International Aroid Society, Inc.

the IAS Newsletter

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A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL AROID SOCIETY

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A Decade of *Schismatoglottis* Species

Peter Boyce & Wong Sin Yeng

Figure 1: *Schismatoglottis pseudohatchii* in habitat with the adult leaf lamina banding clearly visible over the fish-bone markings.

Despite the considerable popularity of *Alocasia* and *Colocasia*, the list of horticulturally important aroid species is overwhelmingly comprised of aroids from the American tropics: *Anthurium*, *Philodendron*, *Dieffenbachia*, *Spathiphyllum*, *Monstera* and *Caladium* being pre-eminent. Paradoxically, aside from *Alocasia*, species from the old-world tropics that command horticultural attention, and even there an attention not or hardly addressed by the wholesale commercial trade, tend to be those grown primarily for the inflorescence: notably *Amorphophallus*, *Arisaema* and *Typhonium* although this in no way implies that the foliage of these magnificent Asians is not noteworthy.

However, this heavy Neotropical bias is not for want of exceptionally attractive and mostly easy to grow foliage plants in the Asian tropics. One such genus is *Schismatoglottis*,

Figure 2: Culivated plant of *Schismatoglottis pseudohatchii* showing the numerous leaves that develop in cultivated plants.

Figure 3: Young *ex vitro* plants of *Schismatoglottis pseudohatchii* with the leaf markings beginning to develop; the fish-bone veining is the first to appear.

Despite the considerable popularity of *Alocasia* and *Colocasia*, the list of horticulturally important aroid species is overwhelmingly comprised of aroids from the American tropics: *Anthurium*, *Philodendron*, *Dieffenbachia*, *Spathiphyllum*, *Monstera* and *Caladium* being pre-eminent. Paradoxically, aside from *Alocasia*, species from the old-world tropics that command horticultural attention, and even there an attention not or hardly addressed by the wholesale commercial trade, tend to be those grown primarily for the inflorescence: notably *Amorphophallus*, *Arisaema* and *Typhonium* although this in no way implies that the foliage of these magnificent Asians is not noteworthy.

However, this heavy Neotropical bias is not for want of exceptionally attractive and mostly easy to grow foliage plants in the Asian tropics. One such genus is *Schismatoglottis*, a predominantly old world tropics genus of more than of 150 species of terrestrial herbaceous mesophytes (plants adapted to constant levels of soil and atmospheric moisture), less often rheophytes (adapted to the flood zones of tropical forest streams), very rarely helophytes (swamp plants in full sun), with a primary distribution centred on Borneo.

As might be imagined, any aroid genus with well in excess of one hundred species contains at least some of horticultural merit. *Schismatoglottis* certainly does not disappoint, and although at the present time rather few are in cultivation outside of specialist research collections, botanic gardens and a few enthusiasts, there are many species that would grace any collection where they are more readily available.

Schismatoglottis is presently the focus of a study aimed at resolving issues about its internal relationships. However, the last revision, that of Hay & Yuzammi (2000), set some informal parameters (termed 'Groups') and these are followed here with the addition of species' complexes to provide fine-line delimitation of species complexes.

Asperata Group

The Asperata Group comprises species wit a clumping habit and petioles that are ofte conspicuously and colourfully ornamente with warts, hairs, scales or bristles. Lea lamina are simple or with cordate bases an are usually softly succulent. Very colourfu leaf markings combined with striking petiole make for handsome plants.

Asperata complex

The *asperata* complex contains man handsome species. Of note are *Schismatoglottis pseudohatchii* (**Figs. 1 – 3**)

Figure 5: Detail of the sharkskin texture of the leaf lamina in *Schismatoglottis mira.*

with glossy olive-green leaves with a striking silver fish-bone pattern overlain with silver banding. In juvenile plants (in this instance tissue cultured plants ca. 6 weeks from the flask) the leaf markings comprise just the fish-bone markings (**Fig. 3**) but as plants age the banding becomes conspicuous. Mature plants in cultivation are multi-foliar and exceptionally handsome (**Fig. 2**). In the same group is the aptly-named *S. mira* (**Figs. 4 – 6**) with extraordinary sharkskin-textured emerald green leaves with a conspicuous cream median-band (**Fig. 5**). As with *S. pseudohatchii*, *S. mira* is in tissue culture and flats of the young plants are outstandingly attractive (**Fig. 6**).

Barbata complex

The *barbata* complex differs from the *asperata* complex primarily in having the petioles and one or both surfaces of the leaf

Figure 4: The outstandingly attractive *Schismatoglottis mira* in habitat.

Figure 6: Young *ex vitro* plants of *Schismatoglottis mira*; the leaf texture and markings appear very early in the plants' development.

Figure 8: *Schismatoglottis ciliata* in habitat showing the erect leaves and the litter-trapping.

Figure 7: *Schismatoglottis cilata* in a variegated form in Sarawak.

Figure 9: Detail of the petioles and newly emerging leaf in *Schismatoglottis ciliata*. Note the coarse nature of the 'hairs'.

species most often seen in cultivation is *S. ciliata* (**Figs. 7 – 9**) a species widespread in Borneo with often conspicuously variegated leaf laminae held erect on conspicuously white-bristly petioles (**Fig. 9**). In the wild *S. ciliata* is frequently found growing in deep peat deposits in heavy shade with the erect growth habit functioning as a litter-trap (**Fig. 8**) with numerous roots entering the accumulated humus around the petioles bases. *Schismatoglottis ferruginea* (**Figs. 10 – 11**) is similar but with the petiole and leaf lamina hairs much softer in texture.

Perhaps the most remarkable species in the *barbata* complex is *S. pyrrhias* (**Figs. 12 – 14**), a species from limestone in remote areas of central Sarawak. The deep green glossy leaves are carried on plum-purple petioles covered in dense white bristles (**Fig. 13**), while the backs of the leaf laminae are jade-green with all veins thickly covered with cherry-red bristles (**Fig. 14**). Although very rare in cultivation, these plants have proven to be very easy, albeit slow, to maintain in cultivation.

Gamoandra complex

The *gamoandra* complex is interesting in that aside from *S. gamoandra* itself almost all of the species are new to science.

Figure 10: *Schismatoglottis ferruginea* in Sabah.

Schismatoglottis gamoandra (**Figs. 15 – 19**) is a rosette-forming dwarf species from central Sarawak with thin stiff leaves held flat on the ground on short petioles (**Fig. 15**). The leaf texture is like thin aluminium sheeting while the lamina colours continue the metallic theme in being pewter-grey with, in some clones, the middle of the leaf burnished into a dull silver band (**Fig. 16**). The whole leaf is made further striking by the raised chessboard venation (**Fig. 17**). For such a diminutive species the inflorescences are large and held almost erect in the middle of the leaves (**Fig. 18**). As can be seen from **Fig. 19,** the generic name *Schismatoglottis* is derived from the Greek *schisma, schismatos* (separating) and *glôtta* (tongue) and refers to the variously deciduous spathe limb that is a feature of *S. gamoandra* and most other species. *Schismatoglottis gamoandra* is also in tissue culture (**Fig. 20**).

Figure 13: *Schismatoglottis pyrrhias* detail to show the plum-coloured petioles with the white 'hairs'.

Figure 11: *Schismatoglottis ferruginea* in close-up to show the much finer and softer 'hairs'as compared with *S. ciliata*.

Figure 12: *Schismatoglottis pyrrhias* in cultivation.

Figure 14: *Schismatoglottis pyrrhias* leaf lamina, rear view, to show red 'hairs'.

Figure 15: *Schismatoglottis gamoandra* in habitat with the leaves pressed close to the ground, a diagnostic feature.

Figure 16: *Schismatoglottis gamoandra* in one of the variegated forms.

Figure 17: *Schismatoglottis gamoandra* leaf venation detail to show the chess-board-like raised veins.

Figure 22: *Schismatoglottis erecta* showing the climbing habit.

Figure 23: *Schismatoglottis erecta* inflorescence at late female anthesis.

Multiflora Group

The Multiflora Group is readily recognized by the petioles with the greater proportion of the petiolar sheath free-ligular. Leaf laminae are simple and usually plain green in a variety of shades from deep olive to vibrant emerald but this is made up for by the often striking venation patterns, especially on the leaf underside.

Erecta complex

Schismatoglottis erecta (**Figs. 21 – 24**) and its all allies are distinctive by the slender, erect stems and long, willowy deep green leaves. They comprise one of a few small distinct alliances of *Schismatoglottis* that exhibit a climbing habit, the stems rooting onto nearby vertical surfaces. Inflorescences in *S. erecta* are nodding and intriguingly

Figure 20: Young *ex vitro* plants of *Schismatoglottis gamoandra*; already the leaf markings and distinctive venation are well-developed.

Figure 18: *Schismatoglottis gamoandra* inflorescence at female anthesis, with the spathe limb gaping slightly.

Figure 19: *Schismatoglottis gamoandra* inflorescence at male anthesis, the spathe limb already more-or-less shed.

Figure 21: *Schismatoglottis erecta* in bud.

Figure 24: *Schismatoglottis erecta* inflorescence at male anthesis, the spathe limb has began to break away from the lower spathe and the pollen has been released in strings.

Figure 25: *Schismatoglottis corneri* in habitat in Sarawak. This is a small plant.

Figures 26–30: *Schsimatoglottis motleyana* in various leaf forms.

Figure 31: Colony-forming habit of *Schismatoglottis motleyana*.

shaped, and a pleasing combination of pale browns, green and deep mahogany and are produced in some numbers on mature plants. In common with many other species in the Multiflora Group, pollen is released in strings rather in the manner of toothpaste being squeezed from the tube.

Corneri Group

The Corneri Group comprises a single species, *S. corneri* (**Fig. 25**), that is the largest in the genus, with *Alocasia*-like succulent grey-green leaves that can reach over 3 m tall and produces clusters of large inflorescences resembling in shape and size white and jade walking sticks. For a long time *S. corneri* was considered to be endemic to Sabah and the Indonesian Anambas Islands but has recently been found in Sarawak, where this photograph was taken.

Figure 34: Distinctive nodding inflorescences carried on wiry peduncles are characteristic of *S. longifolia*.

Figure 32: *Schismatoglottis longifolia* with strap-shaped leaves and a distinctive silver median band.

Calyptrata Group

Species closely allied to *S. calyptrata* have shoots with numerous lateral buds on the rhizome and are colony-forming plants in the wild. Large colonies tend to be colonial and form extensive carpets of uniform leaves (**Fig. 31**).

Schismatoglottis motleyana (**Figs. 26 – 31**) is a variable species, with a wonderful range of leaf markings. It has great potential as a landscaping groundcover plant and also makes a striking specimen in a large container.

The widespread (one of only three *Schismatoglottis* species co-present in West Malaysia and Borneo) but never abundant *S. longifolia* (**Figs. 32 – 35**) often has the strap-

Figure 35: The cup-shaped fruiting spathes of *S. longifolia* are also diagnostic.

Figure 33: *Schismatoglottis longifolia* in a much rarer leaf form.

like leaves with a silver median band (**Fig. 32**), or with the petiole strikingly contrasting in colour to the lamina (**Fig. 33**), has the spathe limb barely opening and then persistent after anthesis before gradually degrading and falling while still clasping the spent parts of the spadix. The clustered, nodding inflorescences and cup-like infructescences are diagnostic for this species.

References

Hay, A. & Yuzammi. 2000. Schismatoglottideae (Araceae) in Malesia I – *Schismatoglottis*. *Telopea*, 9(1): 1 – 177.

31st IAS Show and Sale

Fairchild Tropical Garden
September 20th & 21st, 2008

Past IAS shows and sales have always been very memorable for their gathering of aroid friends, for spectacularly grown aroids brought in just for the show and for sale, and for the presentations delivered by world-class aroid experts... all taking place in a venue that is undoubtedly the best tropical botanic garden in the world.

This year's event, our 31st Annual Show and Sale, is shaping up to be even more memorable!

Every year we see new and extraordinary aroids along with many incredible favorites superbly grown for the show. This year will be no different. Please plan to bring along your prized specimens to include in the exhibition, regardless of whether or not you choose to enter the awards competition.

Many high-quality importers and growers will be joining our roster of great vendors, making the selection of aroids available for purchase even more enticing. If any of you are interested in becoming a vendor at the show, or in just bringing a few plants to sell at the Membership Sales Table, you are most welcome to do so. Please contact Tricia Frank for more information on selling at the show.

Show and Sale Location

The 2008 IAS show and sale will be hosted September 20 and 21 at the world famous Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, located at 10901 Old Cutler Road, Coral Gables (Miami), Florida 33156. The Garden is adjacent to Matheson Hammock Park, about 20 minutes by car from downtown Miami and Miami International Airport. You can find more information about Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden online at http://www.ftg.org/.

Admission to the show is included with the garden admission price of $20 for adults, $15 for Senior citizens 65 and older, $10 for children 3 to 12, and free for members of Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden and children under 3. Garden Admission is free for IAS Members who register with Tricia Frank to help out with the show.

Schedule of Events

Friday, September 19: The show will be setup from 9:30 AM to 6:00 PM. Please bring your select plants for display and for judging before noon. Vendors may setup their booths starting at noon.

Saturday, September 20: The Show and vendors are open from 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM.
On Saturday evening at 7:00 PM we will begin the always-fulfilling Banquet Dinner followed by a short annual business meeting. For those members who cannot attend, please complete and return the proxy ballot for the proposed new board members. The $20 dinner will feature Cuban cuisine. To reserve your seating, please contact Tricia Frank (305-663-8091 or pfrank@fairchildgarden.org) or mail in the reservation form on page 5.

This year our featured speaker will be **Dr. Marc Gibernau,** a very interesting aroider from the University Paul Sabatier in Toulouse, France. Marc has been studying the evolution and mechanisms of aroid pollinator interactions since 1998. He got his start by studying fig pollination in Montpellier. He has published many papers and collaborated with numerous scientists and is highly respected in the aroid community.

Marc will present and illustrate some striking examples of aroid pollination such as *Philodendron solimoesense* in French Guiana by scarab beetles, the Dead Arum by carrion flies and *Arum pictum* by dung flies from Corsica. He will show other examples such as male Euglossine bees in *Spathiphyllum* or *Anthurium* which exhibit strong similarity with the pollination of some Neotropical orchids. The pollination system of the Taro in Southeast Asia will be illustrated as well. Aroids, in relation to these original pollination systems, have evolved spectacular floral traits. Marc will address the diversity of floral / spathe morphologies or odors produced and also describe thermogenesis (the production of heat by the inflorescences). Finally he will show the diversity of the pollination systems in aroids and what made this family such an interesting plant group for him to study. It will be exciting to hear about Marc's experiences and learn of his future endeavors.

Sunday, September 21: The annual no host Aroid-L breakfast will meet at 8:00 AM at the Greenstreet Café, Coconut Grove. The Show and Sale will open again at 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM. At 10:00 AM there will be a Board of Directors meeting at Fairchild Garden open to all IAS members.

Show Hotels

The Kampong, former home and garden of Dr. David Fairchild, has some remaining dormitory accommodations at $30.00 per person per night. This is a first come, first served opportunity. Please contact Tricia Frank at pfrank@fairchildgarden.org, or call her at 305-663-8091 to reserve your space as soon as possible.
The **Ramada Inn Dadeland** (305-595-6000) is convenient to the Gardens and traditionally frequented by out of town guests. Internet rates are competitive with group rates, so the IAS will not offer a group rate this year.
The **Hampton Inn Dadeland** (305-269-0072 or 1-800-Hampton) is also well located.

Finally...

Please plan to attend the International Aroid Society 31st Annual Show and Sale. This year's show and sale is scaling up to be another very memorable event to provide a unique venue for aroids and aroid enthusiasts to come together at a world class tropical botanic garden.

Don't Forget to

RENEW!

All International Aroid Society memberships are by the calendar year, and that means your membership will likely need to be renewed in the next few months. Don't forget to renew online at http://www.aroid.org/ or send in the renewal envelope that comes with your issue of Aroideana.

A Review of

Searching for Miss Fortuna,

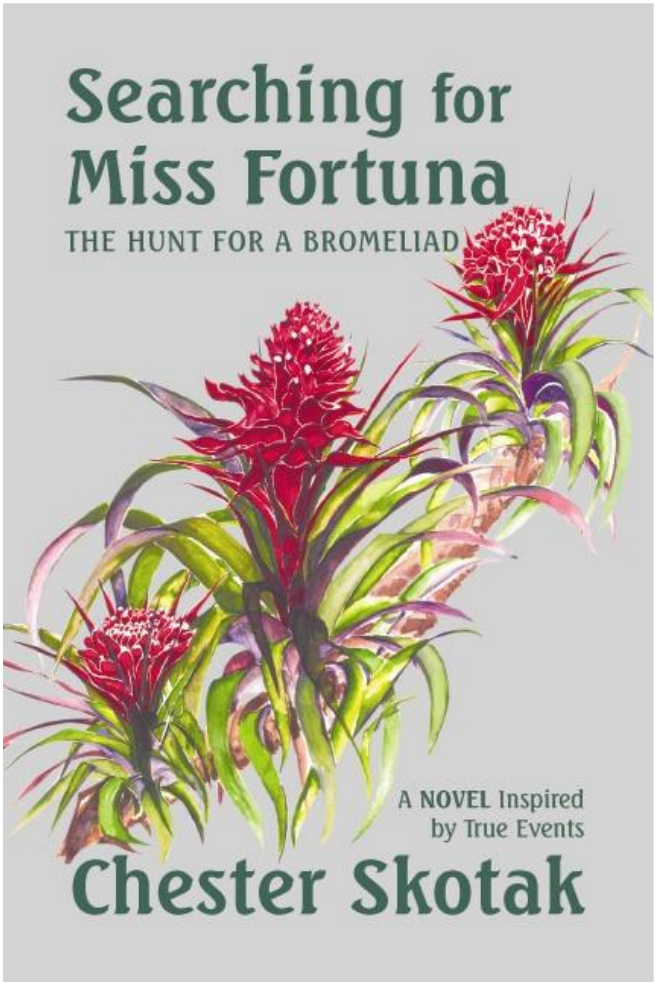
a Novel by Chester Skotak

By Scott E. Hyndman

As I write this review for *Searching for Miss Fortuna*, a novel by Chester Skotak, I am sitting in a plane on the tarmac of the Juan Santamaria International Airport, San Jose, Costa Rica, bound for home in Florida after two weeks of adventure in mid May essentially inspired by this novel. After reading and rereading the novel numerous times, I felt compelled to go meet the author, and explore Costa Rica, one of the beautifully fascinating countries featured in the book. Why would anyone feel so urged to go meet an author of a book so compulsively read for several months? The label "stalker" comes to mind, but I assure you that is not why I undertook the trip. After an aborted attempt of going plant exploring in Cost Rica decades ago, and always wishing to try to remake the trip someday, *Searching for Miss Fortuna* compelled me to follow my dreams.

The first page of the novel, described by the author as "fiction inspired by true events", immediately drew me into the fascinating tale of plant exploration, obsessions, humor, and humanity, told by a cast of characters fitting of an adventure story into The Twilight Zone. Prior to this novel, I had read other books describing obsessed plant collecting like Susan Orleans' *The Orchid Thief*, books describing grand tropical adventure like Eric Hansen's *Stranger in the Forest*, and books of inspired plant exploration like Mulford and Racine Foster's *Brazil, Orchid of the Tropics*, but I had never delved into a truly gripping, page-turning adventure novel about plant exploration that read so much like non-fiction.

What is unique about *Searching for Miss Fortuna* is the intertwining narration by the author of not one, but two tales of adventure involving two protagonists both searching for treasure. One character, only known by the name John, invites the narrator on a search for an enigmatic antique bathtub thought to be worth a fortune and thought to exist somewhere in a ghost town along a river in the lowland jungle near the northeastern border of Costa Rica and Nicaragua. The other adventure, as described by the narrator during the search for the bathtub, with a character only referred to as *The Man from Florida*, involves a hilariously funny account of the obsessive search through Panama for a prized bromeliad, the *Guzmania* from Fortuna. These two independent adventures draw the reader into a skillfully written panorama of characters moving through a continuum of enthralling events that seems so far fetched at times that one wonders what "true events" could have possibly inspired such fiction.



Unlike the Susan Orleans' account of obsessed, zany, real-life plant fanatics, Chester Skotak's *Searching for Miss Fortuna* uses a diverse line-up of individuals, each unique in his past, present, and future presence that creates story lines and dialogues in circumstances leading to stranger than fiction occurrences. Besides the two colorful main characters of the story, there is a panoply of fascinatingly described cast members that includes a Costa Rican Native American always on the run from the law for smuggled wild plants, a drunken boat captain with a haunting past, a botanic garden director teetering on the edge of insanity, and a Brazilian party animal whose zeal for finding new plants is only eclipsed by his desire to try the newest dish at his favorite restaurant. The book's characters tell their stories in very imaginative and creative ways that will hold your attention and make you wonder what could possibly happen next. Notwithstanding the humor and hilarity found throughout the novel, there is also a poignant ending for the character John that is very moving and is fitting for a tribute to the friendship of a unique individual that will always be missed by many.

Searching for Miss Fortuna is not a book for the *Harry Potter* crowd, or for those expecting an easy read without a dictionary at hand. The novel is also not for those easily offended or worried about political correctness because I assure you that you may at times feel uncomfortable reading *Searching for Miss Fortuna*. However, if you are looking for a hilarious and adventurous romp involving rare plants and characters described in a style that is unconventional and new, then I would highly recommend your reading this uniquely appealing and humorous novel.

Searching for Miss Fortuna by Chester Skotak is available from many booksellers including www.amazon.com. You can learn more about the novel and about the author by visiting www.chesterskotak.com.

Cultivar Registration – What's in it for me?

By Derek Burch

The simple answer is 'nothing' for the individual, but for the aroid community the possibility of avoiding some of the uncertainty of what is meant by a particular name gives no guarantee that the people advertising plants sight unseen on ebay are aware of what a cultivar really is, or are truthful in their use of words – any more than that there is satisfaction for the suckers taken in with "*Amorphophallus titanum*" that turn out to be *A. paeoniifolius* or corm-like structures carefully manufactured from mouse-droppings.

So why all of this angst surrounding getting a registration scheme going? Well, for me, as a taxonomist, the identity of a plant is an important matter. Think of this; the name of the plant is the doorway into all of the accumulated knowledge, published or handed down, that we have about it. If you don't have that key, the door stays closed and impenetrable. It doesn't matter (and this is another issue, but one worth mentioning) if a taxonomist changes a specific name or moves the species to another genus, or if it is changed ten times, all those names form a trail to various pieces of information that have been put together by experts. The organism to which the names have been applied doesn't change, and we can get information about it by using any of those names, as long as they have been made available by valid publication.

This principle is well established and accepted down to the level of taxonomic separation covered by '*The International Code of Botanical Nomenclature*' (ICBN) which deals with plants in nature. The impetus to extend this to plants in cultivation is more recent than this, when people finally recognized that trying to force garden plants into that ICBN cast was very unrealistic. Even the attempt to split species into subspecies, varieties and forms was often artificial and impossible to work when dealing with taxa that had come into gardener's hands. We do love to watch for differences in a bed of plants or to carry pollen to receptive sites that nature had never invaded. Eventually a committee, including at least one eminent member of IAS, agreed on a set of rules (*International Code of Nomenclature of Cultivated Plants*) which is modified from time to time after suitably weighty discussion. It is a damned fine piece of work.

The practical value to us? A registered cultivar name follows certain rules as to the form of that name (not a latinised word among other things), and ties back to a description which has appeared in printed material reasonably available to someone searching it out. It can be as simple as a dated plant catalogue, but ideally would be as detailed as the description that is needed for naming a new species, and would refer to illustrations and to a single complete specimen dried or otherwise preserved and stored in a stable environment where it is available for reference.

Meeting these requirements is not that easy, but neither is it daunting in its simpler forms. It will be a little harder for us as a plant society to meet the requirements placed on us by becoming the International Registry for most of the aroid family. We will eventually have to prepare a printed list of all cultivars that have been registered, print each new registration as it is granted, and do periodic updates in print of the master list. I am hopeful that we will be able to supplement this with extensive on-line access to even more identification methods that will make it easier and easier to be sure that a plant offered or referred to is indeed the taxon to which that name belongs.

Neither the committee responsible for the *Code*, nor the registration authority or the registrar has any authority to impose the rules, but what an opportunity this is to take our own responsibility for cleaning up the aroid trade and our own untidy minds. I rest whatever case I am trying to make.

Derek Burch

Nota Bene: I should be happy to send anyone willing to test and comment on a copy of the registration form as it stands. Albert Huntington has done a great job developing an online, interactive cultivar form which will be available when some wording is straightened out. This will make it almost fun to do the registration – considerably easier than filing a tax form, we promise.

2008 IAS Show and Sale Banquet Reservation Form

Member Name:_____

Guest(s):_____

Member Address:_____

_____

E-mail:_____

Phone:_____ Total Number of Persons:_____

Enclose check for $25/person payable to International Aroid Society, or
register and remit by Paypal to tricia_frank@hotmail.com

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: 9/13/2008

mail completed form to: International Aroid Society, PO BOX 43-1853, South Miami, FL 33143, USA

Board of Directors Candidates

Nominees for the International Aroid Society Board of Directors for this year are:

Ted Held is one of the newer IAS members, having joined only two years ago after participating in the Aroid-l discussions for a few months. He readily admits that he is unfamiliar with many of the typical aroids kept by members, but has over 25 years of experience growing and flowering the aroid genus *Cryptocoryne*. His favorite parts about being in the society are learning from the specialist members, hearing of successes and setbacks from ordinary growers, and the free-flowing sharing of information by everyone. He is dedicated to the promulgation of our accumulated knowledge and the joy of growing aroids. As his day job he is a chemist with 35 years of service in industry. He lives in Michigan, near Detroit.

Julius O. Boos: I am originally from Trinidad and Tobago, W.I., and have lived in W.P.B., Florida for over 20 years. I am a long term member of the I.A.S., and have had a life-long fasination with all things natural, aroids being at the top of my list, but butterflies, reptiles, scorpions, beetles, etc. are always on my mind. I have served on the I.A.S. Board several times, and published a few papers in the Society`s Journal Aroideana. I particularly enjoy corresponding with the folks on Aroid-L, helping with advice where I am able. As a day job I work for a specialty Landscape company supervising crews, and we install all landscaping, from giant trees and palms to the sod on high end properties.

Andrew Schrimsher: Pharmacist by profession, I live on the edge of a beautiful lake in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains near Redmond, Washington. As a teen, I fell in with a rough crowd, of suspect character, and in so doing, wasted many years cultivating cacti and succulents, mostly *Euphorbia* and *Pachypodium*. One day about fifteen years ago, a photo of a man standing beside a single mature leaf of *Philodendron maximum* in all its glory, showed me the light, and realizing the error of my ways, I renounced leaves both fleshy and spiny for the only plants really worth growing, Aroids. I struggled along for a number of years, limited by geography and the lack of good sense among local nurserymen until finally able to attend the IAS Show/Sale for the first time in 2004. That trip was an absolute joy, a real eye opener, marred only by chance encounter with a suspicious Southern California marine biologist while waiting for the gates at Fairchild Gardens to open on Saturday morning, and it changed everything. The real world of Aroids, and the people who love them, was finally open to me. The following year, while perusing the offerings at the Palm Hammock Orchid Estates booth, I had the great good fortune to meet the lovely woman, Julieta, who is now my wife and the mother of our son Robert.

Ron Weeks is a founding member of the International Aroid Society. He has assisted in creating many of the aroid displays at the annual show and other events. He currently holds the coveted position of IAS truck driver. Interest in plants started in 1972 when he began work at Fantastic Gardens. Ron prefers aroids that do not smell foul or go dormant in the winter.

Lester Kallus: I'm not a plant professional but have enjoyed growing various plants since I was a child. In the mid to late 1990s, I was trying to learn more about a couple "exotic" plants I was growing. (In retrospect, they were probably about as exotic as *Alocasia macrorrhiza*!) The relatively new internet led me to Aroid-L and consequently to the IAS. Here I began communicating with both experts and with neophytes like myself. The mutual goal of learning more about Aroids has helped me progress in this "hobby" – a hobby which has now become an all-consuming passion. I've met the experts. I've met the neophytes. The IAS has become a place where we can help each other understand the physiology of the plants, learn how to grow the plants and learn how we can squeeze yet more of them into our limited growing spaces. I've served with the Board of Governors in the past and am looking forward to serving with the Board again to help keep the IAS as informative and helpful as it has been in the past.

Those members who will be unable to attend the annual members meeting to be held at 7:00pm on September 20th, 2008 at the Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in Miami Florida in conjunction with the annual banquet may vote for the board of directors by proxy if they wish. Whether or not you attend, the society needs your vote.

PROXY FOR ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

I certify that I am a member in good standing of The International Aroid Society, Inc., and I hereby appoint Enid Offolter proxy with full power of substitution and revocation, to attend and represent me at The International Aroid Society, Inc. annual meeting of to be held on September 20th, 2008. Enid Offolter may vote on my behalf only as indicated below on any business that may come before the body upon which I would be entitled to vote if I were present. This proxy shall be considered null and void if I personally attend the above mentioned meeting.

_____ _____ _____

Member Signature Date Print Name

Candidates for Board of Directors 2008-2011

(Check Boxes to Vote for up to 5 candidates)

□ Ted Held □ Andrew Schrimsher □ Lester Kallus

□ Julius O. Boos □ Ron Weeks □ _____

Mail to: IAS, P.O. Box 43-1853, South Miami, FL 33143, U.S.A.

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