

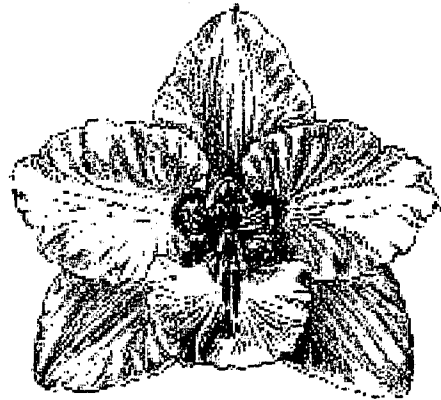
Odontoglossum Alliance Newsletter

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GROWING ODONTOGLOSSUMS IN PERLITE

By Dr. Wally Thomas

Perlite is a naturally occurring volcanic glass compound. It is widely found but the largest deposits are in southern United states and in Greece. It is mined like a mineral and then ground up and heated in an oven at 1000 degrees Centigrade. The small amount of water inside the particles turns to steam and causes the particle to pop like pop corn. The commonly available material is called Horticultural grade – however some of these are too fine. The size that we like is about 3-4 mm. (just over 1/8th in,) the desirable features are. 1) relatively low cost 2) readily available 3) light weight 4) neutral pH 5) excellent fertilizer control 6) very easy to leach 7) easy to dispose of in the garden and 8) it is sterile.

Two particularly important aspects are

Ease of potting

Free draining- immediately above a water reservoir there is 30% and at 8in. (12cm) there is 19%. This provides both aeration and nutrient solution.

Two undesirable features are

1) dust – plastic bags provides better a better seal for dust than paper bags. The perlite has less than .1% silica and is not considered to be a health hazard.. Also there are several suppliers of perlite and it is good to try and find a type that has a low dust content For use a garbage bag is filled 1/3rd full of water/fertilizer mix and the perlite is poured into the water. If the dust is troublesome, briefly put a hose into the bag before using. Do a quick hosing of the perlite in the tub to make sure that the dust is dealt with and then push the perlite down into the water several times . The fine material will quickly

sink to the bottom and the fine material may later be scattered in the garden.

2. In getting rid of the dust the second undesirable aspect, that of compaction, is eliminated.

We became interested in using perlite in the early 1980's following a report (Hall-West of Scotland Research Station) that it had given better results than rockwool in growing tomatoes hydroponically. I later found that Pierce, in 1983 in the AOS Journal had reported good success in using pure perlite in growing Phalaenopsis. Hall had planted the tomatoes in the perlite bags as they came, put the fertilizer/water into the top and exit holes slightly up the side. This gave a reservoir of solution to assure constant fertilization. At this time we were growing our plants mainly on an island some 2 hours from our home and with no electricity or pressure water. Thus the concept of using such a reservoir was most appealing as we were only there for a few days a week. Although we do not grow on the island now we still use reservoir pots but have been experimenting with modifications

POTS Our favorite pot is the Kord saucerless hanging basket pots -the 8" ones being very adaptable. For seedlings out of flask we wrap some cling wrap around the wires leaving an opening at the top. Any pots without drainage may be adapted by drilling 3/8 in. holes in the side up about an inch. Any ordinary pot may be used without a reservoir and the bottom covered with foam peanuts, or Hydroton marbles to contain the perlite. In the last few years we have been trying some modifications. This was mainly because we found that the perlite we had available for awhile was very fine and seemed to be holding too much water. We first tried tilting the 8in. Kord saucerless pots at about 15 degrees this allowed for better drainage but still allowed for a small reservoir. (in hanging the pot we shortened one of the wires) In some we tried putting a dollop of perlite in the central depression of the insert that taps the reservoir and put foam peanuts around this dollop giving less depth of perlite and excellent aeration. These changes seemed to make it possible to get a better exchange of nutrient solution when watering. The results seemed encouraging and so we have put all our growing benches at a slight tilt. It certainly gives better drainage. We have now used the central dollop of perlite and foam with other pots where we have put in drainage hole. We are also trying without the reservoir and it would seem that this is also good but requires a bit more frequent watering. We also obtained some pots with fenestrations part way up the side and put them inside solid pots with drainage holes on the side. They have not done as well but we shall water them more frequently this year and see what happens. Another trial is to drill some 3/8 inch holes in the side of the pots half way down the side to see if the aeration would be helpful. It is too soon to say if this is helpful.

If the perlite that you obtain is too fine, you may wish to put a layer of large hydroton marbles half way up the pot. A local grower has had good success with this idea. A layer or a mix of foam peanuts should also be satisfactory.

SURFACE COVER

A surface cover prevents evaporation, for the surface will get quite dry if not watered frequently. It also prevents the perlite from being washed out when watering. There is also quite rapid growth of algae and anything else that is in the air. Algae blocks air circulation and certainly inhibits growth. For many years we have used pea gravel to cover the surface but have recently tried the small and large size Hydroton marbles. The small ones soon grew algae but the larger ones seem satisfactory if the layer is deep enough - at least two marble depth.

POTTING

We repot seedlings throughout the year but older plants only when they show a new growth. The old media is cleaned away and old bulbs removed to no more than one leafless bulb. Between each plant the secateurs are flamed with a propane torch 'gun' unit on a small tank. The cut end is either seared with the reheated broad secateur blade or is seared with a soldering iron -the latter saves time. Similarly the scissors are flamed for trimming off decayed or damaged roots and leaves. The back of the plant is replaced against the edge of the pot and after filling to within one inch of the top the pot is given a bit of a shake to settle the perlite. The topping is then added and the new growth is adjusted so that it faces to the center and is upright to an angle of 75 degrees. The 75 degrees is just my feeling that they seem to do better if they are placed that way. All used pots are sterilized in big garbage tubs with chlorine(household bleach) being added to the water. Repotting is only done every 2-4 years unless there is some other reason such as failure to grow. We have had dwarf fruit trees in large plastic tubs of perlite for 15 years now and they continue to thrive.

FERTILIZER

We use a two part fertilizer from Plant Prod, namely 7-11-27— 3 parts and Calcium Nitrate -2 parts at an E.C. of 400uS and a pH of 6-6.5 We used to use a level of 600uS and will likely be returning to this level this summer. The above 2 part fertilizer gives a complete fertilizer. So many fertilizers that are 'single' salt ones eg 20-20 -20 do not contain calcium. The temperature of the fertilizer mix should at least be tepid We like to have the water flow freely from each pot as we water. Frequency of watering is difficult to give- but one worthwhile point is to lift up random pots. We have 2 dosmatic units in line-one for each part of the fertilizer. for the lower greenhouses and for the Porch unit we use 2 garbage tubs with both fertilizers mixed in each tub and then applied immediately by electric pump.. Hand held EC and pH meters are used for measurements.

VENTILATION

We use a Solar panel to run 12 volt fans for ventilation. The system has been in use for nearly 20 years without any problems and by now must have about paid for itself. It is brought into use in late March and disconnected in October. Quite appropriately the fan speed varies with the intensity of light. Our greenhouses get no sun until 11 in the morning,

HEATING

Heating of the lower houses is by natural gas. The burners are unvented (there are some small air leaks in both houses). The temperature is set at 50 degrees F -day and night, no doubt slowing the winter growth, but with our many weeks of dull rainy weather the plants seem just as happy as they were with a higher day temperature The Porch house is a conversion of an 8x30 ft porch that is located off two bedrooms. It is truly delightful to walk out into it with one's morning coffee. It gets heat through the open doors of the bedrooms. The plywood floor is painted with a waterproof paint and the plants are grown in raised beds lined with black poly that drain out onto the roof. At one end there is tiered area to which I bring the plants as they come into bloom. The blooms are thus able to flower 'naturally' which I think is so much more attractive than staking them. The tiers are tilted slightly backwards and at the back there is a sheet of poly that catches the water and directs it down into a tub and hence to an adjacent roof.

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

ODONTOGLOSSUM CRISPUM

By Stig Dalstrom

It had been raining for days and there was no end in sight. All the rivers were flooded. Some with icy clear water and others with a chocolate colored soup from the eroded clear cuttings higher up on the mountain slopes. In some places the rivers crossed the road underneath a bridge of sorts, but in other cases the water simply ran over it, making it very hazardous for smaller vehicles to pass. It was the last day of our two-week trip in Ecuador and we were supposed to be in Quito by the nightfall, and leave the country early next morning. There was going to be some serious problem solving if we wanted to accomplish this because of the rain. We were stuck on the wrong side of a flooded river near the little town of La Bonita along the Colombian border in northern Ecuador, and I was desperately trying to come up with an idea how to get out of there. I parked the car on higher grounds and walked down to where the brown water came thundering down through the gorge. It covered the road with an unknown depth of roaring anger. I could see some larger boulders out there barely making a ripple on the surface of the rapid current. There was no way I could cross here and have any kind expectations of success. Still, I was tempted to try. If I picked up some speed and just made a go for it I might be able to pass, I thought. Deep inside I knew I was only fooling myself. The thought of staying in La Bonita and sleep on that wooden floor until the rain ceased made me feel miserable though. We would not only miss the flight tomorrow, but Huck would miss a lot of school, which he probably would survive, but Rick needed to get back to work. Besides, Huck's mother Annie would be beside herself with worry if I did not return from this adventure with her fourteen-year-old boy intact. If something happened to him I might as well stay here in La Bonita. I wondered if there was any phone connection between the village and the rest of the world? I doubted it.

I was on a quest for one of the most beautiful orchids in the world, the elusive *Odontoglossum crispum*. It is a gorgeous plant that grows epiphytically in larger trees throughout the Andes in Colombia. The flowers are snow white, often tinted and spotted with purple or brown. In deep contrast, there is a golden yellow patch with blood red stripes on the lip. It is simply stunning! I had found two old records of this species in Ecuador, both from the nineteenth century, and I had been looking for it for years in the northern part of the country. I wanted to include it in my treatment of *Odontoglossum* for Flora of Ecuador so badly that I was willing to take some risks, but not to the expense of the lives of my friends. There is a fine line between determination and obsession, and I was walking on it. I had been to La Bonita several times and I had found other *Odontoglossum* species but not *O. crispum*. This was not a healthy place for foreigners to visit to begin with. Colombian, and probably Ecuadorean *guerrilleros* and bandits in the area seemed to have developed a taste for kidnapping visitors for ransom. I doubted anybody would be willing to pay much for anyone of us, but how would the bad guys know? Maybe Annie would come down here and sing for them, I chuckled. She could be a very persuasive little firecracker when she wanted to.

This was not leading anywhere. I walked over to the abyss on the north side of the road and looked down. The brown water leaped over the edge and disappeared into the mist and rocks down there. That is where we would end up if my calculations were wrong, I realized, and there was a great possibility they were. I do have a degree in civil engineering but I am probably saving the world a lot of money and suffering by not doing it. My math sucks!

I just could not do it. It is one thing to be alone on a trip but when you have responsibility for other people as well it becomes a different story. I returned to the car, muttering curses over life in general and the weather in

particular. Some of my friends say that it is very obvious when I am in a bad mood. I cannot imagine how they can see that but somehow Rick and Huck had guessed right because they didn't say a word, just sat there, staring at me. Finally, I made my decision, turned the car around and drove back to La Bonita. The embryo of a plan had started to develop in my mind. Well back in town I went to the Mayor, who fortunately was in his office for some odd reason, and I laid out my plan. It consisted of renting a truck, which most likely would be able to cross the river safely and also pull us through, somehow...?

The Mayor patiently listened to me. He pursed his lips as in deep thought for a while and gently asked: – Hmmm, well, what about the other road?

I was dumbfounded. What other road? What are you talking about? He then explained about the old road that went up into the mountains and crossed the rivers on old bridges. You know, where the rivers were smaller! Maybe that would be a solution to my problem? I simply could not believe what I was hearing. I had completely ignored the possibility of an old road. He explained in relative detail how to find this road and I thanked him profusely. I was both grateful and impressed by this man's resourcefulness. With no time to spare, we packed the car and left town in search for a way out of the trap. We managed not only to find the road but also to cross the rivers, if not safely then at least successfully. The "road" was barely passable with a four-wheel drive but we got through somehow and arrived in Quito at nightfall. It was quite a trip on that narrow ledge and I am glad that neither mine, Huck's nor Rick's mothers were able to see us then.

When I was commissioned to make a poster for the opening of the Fuqua Orchid Center at Atlanta Botanical Garden, 2002, I searched for an idea. Ron Determann, who spearheaded this gigantic project had mentioned that it was going to be a cool house for high elevation plants, particularly orchids from the Andes. The leap from "cool orchids in the Andes" to *Odontoglossum crispum* was not very far. To broaden the scope I added a high altitude *Tillandsia*, an *Athelopus* toad and some other "cooler" things to make the poster interesting to look at more than once. As usual, the foreground is there to seduce the viewer, but is nevertheless only a part of the "greater picture". My intention was to show the haunting beauty of both the orchid and the habitat where it makes its' home. If we can see and appreciate the beauty as something good, and worth saving, then maybe I can stir up a desire to protect it before it's all gone forever - Lush oaks used to cover the dry and barren mountains of the Mediterranean, and the Sahara Desert was once a forest!

MASDEVALLIA BURIANI

In November 1999, three dubious characters entered an obscure hotel in Cochabamba, Bolivia. Rick Burian arrived from Portland, Oregon, Jan Sönnemark came from Halmstad, Sweden, and I left Sarasota, Florida, in an attempt to locate an elusive orchid somewhere in this awesome and boisterous country. To understand the background we have to return to 1981. While going through Selby Gardens' herbarium collection for the first time, I came across an unknown *Odontoglossum* specimen that Janet and Lee Kuhn of J & L Orchids in Connecticut had sent for identification. It consisted of a single raceme with some starry flowers of a peculiar shape and it had remained nameless over the years. I eventually concluded that it had to be an undescribed species. The only collection information was "Bolivia, 1978".

My first trip to Bolivia failed to reveal the whereabouts of this orchid, although I did make some other discoveries, one of which became *Odontoglossum tenuifolium*, (plants were originally collected by Carl Luer and others, and deposited nameless in the Selby herbarium). The second attempt to locate the "J & L" orchid proved fruitless as well. I suspected that I might be chasing a ghost for the duration of my life so in early 1999

I decided to describe the species anyway in spite of the scanty material at hand. I chose the name *Odontoglossum dracoceps* because the tip of the column of the flower looks like a small dragon's head. The original plant was still alive and currently resided in Jan's greenhouse in Sweden, but for some reason the conditions did not seem to suit this spoiled brat (the plant) and it refused to do much of anything. Fortunately, a second plant eventually turned up in a friend's greenhouse in Belgium. It supposedly came from Ecuador and originated in Father Andreetta's orchid collection in Paute. I knew this gentleman well enough to conclude that this plant could very well come from just about anywhere. True enough, and after some investigation the trail once more pointed towards Bolivia.

So here we were, challenging the Bolivian traffic again. My attitude is that when you go to Bolivia you drive like a Bolivian. My less enthusiastic partners thought otherwise and simply took over after a "close one" with a truck. It was just as well because it is difficult to look for orchids in the passing trees and keep the car on the road at the same time.

November is a flowering season for many orchids in Bolivia, and we saw thousands of beautiful *masdevallias* in bloom, particularly *M. yungasensis* and *M. notosibirica*, but no *odontoglossums*. Gradually, a familiar despair developed in my heart. The second from last day of the trip we also left the food back at the hotel, and we turned rather grumpy in the afternoon. Fortunately, while digging through some dusty bags scattered in the car we discovered a good-sized salami that we had forgotten. It seemed "ripe" enough to be consumed so we decided not to waste it any further, and felt a little better afterwards for a while. The greater part of the evening and the entire night was a different story altogether. As I was wrenching my intestines, revealing noises from Jan's bathroom told me he was doing "great" too. Rick is a vegetarian, which usually makes me suspicious but on rare occasions can be quite advantageous, I realized. On shaky legs, and after some serious discussions, we decided to make one last attempt to find the darned *Odontoglossum* the following morning. We wanted to think of ourselves as "die-hard" orchid nuts after all. After about an hour of driving we reached the forest and decided to investigate a new (to us) area for a change. Nobody really had the energy to dive into the vegetation much so we stayed on whatever trail we could locate. At one point we met a melancholy looking farmer who was searching for his cows. He had no idea where they had gone and suspected foul play by some neighbors he had been in a feud with for some time. He seemed curious and friendly though and asked what we were doing there, before continuing his search. Shortly afterwards Rick shouted that he had a *Masdevallia* for us to look at. Both Jan and I had walked right by it without paying attention, looking up into the trees. Rick had his eyes directed downwards into a small shrub next to the trail and that was where an interesting looking plant with a newly opened bud was growing. A closer examination revealed a white, cup shaped flower, which was covered internally with magenta "hairs". It reminded me of *Masdevallia tinekeae* but there was something peculiar about it that set it apart. Since there already was a *Masdevallia dalstroemii* and a *M. soennemarkii*, Jan and I generously told Rick that it could carry his name if it turned out to be new. Suddenly I felt a lot better.

Later in the afternoon we came strolling down another trail where we discovered a small population of the same *Masdevallia* in full bloom. It was magnificent! The magenta hairs stood out like neon signs in the murky shadows where it grew on mossy branches. Some plants even grew on the ground among decomposed leaf litter. The amount of magenta hairs varied though, and some flowers lacked it altogether, displaying an entirely white flower. There was no doubt left anymore that we were dealing with a beautiful new orchid species.

Of the elusive *Odontoglossum dracoceps*, however, there was not a trace, and at the end of the day we had to face failure again and head home. I turned around and began walking towards the car with heavy steps. Coming down the slope, I had noticed a fork in the trail so I decided to check it out on my way back as a last

attempt. After perhaps ten steps I almost stumbled over a big clump in the middle of the trail. It was part of a branch that had fallen down from above, and some familiar looking plants covered it. My already strained heartbeat paced up immediately. I bent down and studied the plants a little closer and I could not believe my eyes. The pseudobulb of *Odontoglossum dracoceph* has a very distinct shape and cannot be confused with much else, and I was staring at a large clump of perhaps ten individual plants right in front of me. Eighteen years of search had come to an end and I finally had a locality. Once back to the car, and after having celebrated our good fortune, our melancholy farmer cautiously approached from the forest, carrying an enormous *Cyrtorchilum* plant in his arms. He looked a little sheepish but asked us if that was something we might be interested in. I did not recognize it and wanted to pay him for his efforts, but he adamantly refused to accept any money and simply said that he was happy to help out (it turned out to be another showy and undescribed species but that is a different story). Some years later, pollen from one of the two plants of *Odontoglossum dracoceph* in cultivation miraculously reached the stigma of the other plant, and an unknown number of seedlings became available for orchid growers around the world. A victory for orchid conservation!

ODONTOGLOSSUM HARRYANUM

Lars Danils discovered that he loved mangos. Coming from the real backwoods of Sweden, he was not spoiled by a generous access of tropical delicacies when he grew up, except bananas of course. Lars was more of a “potatoes and sausage” man. When he went to Ecuador together with me, Thomas Höijer and Manfred Lindström from the botanical garden in Stockholm, it was his first visit to a tropical country, and quite possibly his first trip outside of Sweden (Scandinavian countries not counted because historically they should be part of Sweden anyway). Our main mission was to search for orchids but in a country like Ecuador, anything can become an exotic temptation. Lars discovered the pleasures of tropical fruits and was glutting himself. We were in the old city of Loja and had packed our car with food for a few days since we were planning to be on the road for some time. Nobody knew what the food sources would be like in the Oriente, the eastern foothills of the Andes. Every person probably has his or her own nightmare of what can happen if everything goes wrong. A worst-case scenario of sorts, and Lars’ fear was to starve to death. To be on the safe side he had purchased a large bag of mangos and since there was no space left in the car, he tenderly embraced it in his lap. These mangos were not the kind you see in the supermarkets in the United States, but rather small and yellow with various cuts and bruises. Despite the delicious taste, I never developed a real passion for mangos because of the fibers and the way they are designed. No matter how you try, you can only eat about seventy five percent of the fruit before it gets messy. The last twenty five percent is a “blood bath”. Afterwards I feel like a whale with my mouth full of bards. This did not bother Lars, however, who happily stuffed himself as the days went along.

One of the orchids I had dreamed about to find was *Odontoglossum harryanum*. It was originally discovered in Colombia and considered very rare but I knew that Father Andreetta, a Salesian missionary of Italian origin who lived in Cuenca, had rediscovered it in eastern Ecuador. Father Andreetta was a stately and impressive character who learned the fascination of orchids while spending years turning God-forgotten places in the Oriente into somewhat God-abiding. I suppose there must have been plenty of time to kill during these years because he had developed a really bad case of the “orchid bug”. During a séance in the Selby Gardens Orchid Identification Center I had found some slides taken by Father Andreetta of *Odontoglossum harryanum* and they were labeled “Paute”, which is a small town in east-central Ecuador, not far from Cuenca. As we were scrambling down from the highlands of southern Ecuador towards the town of Zamora, I had images of this fabulous orchid in my mind. It had never been reported from this area but that means very little when it comes to species distributions of *Odontoglossums*. If the habitat is right, keep your eyes open!

I was sitting in the front passenger's seat scanning the passing trees and road-cuts, deep in thought when I caught a whiff of a foul and fruity yeast smell. I sniffed for more but it was gone. Perhaps we passed a pile of rotting fruit or something, I absently mused and forgot about it. Not long after that, a somewhat stronger wave erupted, this time from inside the car, and it had an un-mistakenly similarity of bad mangos. I turned around and looked at Lars. He was sitting very straight and his face was very pale. The bag in his lap was half empty. Suddenly he burped and the olfactory sensation of rotten mangos filled the car. It did not take long before we had to stop and let him stumble into the ditch to reverse the consumption. It was obvious that the mangos tasted better going down than coming up. I did not feel sorry for him at all though. After a couple of days the mangos had turned bad and we wanted to throw them away, but Lars insisted that since he had paid a few Sucres each for them he was not going to throw away anything. He had ingested twelve in a row that day when the yeast effect developed. My dear friend was pretty sick after that and to this day, his appetite for mangos has yet to recover.

A couple of days later we left the sleepy town of Gualaquiza and headed north on a recently opened part of the road. It was exciting to drive here knowing that nobody had been able to get through along this stretch before. Along the roadside were lots of cut trees that had been bulldozed aside to make way for the road, and we had a busy time searching through them. The orchids growing on the upper branches were soon to die in the scorching sun anyway. At one point we were back in the car, bumping along as best we could. I was in the backseat and my field of vision was somewhat blocked by piles of luggage and junk. We passed a cleared area where some trees had been left on the far side. I managed to get a glimpse of the jungle giants far away, and saw something hanging from a limb that caught my attention. I immediately knew what it was, even at that distance. I shouted – “Stop!!!! *Odontoglossum harryanum*!!!!”

My fellow travelers almost had simultaneous heart attacks and Thomas barely managed to keep the car on the muddy road before we came to a skidding halt. I was out of the car first of all, how I don't know, and scurried across the cleared area before my friends had a chance to comprehend what was going on.

– There, I pointed and shouted! About five meters above me was a flowering plant of *Odontoglossum harryanum*, with a full spike of magnificent flowers reaching down to greet me. I was jumping with excitement. It turned out that we had discovered a small population of this hard to find orchid and were able to learn a lot about its natural variation in size, shape and coloration. The Colombian plants often have the petals closed in front of the column, which takes away some of its beauty and potential for breeding purposes. Some of the Ecuadorian plants have a much more open flower, but other than that, they are morphologically very similar. There are several other forms, or subspecies, in this complex that may or may not be distinct taxonomic entities. The variation is so great that it is hard to distinguish them from each other in a consistent way, and I prefer to lump them together as a single “superspecies” with several subspecies instead. After this occasion I was nick-named “Snake eye” for my ability to look in several directions at the same time.

In my painting of *Odontoglossum harryanum*, I have placed the plant on a branch hanging out over a deep abyss filled with water and rocks. It is not a romantic place. It is a place where only the brave, or stupid, would go to risk his neck to see this view. The vertical cliff in the background is a symbolic fortress.

Unconsciously I try to protect the habitat by placing it in a fortress where nobody can reach and destroy it. It is a very “masculine” painting with hard rocks and cold violent water rushing by. It hurts to go there. Leave it alone!

Call For Elections

It is past time to elect officers and directors in our Odontoglossum Alliance. The current Directors and Offices and Directors with their term expiration date are tabulated.

Directors	Term Expires
Helmut Rohrl, Chairman	2005
Howard Liebman	2005
Robert Hamilton	2005
Tom Perlite	2003
Mario Ferrusi	2002
Juan Felipe Posada	2003
Tom Etheridge	2004
Russ Vernon	2004

Officers	Title	Term Expires
Steve Beckendorf	President	2005
Sue Golan	Vice President	2005
John Miller	Secretary, Treasurer	2005

The President has formed the Nominating Committee consisting of the following three members: Mario Ferrusi, Howard Liebman, and XYZ. If any member wishes to nominate a member for any of the officers they may send e-mail to any of the nominating committee members.

Larry Sanford coolgrow@eqs.net
 Russ Vernon russ@pawsinc.com
 Robert Hamilton bob@eecs.berkeley.edu

The slate recommended by the nominating committee will be published in the May 06 newsletter. And ballots for voting will be included with the mailing. Ballots are to be received at the address specified on the ballot by 1 August 2006. The election results will be published in the August 2006 newsletter and the directors and officers elected will take office with that notice.

My Sad Day

We built our house in 1986. Last month I was cleaning the garage and found this five-gallon bucket labeled perlite. I looked in it and it was the white stuff looking just like what I use in my potting material. I was needing another bucket, so I thought I will just use this up in my repotting and have the bucket. I currently use two mixes, one is fir bark with perlite and charcoal and the other is coir of the peat moss variety. Here I also mix perlite with it. I have found the later good for paphs as it hold water well and keeps the mix moist. The odonts seem to like it as well. The bulbs don't seem to get as big, but the plants keep solid bulbs through blooming and all the seasons. So I have been gradually converting some of the smaller odonts to this mix. I added some of this perlite to both potting mixes.

I ran out of the coir mix and proceeded to make a new batch, this time using all perlite from the bucket. As I mixed it with my hands, I quickly noticed the mix getting not just warmer, but hotter and hotter. Something was wrong. I put some of the perlite in a cup with a little water. I put my hand in the cup as it got

hotter and hotter. I can hold 130-degree objects in my hand. With my hand in the water, I quickly had to remove it. The water was over 130 degrees F. That prompted me to throw out the new mix of potting material as well as the balance of the perlite in the bucket. However I had potted a number of plants using both mixes, each containing some of the garage perlite.

About a week passes and I start to notice a number of dead leaves in the greenhouse. After closer examination the bulbs were found to be soft and the plants dead. I had cooked the plants. I have for the last two weeks been picking out cooked and dead plants with the count now over two dozen and climbing. I am sure I will get to close to twice that number but hopefully not exceed it.

What was the perlite? I believe it was left from the concrete operations in building the house. This perlite, which is exothermic, was used with the concrete when the weather was cold to keep the concrete warm enough to set and not freeze. Another possibility is that it was obtained to melt the ice in the driveway and walks. In either case it was quick poison for the plants.

So now I look at it as a lesson learned and an opportunity to acquire some new plants.

John Miller

Next Odontoglossum Alliance Meeting

The last Odontoglossum Alliance meeting was held in October 2005 in Cincinnati, Ohio and was a very successful meeting. We have yet to schedule the next meeting. Generally speaking holding the Odontoglossum Alliance is most successful if held in conjunction with the AOS Trustees meeting. This not only attracts a large number of people, but the venue is usually very large making the trip more interesting. The show organizers then handle the administrative activities associated with a meeting. This includes such things as advertising, block room reservations, registration, dinner reservations for the Alliance dinner, and lecture and meeting room reservation. The problem with always going where the Trustees meeting are held lies with their selected location. As often as not these meetings are held in locations where there are few or no local growers of the Odontoglossum alliance, few displays and sales. The result is we end up with a very small attendance.

The next best choice is an orchid show in a location where there are significant numbers of local growers. Here many of the administrative activities associated with a meeting are conveniently provided. Such was the case with the 2005 meeting.

The other choice is to pick a location, where there is a show, but no program. Here we are without the administrative support. The local members of our alliance must handle this. Such is the case when we hold our meetings in San Francisco in conjunction with the SF Orchid Show held the third weekend in February. The advantage of this location is the show where there is an abundance of Odontoglossum alliance material in the show and in the sales booths.

We do not have a meeting scheduled for 2006. The schedule for the AOS Trustees meetings is as follows:

Spring 2006	April 4-9 in Buena Vista, Florida (near Orlando)
Fall 2006	November 3-5 in St Louis, Missouri
Spring 2007	May 2-6 Arlington, Texas
Fall 2007	To be announced
Spring 2008	February 27-2 March World Orchid Conference, Miami, Florida
Fall 2008	To be announced
Spring 2009	April 29-3 May Houston, Texas

While all these are interesting locations, there are not many, if any, Odontoglossum Alliance members

in the local area, nor any commercial odont growers. The 08 WOC is an interesting venue as it is such a large show. Surely there will be odonts displayed.

It is too late to organize a meeting in the spring of 2006; a fall meeting is possible with difficulty. Our next best opportunity is a spring 2007 meeting. In the May newsletter mailing we will be sending out dues notices and election ballots. Within that will be a place for each member to add preferences for future Odontoglossum Alliance meetings.

John E. Miller
Secretary.

Larry Sanford Wins The Robert B. Dugger Award

One of our stalwart Odontoglossum Alliance members has won the Robert D. Dugger Award for 2004. This award was started and financed by our Odontoglossum Alliance members. It is a pleasure for one of our own to be the winner. Congratulations Larry. The plant is Odontioda Leysa 'Patience' AM/AOS. Another of our members, Robert Hamilton, made the cross with Nutley x Sanderae. The award is for the most outstanding Odontoglossum alliance plant awarded in the year. The plant was registered by Larry and is his favorite red Odontioda, so he named the clone 'Patience' for his wife of 57 years. He notes that the plants are small and somewhat more tolerant of warmer temperatures than the other red odontiodas. This plant was shown at the Three Rivers Orchid Society in Ft. Wayne, Indiana and was photographed by Lynn Shaughnessy. Larry has subsequently won an AM on a second Oda. Leysa in 2005.

Thanks For The Help And Keep It Coming

All the members and especially your editor thank Wally Thomas and Stig Dalstrom for responding to my plea for material for our newsletter.

Please keep it comng. Your experiences and events help all in pursuit of growing and enjoying the Odontoglossum Alliance.

Your Editor



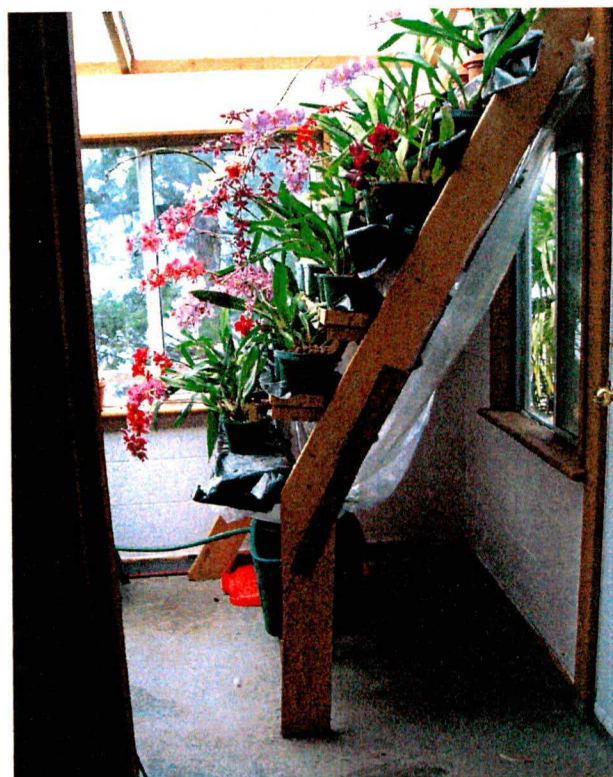
Display Bench with white pots



A view of the greenhouse



Perlite size Top scale inches
Bottom scale centimeters



A side view of the display bench



Close-up of the display bench



The Burner



A 12 Inch hanging basket with seedlings



Seedling Bench



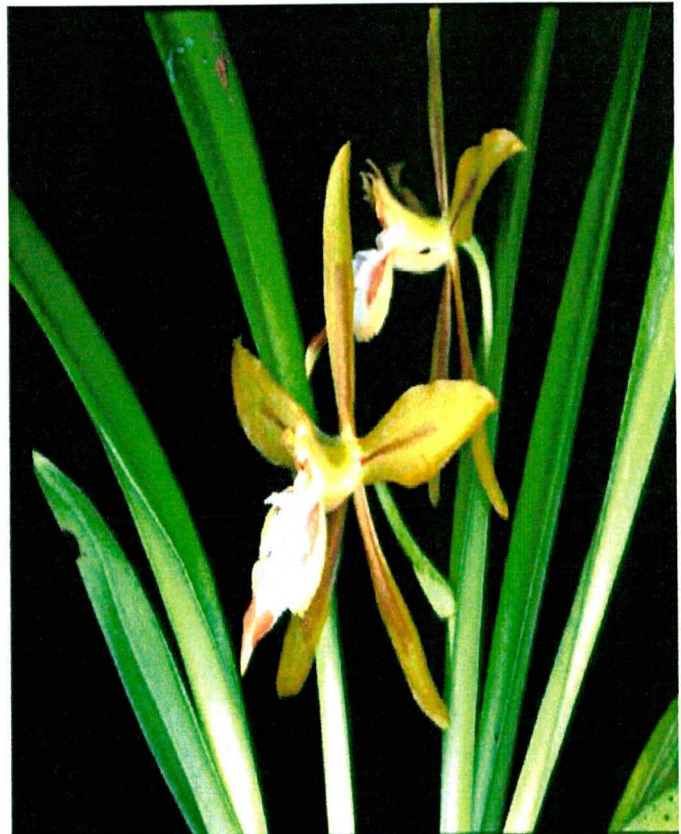
White pot hold the black pot
The black pot has fenestration



Odm. harrayanum



Masdaevallia burianii



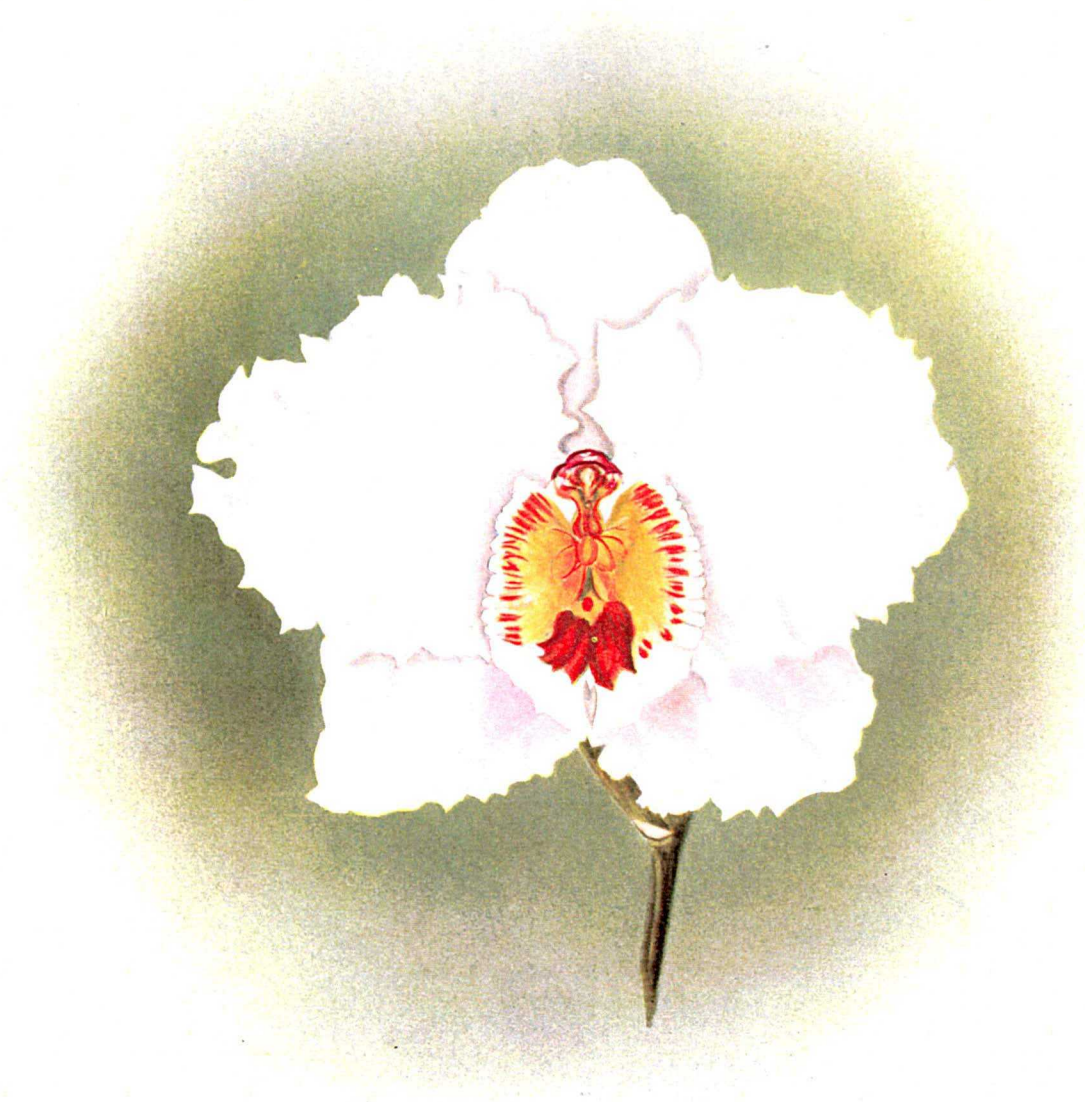
Odontoglossum dracoceph



Odontoglossum crispum
A poster created by Stig Dalstrom



Odontioda Leysa 'Patience' AM/AOS
Awarded The Robert B. Dugger Award for 2004
Awarded to Larry Sanford

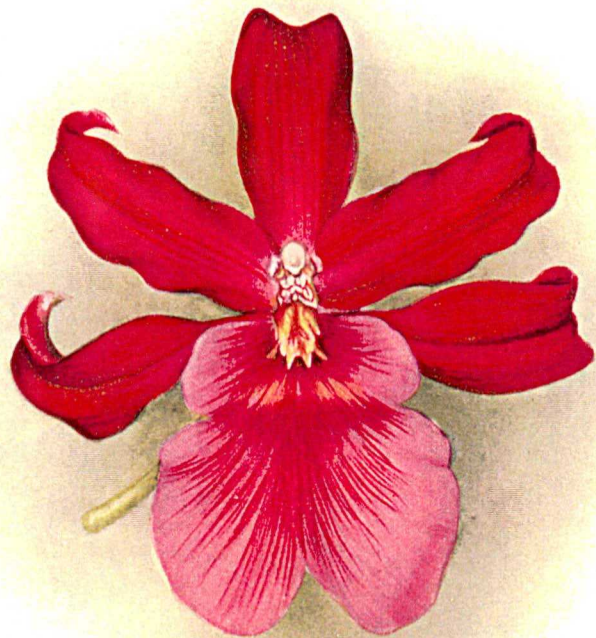


ODONTOGLOSSUM CRISPUM

"CHARLESWORTH'S PREMIER TYPE"



CHARLESWORTHARA NOBILIS
(ONCIDIUM MACRANTHUM X MILTONIODA AJAX)
A.M. R.H.S. 11/1/1921



MILTONIODA HARWOODII, VARIETY EXCELSIOR
(COCHLIODA NOEZLIANA X MILTONIA VEXILLARIA, VARIETY QUEEN ALEXANDRA)
F.C.C. R.H.S. 29/6/1920