

## CLUB NEWS



**Brian Monk**

### September 4 Monthly SAOS Meeting

by Lola Stark,  
seacuter@bellsouth.net

#### Welcome and Thanks.

President Jeannette Pacetti opened the meeting at 7:15 pm with 56 people present including 5 guests and new members Carol White, Linda Stewart and Marianne Moody. She thanked Jeanette Smith and Barbara Conrad for the refreshments

and reminded those present to "Drop a Dollar" to help pay for the refreshments. Gail Marshall reminded those whose birthdays are in September to pick up their birthday ticket from Christie. Jeannette reminded everyone to vote for their favorite on the show table, dropping your choice in the silver box and that Dick would announce the winner at the break between the program and the raffle. Librarian Penny Halyburton showed us a few books from the Library and suggested that members go to the website and order what they'd like for next month and asked members who have books out to please return them at the next meeting.

**SAOS Club Business.** The Keiki Club will meet at Sue and Terry's home on 16 September. The program will be Fall Preparations. We always have potting supplies and fertilizer on sale at meetings and at Hagan Ace from 9 am to 1 pm on the first Saturday of the month. SAOS will be at Hagan Ace on US 1 South on Saturday October 6. If you have questions or need help with a plant, please come by and see us! Jack Higgins is filling up the hours for the GardenFest at the Ag. Center on October 6 to 7. He still need a couple people to fill in for 1 hour periods. Please call him if you can help! It's indoors this time, and free to all who want to attend. There will be lots of booths to check out!



**Orchid Events.** The Gainesville Show which we plan to enter is October 13 and 14, so start grooming your plants now and join the fun!

**Program.** The program this month was "Brazilian Miltonias - Some like it Hot" with Brian Monk of Blullama Orchids, situated in Fort Lauderdale. Brian has given us several lectures and always is welcomed for his knowledge and humor! In addition to his orchids, Brian works as a veterinarian as well as photographer and this year has added flasking to his repertoire.



***Brian's presentation was packed with growing tips & highlighted with his great photographs.***

Miltonia orchids (Milt) and Miltoniopsis orchids (Mps), though similar in name are not the same and can be differentiated by their leaves. Miltonias have spaced pseudobulbs with two leaves. Miltoniopsis have pseudobulbs that are very close together and have one leaf. The flowers are similar, but Miltonia have smaller flowers and have narrower sepals. Miltonia come from the coastal area of Brazil and the Miltoniopsis from Costa Rica.

Miltonia have very fine roots, making watering often a necessity. Brian likes to grow in a plastic pot, situated into a clay pot to slow down their drying out. They are quite heat tolerant and a large differential between night and day temperatures is not required though it is enjoyed. He has grown them in temperatures down to 37 degrees without loss. The colors of the flowers will be deeper and the

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# CLUB NEWS



## Upcoming Orchid Events

### September

- 11 JOS Meeting, Topic TBA, 7 pm  
Rafael Romero, Plantio L'Orquidea
- 15-16 Ridge Orchid Society Show  
Lake Mirror Center, Lakeland
- 16 Keiki Club for Orchid Beginners  
Fall Preparations  
Sue and Terry Bottom's Home  
6916 Cypress Lake Ct. St. Aug 32086

### October

- 2 SAOS Meeting, 7 pm  
Fred Clarke, Sunset Valley Orchids  
Australian Dendrobiums
- 5 – 7 South Florida Orchid Society Show  
Bank United Center  
University of Miami, Coral Gables
- 6 SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm  
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine  
Repotting and Plant Clinic
- 6 - 7 Home and Garden Show  
Agricultural Center, St. Augustine
- 9 JOS Meeting, Topic TBA, 7 pm  
Fred Clarke, Sunset Valley Orchids
- 13-14 Gainesville Orchid Society Show  
Kanapaha Botanical Gardens
- 13-14 Fort Pierce Orchid Society Show  
Fort Pierce Shrine Club
- 19-21 Orchttoberfest at EFG Olrchids  
4265 Marsh Road, Deland
- 26-28 Delray Beach Orchid Society Show  
Old School Square
- 27-28 Brevard County Orchid Society Show  
Melbourne Auditorium

### November

- 3 SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm  
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine  
Repotting and Plant Clinic

- 6 SAOS Meeting, 7 pm  
Movie and Popcorn Night: The Judge,  
the Hunter, the Thief and the Black Orchid
- 13 JOS Meeting, Topic TBA, 7 pm  
Dr. Courtney Hackney

### December

- 2 JOS Christmas Auction, 5:30 pm  
Orange Park Country Club  
2525 Country Club Blvd, Orange Park
- 8 SAOS Christmas Auction, 7 pm  
Moultrie Trails Clubhouse  
121 Crooked Tree Trail, St. Aug 32086

## St. Augustine Orchid Society Organization

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# CLUB NEWS

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blooms will last longer in cooler temperatures. Treat them like you do Oncidiums and you'll be very happy with the result. They like 1500 to 3000 light candles, which translates to bright light, not full sun, a little shadier than Cattleya light. They like to be given magnesium twice a year, easy to do with the addition of Epsom salts to your fertilizer.

When selecting a potting mix, consider, as you do with your other orchids, how often you water. The mix must wet easily and stay moist, but should dry out before rewetting. Shallow, wide pots are best and they like to be hanging or mounted on cork or tree fern. These orchids ramble in their pots and their roots become very dense and should probably be repotted every year.



Brian went on to show us many, many species of *Miltonia* including *Milt. candida*, *Milt. clowesii*, *Milt. cuneata* (which blooms in May and June), *Milt. flavescens* (doubles its size

in a year and will cover an entire tree), *Milt. moreliana*, *Milt. regneli* (has a common alba form), *Milt. spectabilis* (which does very well mounted, blooms in late spring and grows very closely with *Milt. moreliana*). There has been a lot of introgression where these two species combine and share traits of their species parents. There are lots of natural hybrids between these species, but not many

hybridizers have worked with them. The highest number of progeny is *Milt. Anne Warne* with 47 offspring. The species



is not highly awarded either, as it is not well known. We had several plants on our Show Table that were great examples of several different species and hybrids and Brian encouraged us to take them to be awarded if possible.



**Brian presents Marcia Farrell with his raffle plant.**

**Meeting Conclusion.** Following our break, Dick Roth announced that Den. Hibiki grown by Helen Hoffman was voted the best on the Show Table. Our raffle and silent auction followed, led by Jack Higgins, Christie Peppard and Gail Marshall. Brian raffled one of his spectacular plants, Lc. Adolph Hecker, won by Marcia Farrell.



**Brian & Courtney talkin' orchids after the meeting**

Thanks to Watson Realty and Jeanette Smith for the use of their meeting space at 3505 US 1 South



# CLUB NEWS

## Keiki Club for Orchid Beginners

September 16 – Fall Preparations

Our last Keiki Club meeting for the year will be on Sunday, September 16. We'll review fall orchid care and how to prepare your plants for their winter home along with the minimum temperatures to which your orchids should be exposed. We'll also talk about some of the less common orchids requiring special winter care, including the pendulous dendrobiums and catasetum relatives. We're meeting at Sue and Terry Bottom's home at [6916 Cypress Lake Court in St. Aug](#) on Sunday afternoon from 1 to 3 pm. Bring a folding chair. Call 797-4360 with any questions.



## October 2 Monthly SAOS Meeting Fred Clarke, Australian Dendrobiums

Crowd favorite Fred Clarke of Sunset Valley Orchids located in Vista, California will speak about Australian Dendrobiums at the October 2 meeting of the St. Augustine Orchid Society. Our friends down under have been breeding their native Dendrobiums and creating some fantastic flowers, the word is out! Aussie Dens are easy to grow, tolerant of heat and cold, have fragrant flowers, and re-bloom from the old bulbs. They grow well with Cattleyas and in frost free areas they are perfect plants for the shade house. Fred will also cover the 'best practices' for growing these remarkable plants.

Fred, an AOS judge and orchid hybridizer, created Sunset Valley Orchids in 1995 as a natural outgrowth of a hobby. Sunset Valley Orchids is a boutique style nursery dedicated to excellent customer service and unique offerings of award quality orchids. Fred always offers a 10% discount on preorders, but has a special offer for [discounts up to 40%](#) if the Society order is large enough.



# INSPIRATION

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***Stan. King Kong 'Crypt' HCC/AOS***



# CULTIVATION



## Growing Tips for September

Dr. Courtney Hackney,  
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Dept. Biology, Univ. North  
Florida

Advice is a commodity easy to come by and this column is no exception. The problem comes in how it is used. The exact same words can have very different meanings to people based on their knowledge and past experience. In addition, each orchid grower has different goals and growing conditions that make generic advice dangerous.

During a recent speaking tour, a number of hobbyists told me stories of how badly their orchids had grown after they changed the way they were taking care of their orchids. In one case, a hobbyist altered their medium because a visiting speaker's plants were growing extremely well in a medium they had never used. In another case, a recommended fertilizer did not produce the growth expected and in fact caused problems they had never experienced before.



Almost every speaker I hear at society events cautions the audience to remember that their conditions may be different when providing cultural advice and the same is regularly done in this column. Even commercial growers, however, can succumb to the temptation to try something new.

Every year there are new media, new fertilizers and new treatments for pests and disease and I will confess that I usually try them all plus a few of my own. Occasionally, one works well under my growing conditions and it is incorporated into my general culture. Most of the time, however, it does not and becomes fodder for this column. The unfortunate part is the fact that what does not work for me under my cultural conditions may work under yours.



Becoming a great orchid grower requires some experimentation, but everyone needs a starting point. That may mean keeping new plants in the medium they came in or treating extra divisions with something new that just came on the market. During any experiment you still need to apply common sense. For example, if you try a new medium that is clearly more dense and holds water longer, you will need to think about all of the cultural aspects of that change. Longer intervals between watering is an obvious consequence, but you might also need less fertilizer or even a different fertilizer altogether.

The key point is to remember that your orchids are used to specific cultural conditions and have adapted to your conditions. Alter any one variable of culture, i.e. light, temperature, water quality or quantity, humidity, air movement, fertilizer, or media, and an otherwise successful cultural environment can become less so.

Some of the most successful orchid growers I know are best characterized as "minimalists", i.e. just give their orchids the basics and they rarely change anything about their culture. They follow the same approach when it comes to treatments of pests and disease and are very cautious when it comes to using new products, often waiting many years before even trying them. A number of products in the past seemed great but caused long-term problems for either orchids, the grower or both.

As one who provides the best insight and advice I have, I am not insulted when someone chooses not to follow my advice. The cautious person waits for others to try something new before they do.



# CULTIVATION

## Your Orchids in September

based on Robert Scully, Ned Nash & James Rose checklists, courtesy of the AOS



**General Growing Tips.** The welcome transition to fall is upon us. Once the temperature and humidity mediate, you'll notice many of your plants putting on a second growth spurt, reward them by watering a little more frequently with dilute fertilizer. You can expect the emergence of buds on many orchids from the cattleyas, evergreen dendrobiums and vandas to cycnoches, catasetums and miltonias. Select the ideal spot for the plant and place pendulous bloomers atop an inverted pot. Support the inflorescence as it emerges and open the sheath to prevent the accumulation of moisture around the developing buds. Consider switching to a dilute bloom booster fertilizer to prepare winter dormant orchids for their rest period.

**Cattleyas.** Despite the shortening days and lowering angle of the sun, you will see a flush of new root tips. Keep water and fertilizer in balance with heat and light. Check plants for potting needs for the last time. Any in dire need should be repotted as there is just enough of the growing season left for plants to establish before the days get short and cold. The spectacular, multiflowered *C. bowringiana* should be in sheath. Observe the puffy sheath structures often, they may need to be opened at the tip to encourage evaporation of condensation that forms around the buds. *C. labiata* and its hybrids will begin to flower this month along with the spectacular and fragrant forms of the species *C. percivaliana*.



**Cymbidiums.** Through diligent breeding programs, the cymbidium season gets stretched longer and longer. *Cym. ensifolium* hybrids will bloom first with the winter blooming standard sized hybrids soon to follow. Stake inflorescences and move plants to a shadier location to help the flowers develop.

**Dendrobiums.** This is the season for the phalaenopsis and canaliculatum type dendrobiums. The long, arching sprays of flat dark red-purple to white or pink saucer-like blossoms provide weeks of satisfaction. Fertilize with low nitrogen fertilizer for the best flowers. *Nobile*-type hybrids should continue to be maintained on a nitrogen free fertilizer program. You can start to gradually reduce watering frequency on the winter dormant dendrobiums.

**Oncidiums.** Of the three popular pansy orchids *Miltonia xbluntii*, *roezlii* and *spectabilis*, the latter is probably the most showy. The reddish purple flowers of *Milt. spectabilis* var. *moreliana* usually appear singly and last for weeks.

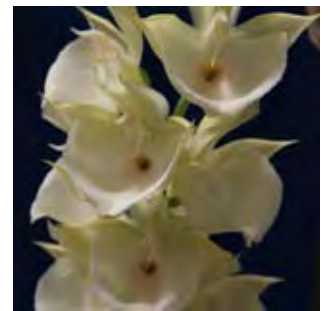
**Paphiopedilums.** Standard green-leaved paphiopedilums began to show their bloom sheaths this month. Late season heat waves can blast these early sheaths, so provide proper cooling and air circulation.

**Phalaenopsis.** The bulk of this season's growth is being ripened this month. Begin to watch watering more carefully and reduce feeding proportionately with reduced watering needs. *Phal. hieroglyphica* flowers reliably in the autumn. Its fragrant pale yellow flowers are distinctively marked with well defined brown lines on the sepals and petals. *Phal. equestris* and *Phal. lindenii* may also show their best now, the former may be everblooming through spring and the later will arouse curiosity with its attractively striped lip.

**Vandas.** This is the principal blooming season for *Euanthe sanderiana* (syn. *V. sanderiana*) and the foundation for large flowered modern vandaceous hybrids. Position plants so the inflorescences will grow out of the leaves toward the light. Help uncooperative types by placing a thin bamboo stick between the emerging inflorescence and the flattened form of the leaves, thereby forcing the raceme outward.

### Other Genera: Catasetum

**Relatives.** Autumn is typically the end of the growing season for the catasetum relatives. Plants may produce flowers from pseudobulbs with leaves, or in some instances, from bulbs that have already lost their leaves. Watch the undersides of the leaves to control spider mites which seem to find these delicacies just as the foliage reaches its prime or plants are about to bloom. Support the basal racemes of catasetums as they emerge and consider placing the pots on inverted pots to provide room for them to hang freely.



# CULTIVATION



## Orchid Questions & Answers

by Sue Bottom,  
sbottom15@bellsouth.net

**Q.** A few months ago, I accidentally cut off a blooming sheath from my orchid. I stuck it in some water until the bloom died. Now I have many new leaves that are starting to grow. Everything

I read says it will never reroot, but I hate to throw it away. Any suggestions?

**A.** Those are keikis, new babies, growing on the flower spike. The plantlets must be using a reserve of food in the flower spike to power their growth. You can't remove the keikis until they get roots. Perhaps you could get a flat and put an inch or so of sphagnum moss in it and lay the flower spike on top of it and see if the little plantlets will root. I can't say I've ever seen keikis form on a cut phal spike before, congrats!



**Q.** My *B. digbyana* has beautiful color, two new leads and 4 to 5 leaves as shown with what looks like a bud starting but no sheath ever appears. I suspect it needs more light because it hasn't bloomed since I got it in bloom several years ago.



**A.** *B. digbyana* (or *Rl. digbyana* as it's now called) and *Brassavolas* in general like the high end of *cattleya* light. If it hasn't bloomed for you, the most likely reason is that it's not getting enough light. It may be getting enough light to grow well, but not enough for it to manufacture enough food to produce the beautiful fimbriated flower. Try moving it gradually into more light. Insufficient light is the number one reason why orchids don't rebloom.

**Q.** I am seeing green stuff grow on the inside of the pot. Should I worry about this?



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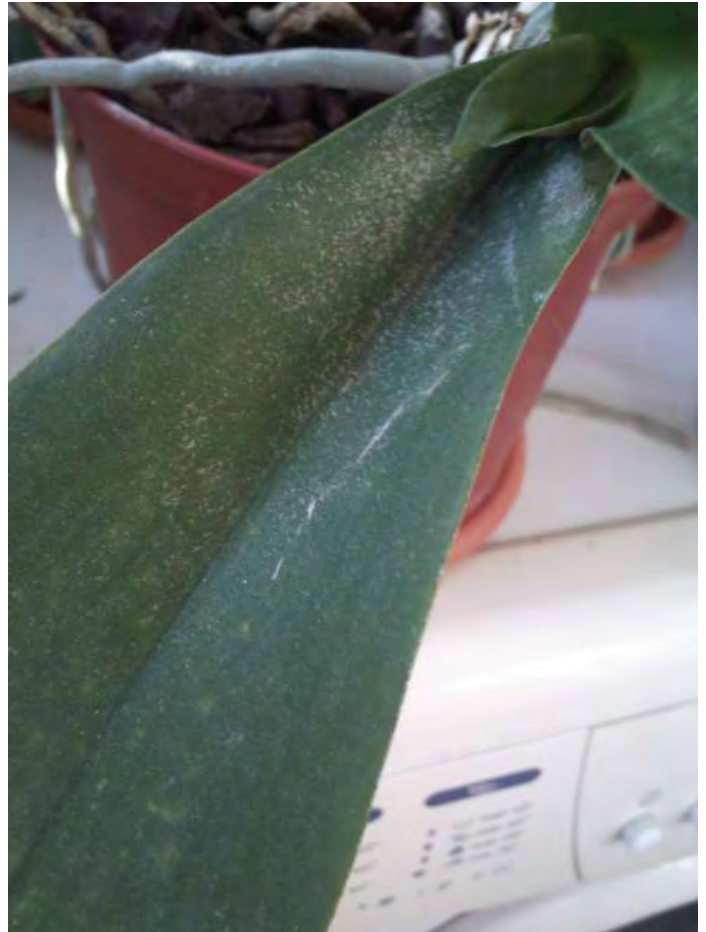




# CULTIVATION

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**A.** That's algae growing inside the pot because the pot is clear. If it bothers you, you can drop the pot in a decorative pot that will block the light or occasionally pour some dilute physan or 10% pool algaecide through the pot (say 1 tsp/gal).



**Q.** I have some problems with my phalaenopsis and dendrobiums. I don't know if the problem is caused by some little creatures or not. Can you help my plants?

**A.** I am afraid you have mites on your orchids. Try spraying upper and lower leaf surfaces with the home cure mixture of 1/3 rubbing alcohol, 1/3 409 or Murphy's Oil Soap and 1/3 water. Plants can also be sprayed with a miticide like Avid, Talstar or Kelthane following label instructions being particularly careful to contact all the undersides of the leaves. During warm weather, new generations mature every 6 days so repeat applications will be required, perhaps 3 applications at 4 day intervals.

**Ace Repotting Plant Clinic**

The first Saturday of the month from March through November, SAOS members are available to talk with you, answer questions and help you repot orchids.

Ace Hardware, 3050 US 1 South, St. Aug,  
9 am until 1 pm.



# CULTIVATION

## Watering Orchids During Each Season

Sue Bottom, sbottom15@bellsouth.net

One of the most frequently asked questions is how often should I water my orchids? Such a simple question, such a complex answer. The simple answer is that it depends on your potting mix, the type of orchid, where you grow and the season:

**Potting Mix.** Water retentive mixes like sphagnum moss and coconut husk mixes hold more water so they require less frequent watering. Depending on the type of orchid, you would water right before or right after the mix is dry when felt an inch or two below the surface of the media. Inorganic mixes like the SAOS coarse mix, aliflor, hydroton and lava rock do not retain much water and can be watered more frequently, a very important consideration if you are growing outside during the tropical storm season in Florida.



**Pseudobulbs vs. Fleshy Leaves.** Orchids with pseudobulbs like cattleyas and dendrobiums can store water and food in their thickened tissue similar to the humps on camels. These orchids can sustain themselves with their reserves during extended dry periods. Phalaenopsis and paphiopedilum orchids that have only thickened leaves and roots require more frequent watering because they rather quickly can deplete their reserves.



**Orchid Growing Area.** Many folks grow their orchids outdoors during the spring through fall and find a protected spot for them during the winter. If your summer growing area allows rainwater to water your plants freely, you will probably have great growth for most of the year. But during the August/September rainy season when it can be gray for 7 days in a row or rain for 14 days in a row, your plants can become waterlogged and suffer from rots and fungal diseases, particularly if they are grown in a more water retentive mixture.

## Growth Season vs. Winter Rest Period.

Orchids in rapid growth during the growing season may have to be watered two or three times more frequently than is required during the winter resting season. The plants need much more water and fertilizer to put on new growths and prepare the next season's blooms than they need during their winter nap.



Keen observation of your orchid's growth habits during each season of the year together with the climatic conditions will determine how much water and fertilizer your orchid needs to grow to its maximum potential.

**Spring.** In the spring, your orchids rouse from their winter rest and start to ramp up their growth rate. You'll start to gradually decrease the time between watering events. If you were watering every 7 days, you'll start watering every 6th day, then every 5th day. Of course, you'll extend the period between watering if the weather turns cool or gray and reduce the period during the glorious spring weather.



**Low Humidity.** When night time temperatures stay above 60F and day time temperatures stay below 90F, your orchids start to move into overdrive. You'll be able to tell by the flush of new root tips, where the growing green tips lengthen each day. During this time of year, the humidity is low so water rapidly evaporates. The orchids are watered very heavily during this time of year, the cattleyas may be watered every second day if they are potted in a clay pot with a coarse, freely draining, low organic matter mix. The amount of fertilizer is likewise increased to say 1/4 teaspoon/gallon with each watering event (flushing monthly with plain water).

**Night Time Watering.** You can switch to nighttime watering during the spring, when you water at dusk with plain water and apply your dilute fertilizer to the orchids the next morning. This way you can adequately hydrate your orchids as well as flush and fertilize at the same time.

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# CULTIVATION

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**Summer.** As we move into summer, the day and night time temperatures keep rising as does the humidity, beginning usually in the May to June time frame. When the day time temperatures rise above the 90 to 95F range, you'll see the orchid growth rate start to slow. You will water slightly less frequently than during the spring, cattleyas in coarse mix may be watered every third day with dilute water soluble fertilizer.



**High Humidity.** With the return to high humidity, watering in the morning is preferred so the vegetation will dry by nighttime which will help prevent fungal and bacterial problems. You should not water at night during periods of high humidity and low air movement.

**Tropical Storm Season.** With the advent of the tropical storm season, we must endure extended periods of rainy and gray weather. Allow your plants to go to a hard dry by adding extra days between waterings to help stave off fungal and bacterial infections. Black rot usually makes its appearance on cattleyas in July and will continue through August and September. If you're growing outdoors and cannot restrict the amount of water your plants receive, consider moving them to a protected area and applying prophylactic sprays of effective fungicides.

**Fall.** When the temperature and humidity mediate sometime after mid-September, you'll notice many of your plants putting on a second growth spurt. As in the spring, you'll see a flush of new root tips on cattleyas, deciduous dendrobiums, phalaenopsis and other non-winter dormant orchids. As long as the night time temperatures stay above 60F and the humidity is low, you can increase watering levels to spring levels to compensate for increased evaporation. Move to a lower fertilizer addition rate, say 1/8 teaspoon/gallon with each watering event (flushing monthly with plain water).



**Nobile, SemiNobile and Callista Section Dendrobiums.** Plants that enjoy a deep winter rest, like the nobile, seminobile and callista dendrobiums, should be eased into their winter rest by slowly decreasing the frequency of watering and either switching to a bloom booster fertilizer or restricting all nitrogen in the early fall.

**The Catasetinae.** In the late autumn, the catasetums, cycnoches, clowesia and mormodes will begin to enter the dormancy phase, caused by the maturity of the pseudobulb, shorter day length, cooler day/night temperatures and reduction in root zone moisture. The first signals you will observe on your plants are yellowing and browning off of the leaves. As a general rule, this will happen by mid-November, at which time you will stop fertilizing them and reduce watering by half. When all the leaves have dropped or by the end of December, stop watering the plants.

**Winter.** As the days get shorter and the light levels to your orchids are reduced, water and fertilizer requirements are also less. A general rule of thumb is water once rather than twice a week as you do during the summer. Phalaenopsis and paphiopedilums like to be moist but not wet. Cattleyas, dendrobiums and oncidiums like to dry between watering. Check the medium several inches down in the pot to see if it is still damp. If is damp, delay watering. It is especially important to watch your largest pots since they are the slowest to dry out after watering, especially when it is cool.

**Nobile, SemiNobile and Callista Section Dendrobiums.** Some people advocate not watering these plants at all during the winter until after flowering or new growth begins, others just restrict watering to once or twice a month to prevent the bulbs from shriveling. Do not fertilize these plants during this time period or you will encourage vegetative growth rather than flowering.

**The Catasetinae.** When all the leaves have dropped or by the end of December, stop watering the plants. Watering during dormancy should only be done if the plant bulbs shrivel severely. Usually a single irrigation is sufficient to restore the bulbs.



# ORCHID ADVENTURES



## Orchid Adventures Carib Orchids

by [Sue Bottom](mailto:sbottom15@bellsouth.net), sbottom15@bellsouth.net

Carib Orchids is a must stop if you're touring the orchid nurseries in the Homestead area. They specialize in growing cattleyas in a series of immaculate greenhouses. Their cattleyas are grown to perfection in a coarse potting mix in bright bright light with plenty of moving air. They offer well established clones in 6 inch pots that have multiple blooming sheaths on plants growing out of their pots. The cattleyas we've brought home from Carib are some of our favorites, like C. Maui Plum 'Volcano Queen' and C. Motte Spot 'Paradise'.



# SHOW TABLE



**Grower Sue Bottom**  
**Angcm. Longiscott 'OC'**



**Grower Dick Roth**  
**Ascda. Yarnisa Gold**



**Grower Courtney Hackney**  
**Phal. Samera var. coerulea**



**Grower Sue Bottom**  
**C. bowringiana 'Guatemala'**



**Grower Martha Weed**  
**Miltonia Xenia**



**Grower Sue Bottom**  
**Den. antennatum**



**Grower Lola Stark**  
**Milt. moreliana**



# SHOW TABLE



**Grower Sue Bottom**  
**Blc. Toshie Aoki x Pot. Lemon Tree**



**Grower Helen Hoffman**  
**Den. Hibiki**



**Grower Courtney Hackney**  
**Blc. Lake Murray x Blc. Michael Crocker**



**Grower Marv & Jan Ragan**  
**Pot. Caesar's Head 'Carolina Autumn'**



**Grower Sue Bottom**  
**Enc. radiata**



**Grower Courtney Hackney**  
**Blc. Cherry Suisse**

