

The Orchid Conservation Alliance
564 Arden Drive
Encinitas, CA 92024



ORCHID CONSERVATION ALLIANCE

June 27, 2011

Dear OCA Member:

Those of you with a good memory will remember that in the February newsletter I mentioned that “In New England, my daughter’s *Cypripedium acaule* is certainly well below freezing but will bloom very nicely in just a few months.” Well, I visited my daughter a couple of weeks ago and her orchid was certainly in bloom, but I got the identification wrong. It is *Cypripedium reginae*, and it certainly did bloom very nicely (See photo at right).

I have expounded frequently in this space on the value of reserves. Another example recently hit the news, although it is not an orchid. A press release from the ProAves Foundation in Colombia announced the rediscovery after 113 years of the Red-crested Tree Rat (*Santamartamys rufodorsalis*). It’s about the size of a guinea pig. This rodent, never before photographed, showed up at the lodge of the ProAves El Dorado Nature Reserve at 9:30 PM on May 4, 2011. Shown perched on the handrail of the lodge’s porch, it stayed for about two hours before calmly proceeding back to the forest. How amazingly cool is that ? No matter what you make a reserve for, birds in this case, the reserve provides a home for the unintended also. See www.proaves.org for the full story.

The OCA’s August Orchids in the Wild[®] trip to Colombia will take us to several reserves, nurseries, and a flower show. It starts August 4 in Medellin and runs to the 19th in Cali. There are still three of fifteen spaces available. For the full itinerary and other details, see our website at www.orchidconservationalliance.org and click on Orchid Trips. Lots of great orchids certainly will be seen and you’ll be able to buy some at the nurseries for shipment to the US. Will a Tree Rat make an appearance ? It might be in the neighborhood. Would you be disappointed if the *Telipogon* at the right substituted for the rat ? I think not.



Cypripedium reginae in Vermont.



Red-crested Tree Rat

Photo: Lizzie Noble/www.proaves.org



Telipogon sp.

As president of the Orchid Conservation Alliance, one of my principal duties is the raising of money. When you make a donation, you will always get a thank you note from me. Sometimes, however, a simple thank you note is really not enough and from time to time I will mention some person's exceptional efforts to help with fund raising for the OCA. Today I want to mention especially **Bruce Davidson**. Bruce is a member of the Santa Clara Valley Orchid Society and the originator of the San Jose Orchid Exposition. Bruce started the SJOE in 2005 as an event at the Holiday Inn Express where he works as Director of Sales. It quickly became too popular to continue in the space available at the hotel and it was moved to the Miraido Club House in San Jose's Japantown. Bruce has always had orchid conservation as a focus for the Exposition and he always has a fund raiser at the show for the OCA. As of this year, Bruce has raised over \$3900! Way to go, Bruce!



Bruce Davidson

Speaking of money ... Many of you have sent checks and for that the OCA is very grateful indeed. And I know the rest of you are just waiting for the right moment; maybe this is it. Is there one or several donors out there with very deep pockets indeed? The twenty-one members of the OCA who have traveled with us to Brazil have visited David and Izabel Miller's Macae de Cima reserve. Those of you who have read one or another of their books know it in a different way. It is roughly 650 acres of mostly primary Brazilian Atlantic rain forest less than three hours from Rio de Janeiro. Of all the Atlantic Rainforest that has ever existed, less than 5% remains today. David and Izabel have lived there for about thirty years with many of the orchid species we know and love, such as this *Sophronitis coccinea*. During those years they have welcomed many orchid enthusiasts, including myself, and if their visitors weren't orchid enthusiasts when they arrived, they were soon converted. I first went there in 1999 and I have been in love ever since. Just as everyone ages, so too have David and Izabel, and the land is now up for sale. The asking price is \$1,500,000. That is a substantial sum of money, but it is only \$2300 per acre. Besides the 650 acres, the property includes a wonderful house, a dormitory for students and overflow visitors, solar electricity, a utility outbuilding, and a swimming pool. If we can raise two-thirds of the price, the other third will be donated. Actually, I don't want the OCA to buy it. I want to buy it for the Reserva Ecológica de Guapi Açu, or REGUA, an organization founded by Nicholas Locke. REGUA is nearby, very competently run, stable, and also a locally respected ecological reserve. We would then run the Miller Reserve as a conservation research station and ecotourism destination. The annual costs are estimated at \$25,000 per year. I am sure that sum could be raised fairly easily for the first few years after which the station would become self sustaining from ecotourism and research. Relevant websites with more information on the Miller property and REGUA are <http://www.riotrust.org/home.html> and <http://www.regua.co.uk/>. This is our opportunity to secure a wonderful property for orchids, conservation, and lots of other species too, likely some as yet unknown. Who will break the ice and be the first donor ?



Soph. Coccinea
Izabel and David Miller

Best regards, Peter Tobias, OCA President