



Sex, Promiscuity and the Proliferation of Phenotypes

By Sergio Tejedor, HSPR Member

Not even heliconias are immune. Easy access to wide ranging sources and markets make our backyards and farms promiscuous (overloaded) spaces with sweeping varieties of heliconias. Sexual reproduction through cross pollination by visiting vectors, such as hummingbirds, bats, bees and insects is unavoidable.



'Rosa Salvaje'

This mode of promiscuous sexual reproduction (seeds) brings the phenotype infection or phenomenon. This phenomenon has taken hold in epidemic, pandemic proportions. It occurs locally, as well as internationally. The phenotype phenomenon has universal effects on heliconia inflorescences. The best cure is to publish, name and chat about this phenomenon. This is our drive to marvel at heliconias.

Following this short introduction you will find photographs along with names of different variations with color and shapes

(phenotypes) that have emerged at Santa Rosa Farm, Jayuya, Puerto Rico.

Natural origin (spontaneous seedlings):

1. *H. sp.* 'Rosa Salvaje'
2. *H. sp.* 'Wild Beauty'
3. *H. sp.* 'Abayalde'
4. *H. sp.* 'Red Yellow Petite'
5. *H. stricta* 'Orange Iris Bannochie'
6. *H. sp.* 'Beauty and the Beast'

Known origin (planted seeds):

1. *H. caribaea* 'Golden Heart' (progeny of 'Burgundy')
2. *H. caribaea* 'Green Apple' (progeny of 'Granny Smith')
3. *H. caribaea* 'Red Apple' (progeny of 'Granny Smith')
4. *H. champneiana* 'Taino Gold' (progeny of 'Maya Gold')
5. *H. stricta* 'Santa Rosa' (progeny of 'Fire Bird')
6. *H. stricta* 'Rosa' (progeny of 'Fire



'Wild Beauty'

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Dates to Remember

- HSPR Meeting and Christmas Party, 9:30 am, Sunday, December 14, 2008. Home of Dr. José "Falín" Abreu-Deliz, Cidra, PR. Don't miss it!
- HSPR "Meet the Experts" Costus Conference, 10:00 am, Sunday, March 8, 2009, with Dave Skinner at U.P.R. Mayaguez Campus.

Sex, Promiscuity and the Proliferation of Phenotypes (continued)



'Abayalde'

In conclusion, I theorize that most of the heliconia inflorescence color and shape variations observed in nature is the hereditary expression of seedlings. In theory and not in all instances, it can be attributed to hereditary traits brought through sexual reproduction, not hybridization. When variations in color take place, the tendency of the bloom is to undergo color tone variations, until reaching the original

- Bird')
- 7. *H. orthotricha* 'Dark Red Lehua' (progeny of 'Lehua')
- 8. *H. orthotricha* 'Pura Flama' (progeny of 'Tricolor')
- 9. *H. orthotricha* 'White Spot Tiger' (progeny of 'El Tigre')
- 10. *H. orthotricha* 'Tierra Alta' (progeny of 'Razz Berry')
- 11. *H. orthotricha* 'Princesa' (progeny of 'Imperial')

mother color or the omnipresent color within the variation as the inflorescence matures.



'Red Yellow Petite'

The following are examples of variation that occurs among *H. caribaea* 'Prince of Darkness' seedlings:

- 1. *H. caribaea* 'Prince of Brightness'
- 2. *H. caribaea* 'Painted Palette'

These expressions are solely based on observations. They do not presume or imply scientific evidence.



'Orange Iris Bannochie'



'Golden Heart'



'Beauty and the Beast'



'Green Apple'



'Taino Gold'



'Rosa'



'Pura Flama'



'Red Apple'



'Santa Rosa'



'Dark Red Lehua'



'White Spot Tiger'



'Tierra Alta'



'Princesa'

From Our Last Meeting

The HSPR's September meeting was hosted by Migdalia and Raymond Jerome at their spacious, two level tropical house in Canovanas. A breezy, cool day, full of camaraderie, was enjoyed by everyone who assisted the meeting. Thank you both for being so brave and hosting the meeting during such a turbulent period full of active hurricanes (Gustav, Hanna and Ike). A round of applause!

Yolanda Reyes (HSPR Treasurer) gave the formal presentation of our finances. Our society currently has a balance of \$2,052.24 in its bank account. Bob Castro (HSPR Vice President) followed up with a report on how our society has been growing internationally, around the world. Bob told us that during this year alone, we have acquired twenty new members - eight of them from foreign countries, including: Australia, France, Panama, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Canary Islands, India and several states in the U.S.A. (California, Texas and Florida). HSPR now has 105 active members. Thanks to the prestige of Bryan Brunner (Editor and Web Master), our newsletter and website are giving much to talk about globally. Our website is number one on the top of the list, when "surfing" for heliconia information on the internet is concerned. Our deep felt congratulations goes out to Bob and Bryan for such impressive data from our Board of Directors.

During the morning's presentation Ray Jerome spoke on the different talks that were given at the Heliconia Society International Conference 2008, held this past summer at Iquitos – Río Amazonas, Perú. Afterwards, I presented our members a brief report on the latest developments presented at the June HSI Conference. I informed our group of Ray F. Baker's (HSI Bulletin Editor) interest in celebrating the HSI Conference 2010 in Singapore and how Puerto Rico is seriously being considered for the 2012 conference site. ¡En Hora Buena! Manos a la obra.

Later on, I gave a PowerPoint presentation, with 230 color

photographs, of the Peruvian trip: the Pre-Conference Tour to Machu Picchu, Iquitos and the Post-Conference Tour on the Amazon River. Humorous anecdotes about our (Falín and I) personal experiences collecting heliconias in the wild, deep in the jungle, were shared with the enthusiastic group, who vicariously traveled with us during our adventures.

I announced to our members that we are inviting Dave Skinner (renowned world authority in Costaceae) as our Guest Speaker in the next "Meet the Experts Series". He will give us a PowerPoint presentation on the subject of his specialty and will also write an article, to be published in a forthcoming issue of the HSPR Newsletter. The conference will be held Sunday, March 8, 2009, at the auditorium of the Biology Department, University of Puerto Rico's Recinto Universitario de Mayagüez. Dr Duane A. Kolterman (UPR professor of botany and HSPR member) has volunteered to help us coordinate the activity, along with Bob and Gildreth, in Mayagüez. This meeting will be held on the west coast of the Island for the benefit of our members who reside in that area and find it difficult to travel to the east side. But, please, remember, we urgently need more volunteers to host future meetings on the west coast.

Since our recently elected secretary hasn't been present at the past three meetings, Amelia Villanueva has volunteered to help us with the post. She will help Bob Castro update all the information related to our members' list, and other tasks. ¡Muchas Gracias Amelia!

During our customary "Show and Tell" session, several of our members brought a lot of rare and colorful inflorescences, including gingers and bromeliads. To whet the appetite (the curiosity) of our members, and as a preface to our March 2009 meeting, I brought over a dozen samples of different varieties of costus that were currently flowering at my farm, such as: *C. stenophyllus*, *C. pulverulentus*, *C. erythrophyllus*, *C. curvibracteatus*, *C. speciosus* 'Variegata', *C. pictus*, 'French Kiss', and others.

Other members also contributed with rhizomes and potted plants for the raffle. There were so many plants to be raffled (the cherished *H. xanthovillosa* 'Shogun'; the all time favorite *H. chartaceae* 'Sexy Pink', *H. platystachys* 'Sexy Orange', *H. chartacea* 'Surinam Gold' and so many others), that in the end, Amelia and Gildreth (our raffle-persons), got so tired of calling out the prizes that they decided to give them ALL away. They asked the public to go ahead and select their own prizes. Can't beat being the proud owner of a rare collector's plant (a *xanthovillosa* sells for over \$100.00 a rhizome on the internet!) for just one dollar. A giant success! Everyone won!

Héctor Méndez-Caratini
President, HSPR

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PUERTO RICO, INC.**

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HSPR

*Promoting Zingiberales in
Puerto Rico since 1996.*



The Heliconia Society of Puerto Rico, Inc. was founded in 1996. The objectives of the society are to stimulate and promote the enjoyment and understanding of Heliconia and related plants of the order Zingiberales through education, research and communication, and to interact with the Heliconia Society International and other institutions which share similar interests, purposes or objectives.

President's Corner

As stated previously, Dr. José "Falín" Abreu-Deliz has generously accepted our plea to host the December meeting. Falín's lovely country house in Cidra - Home of the Braves, the Island's AA baseball champs - will be the site of our customary Christmas Party, where everyone comes to enjoy the festivities and have fun. Don't miss it, or you'll regret it.

During this up-coming meeting Yolanda Reyes, our Treasurer, will give our members an interesting talk, full of tips on "How to propagate heliconias from rhizomes". Also, I have managed to get several specimens from a rare costus collection which will be distributed among our eight precious HSPR/HSI Conservation Centers. So we ask our CC care keepers to please be present, so they can accept this generous Christmas Gift given to us by Dave Skinner - our March 2009 "Meet the Expert Series" invited guest speaker. ¡En hora buena!

As always, we're asking our members to bring plants and rhizomes for the raffle, for sale, or for our customary "Show and Tell" sessions. Plants for the raffle do not necessarily have to be rare Zingiberales. Orchids, as well as bromeliads, anthuriums, fruit trees and rare palms can also be brought to expand our growing collections. Everybody's been winning lately at "La Rifa", so don't be left out, become a winner!

We need the full cooperation of all our members to make our dreams come true. The "Meet the Experts" series of conferences are an important educational segment of our society for the benefit of our members. Please get involved in our society now. Don't forget that the money generated from The Raffle, along with the membership dues, goes out to pay for the expenses of our non-for-profit organization related to the printing and shipping of our quarterly newsletter, as well as to pay for our invited foreign guests and other future activi-

ties. Please contribute to make our dreams a reality. Our society needs you. Volunteer now/contribuye hoy.

See you at Falín's "Eternal Spring" country house.

Feliz Navidad 2008 y un próspero año nuevo 2009 para todos@s.

Héctor Méndez-Caratini
President, HSPR



'Prince of Brightness'



'Painted Palette'