



CLUB NEWS



Courtney Hackney

February 7 SAOS Meeting

by Janis Croft,
secy@staugorchidsociety.org

Welcome and Thanks.

President Bob Schimmel opened the meeting at 7:15 pm with 59 attendees. Bob thanked Jeanette Smith, Sandra Taylor and Elaine Hardy for the refreshments. He then reminded all to drop a dollar in the jar when they enjoy their

refreshments. We welcomed two guests along with 4 new members, Carol Raymond, Lourdes and Francisco Guell and Kathy Titus.

Our Membership Veep Linda Stewart was home sick so Lady Di recognized our 10 February birthday folks with free raffle tickets. Bob informed all that the Best of Show voting would occur between the Show Table discussion and program and encouraged all to vote for their favorite orchid.

Club Business. It's time to renew your membership, \$15 for individual and \$25 for family. You can also renew online using PayPal membership links on website or send money to friend and family on PayPal.

The next Ace Repotting Clinic will be on March 4th from 9 am til 1 pm.

The Keiki Club will be a Double Header: Building a Winterizable Shade Structure by Janis Croft and Building a Rainwater Collection System by Linda Stewart. The session will be on February 19 at Janis and Alan's home at 8311 County Road 208, St. Augustine 32092. Sue Bottom announced that we are considering changes to our Keiki Club and asked for suggestions of what you would like to see or do.

Email Sue (sbottom15@hotmail.com) if you need potting supplies and she will bring them to the next meeting for purchase.

There are orchid shows in Florida this Month:

Boca Raton Orchid Society - February 11 - 12

Naples Orchid Society - February 25 and 26

Best wishes to Nicky Makruski, who is moving to NC later this month, and a big thank you for donating plants to the Raffle Table.

Janis Croft spoke to the group about the Jacksonville Orchid Society show, A Palette of Orchids, coming up on March 18 and 19. She passed around a sign up sheet for exhibit plants and volunteers for setup and break down. Christine Peppard also passed around a sheet for volunteers to sell raffle tickets for an hour during the show.

Bob reminded all to check out the club's library collection on the website and email Penny (librarian@staugorchidsociety.org) your request and she will bring the item(s) to the next meeting.

Our AOS Representative, Suzanne Susko noted that the latest AOS Orchids magazine has a great article on Bulbophyllums. She also brought in an annual supplement that comes with the magazine subscription and told us the next one out in the Fall will be on Phalaenopsis. She then encouraged all to subscribe to AOS.



Show Table Review. Courtney Hackney again stated that this evening's show table could be an orchid show exhibit all by itself. He started by pointing out two huge Blc. Mem. Grant Eichler 'Lenette' plants in bloom. Both are from the same clone but one had been repotted last year and had smaller flowers than the other one which was bursting out of its pot. This shows you that repotting does affect the next year's flowering.

Continued on page 3



CLUB NEWS



Upcoming Orchid Events

February

- 11-12 Boca Raton Orchid Society Show
Safe Schools Institute
- 14 JOS Meeting, Orchiata Bark, 7 pm
Graham Ramsey, Orchiata
- 19 Keiki Club Get-Together, 1 pm
A Winterizable Shade Structure, Janis
Designing a Rain Barrel System, Linda
Janis Croft and Alan Winer's Home
8311 County Road 208, St. Aug 32092
- 24-26 Naples Orchid Society Show
Moorings Presbyterian Church

March

- 4 SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine
- 4-5 Tampa Bay Orchid Society Show
Egypt Shrine Center
- 7 SAOS Meeting, 7 pm
Growing Orchids in Cypress Mulch
Steve Arthur, Orchid Hobbyist
- 12 Keiki Club Get-Together, 1 pm
Potting Mixes and Repotting Orchids
Sue and Terry Bottom's Home
6916 Cypress Lake Ct, St Aug 32086
- 14 JOS Meeting, JOS Show, 7 pm
Show Committee Update
- 18-19 Port St. Lucie Orchid Society Show
Port St. Lucie Community Center
- 24-26 Gulf Coast Orchid Alliance Show
Naples United Church of Christ

April

- 1 SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine
- 1-2 EPIC Celebration of Spring
Annual Flower and Garden Expo
Ag Center, St. Augustine
- 1-2 Orchid Society of Highlands County Show
Bert J. Harris Ag Center, Sebring

- 4 SAOS Meeting, 7 pm
Spring Orchid Auction
- 7-8 Englewood Area Orchid Society Show
Englewood Methodist Church
- 11 JOS Meeting, Topic TBA, 7 pm
Tom Wise, Johns Island Orchids
- 16-17 Tallahassee Orchid Society Show
Doyle Conner Building
- 23 Keiki Club Get-Together, 1 pm
Picnic and Orchid Swap
Memorial Lutheran Church
3375 US 1 South, St. Aug 32086

St. Augustine Orchid Society Organization

President	Bob Schimmel schimmelr55@bellsouth.net
Vice President Events	Dianne Batchelder ladydi9907@aol.com
Vice President Membership	Linda Stewart lindstew@hotmail.com
Vice President Programs	Sue Bottom sbottom15@hotmail.com
Secretary	Janis Croft croftie1984@gmail.com
Treasurer	Bill Gourley wgourley@bellsouth.net
Directors at Large	Mary Colee mcolee4@gmail.com Susan Smith 2manysmiths@comcast.net Suzanne Susko suzsusksso@bellsouth.net
Exhibit Committee Chair	Janis Croft croftie1984@gmail.com
Librarian	Penny Halyburton phalyburton@comcast.net
Newsletter Editors Webmasters	Sue and Terry Bottom sbottom15@hotmail.com tbottom14@hotmail.com



CLUB NEWS

Continued from page 1

The Clowesia Jumbo Grace was just spectacular and covered totally with flowers. He has difficulty growing these and referred all to confer with Sue Bottom if you want to grow one successfully. They require a very dry wintering in order to flower splendidly. He had a friend that would put these along with Catasetums under his house bareroot for the winter to be sure they never received water. He would then pull them out in the spring with spectacular results.

Courtney next pointed out a deep dark purple *Catyclia* Anne Anderson 'Halcyon' that smells like a classic rose and commented that this was the darkest purple he had ever seen in this variety. In contrast, there was an orange Lc. Orange Trick x Epi. ciliare in full head of flowers that was just amazing. From this large plant, he moved on to the very petite flower of the *Bulb. saltatorum* var. *ciliatum*, commonly referred to as the "feather bulbo". One needs a magnifying glass to see the cantilever lip on each flower. He then pointed out a very small orchid, *Laelia lundii* 'Laurelwood,' that he admits to having difficulty growing. He suggested using the cultural info in *Orchid Wiz* to help one understand the climate and location of where an orchid grows naturally to help you replicate those conditions for successful growing. This orchid naturally grows on rocks and this plant was being grown on lava rocks. Check out the photos of our show table examples at the end of the newsletter and on the SAOS website.

SAOS Program. Our planned speaker was ill so Sue Bottom and Courtney Hackney pitched in and pulled together a talk on Re-Blooming Your Favorite Orchid. All orchids flower at times that coincide with their specific pollinators activities. They receive environmental cues such as changes in day length and temperature as well as the occurrence of rainy or droughty conditions and a combination of any or all of these. Plants also have internal cues that help determine when they will flower. The plant's health is critical. While growing they store excesses of nutrients and water and use this to fuel their basic metabolism. If there is not enough excess energy to grow roots and leaves, there will not be any left for blooms. So you must have healthy plants in order for them to bloom. Many growers remove seed pods to prevent the consumption of all that energy that goes into growing a seed pod, otherwise the next year's flowering may result in smaller flowers and less of them.

One of the main points of making your orchid happy is to provide them enough energy from the sun; most orchids need a minimum of 12 hours of sunlight per day. Courtney noted that plants are "cold blooded" meaning that when it is warmer, their metabolic rate is greater than when it is cooler, so a drop in night time temperatures allows plants to conserve energy from the day's exposure to sun and

moisture. Our orchids spend their energy first on growing—new roots, new leaves, and lastly, new flowers. One exception to this is if your orchid is failing. Then it might burst forth in flower and then die hoping that its flower's pollen will be used to produce seed.

If you ask yourself why my plant didn't bloom, consider these factors: Did it get enough light during previous growing season? Were environmental cues provided? Is your plant in decline? Are the roots healthy? Almost never is failure to bloom caused by a lack of fertilizer.

Insufficient light is the #1 reason an orchid doesn't re-bloom. The plant's leaf color is a good indicator—the darker green, the less light it is likely receiving. You also need a vibrant root system and good air circulation (from fans or growing outdoors). As always, lots of water, water, water on the day you water. What days you water depends upon your potting media, organic vs inorganic, etc. Many plant need a 5 to 20 degree day to night temperature change for best growth. Courtney talked of phalaenopsis growers having huge refrigerated areas where they wheel in their orchids for a week or so, bring them out and in a few weeks, the plants are spiking. When it comes to fertilizer, follow the weekly, weakly theory. Fertilizer is just not *that* important.

Finally, know the background of your orchid. Where does it grow in nature, when does it flower, how much rainfall occurs and in what seasons, what are the temperature variations, etc. Make copious notes from this initial research and then try to replicate conditions in your growing situation. Sue Bottom suggested getting different color tags to represent environmental cues. Plants that need shady conditions vs those that need bright light would get two different color tags so you can readily know where to place your plants to meet their light requirements. You can do the same for the other cues. In conclusion, if you still have difficulty re-blooming send your plant pictures with description to info@staugorchidsociety.org.

Meeting Conclusion. Harry McElroy announced the Member's Choice Award as a two way tie between Suzanne Susko's Dtps. Green Field Red Zuul 'Harlequin Queen' and Sue Bottom's Lc. Orange Trick x Epi. ciliare. The Raffle table closed out the evening. Thanks to those that volunteered to stay and clean up the room.

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



CLUB NEWS

January Keiki Club

Staking Orchids & Orchid Toolbox

About a dozen folks met up at the Garage Mahal for the first Keiki club get together of the year. Terry Bottom did a hands-on presentation on the do's and don'ts of staking your orchids. He approaches it as if he is behind the viewfinder on his camera, always imagining how to orient the flower so it will present itself best in a photograph. The best time to stake and orient the flowers is when they are newly forming, but sometimes the flowers get away from you and then you have to be very careful about reorienting the spikes for fear of breaking them. Mary talked about the handy different things she keeps at her fingertips when working in her growing area, like plant ties, stakes, household chemical sprays, cutting tools, disinfectants, etc. We talked a bit about some other tools growers keep handy, like magnifiers and tweezers. It is always fun to learn how others grow their orchids and manage their collections.



February 19 Keiki Club

Double Header along the River

The Keiki Club will be on Sunday, February 19 at the home of Janis Croft and Allen Winer along the River. We're going to have a second double program.

Topic 1: A Winterizable Shade Structure

Moderator: Janis Croft

A traditional greenhouse is great for the winter cold months, but it can become an oven during the summer heat. Janis will show you how she built her shade house that is open to the elements during the growing season and closes with a retractable curtain when it's cold.

Topic 2: Designing a Rain Barrel System

Moderator: Linda Stewart

Our well and tap water contains lots of dissolved salts that can build up around your orchid's roots. You can correct this problem by collecting rain water to water and flush your orchids. Linda Stewart will show you how.

Where: Janis Croft and Allen Winer's Home
8311 County Road 208, St. Augustine 32092

When: February 19, 1 to 3 pm

Time to Pay Your 2017 Dues

It's that time again, membership dues for 2017 are now due. We'll be collecting dues through the March meeting, after which we'll update our 2017 SAOS roster and email distribution list. Dues are \$15 for an individual and \$25 for a family. If you can't come to the meeting, you can mail your membership check to SAOS c/o Bill Gourley, 807 Kalli Creek Lane, St. Augustine, FL 32080. You can also pay online using PayPal, using either the individual or family membership links on the website or the [PayPal send money to friends and family link](#) using the SAOS email address info@staugorchidsociety.org. Thanks, and welcome back!



March 7 Monthly SAOS Meeting

Growing Orchids in Cypress Mulch

Steve Arthur of Steve Arthur Orchids is visiting St. Augustine from his South Carolina home to talk about growing orchids in cypress mulch. Steve uses shredded cypress bark mixed with perlite to grow his orchids. He reports that the mix is long lasting, requires less fertilizer, is low cost and widely available. He'll talk about how to vary the mix to grow different types of orchids, and produce pseudobulbs that are bigger, plump up faster and have multiple leads each year.

Steve began growing orchids over thirty years ago. His current greenhouse in Graniteville, SC, covers about 5,000 square feet of growing area. He grows a mix of things but tends to focus on Cattleyas and has been making crosses for years. In his greenhouse lab, he also does contract work (such as sowing and harvesting seeds) for other nurseries. Steve is affiliated with Carter & Holmes, frequently selling plants for them at the shows, and is currently their Lab Manager.

Orchids will be available on the sales and raffle tables. Friends and guests are always welcome.



INSPIRATION



Epi. parkinsonianum

© Terry Botta '17



CULTIVATION



Orchid Questions & Answers

by Sue Bottom,
sbottom15@hotmail.com

Q1. How do you fill your tea bags with the Purely Organic fertilizer? I put mine in seed trays open, fill all through a funnel and then close.

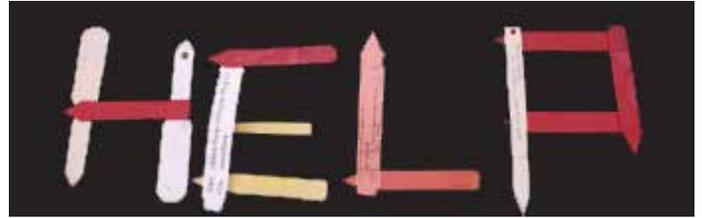
A1. That looks like a good way. I like it when my Stepmom is in town and she fills them up for me. She just scoops up the Purely Organic with a 2 inch plastic pot and pours it into the tea bag. I got the large bags last year, but I like the size of your tea bags better.



Q2. I grow phalaenopsis orchids indoors in Pennsylvania. I have some that have tiny lighter, round spots on the leaves that seem to have a dot in the center. I have sprayed them but it doesn't seem to make a difference.



A2. I am a bit stumped, that bull's eye pattern of damage looks like thrips damage where the thrips pierced the leaf and the sunken spot formed around it, but I wouldn't



expect thrips in your home in PA in January. Brook wrote back that leaf damage is not new and she suspected thrips from when the window were open in the summer, as she had thrips in the herb garden and in the potato fields.

Q3. The leaf and plant look limp and it has dark spots and white fluffy things. Is there some way to save this plant, or should it be disposed of?



A3. You have several things going on. The white fluffy things are mealybugs, and they are very difficult to get rid of. For a household cure, you can spray the tops and bottoms of leaves and all leaf crevices with isopropyl alcohol each week, for at least a month. The leaf limpness means the plant is dehydrated, which means that it is either not being watered frequently enough or the roots have been damaged and cannot take up water. This often occurs when the potting mix starts to degrade. You'll have to knock the plant out of the pot to check the roots to determine the problem. The browned and necrotic part of the leaf is dead, and this could have been caused by several things, like water pooling on the leaf, sunburn, etc. Whether you choose to rehab this plant or discard it, you may want to understand what caused the problems so you can prevent them from happening in the future.





Phalaenopsis – Blooming and Bud Drop

Courtney's Orchid
Growing Tips

Winter is officially here and with the short gloomy days comes the beginning of Phal season. Phalaenopsis can put on a spectacular floral display. Several nurseries in the Carolinas are well known for greenhouses full

of blooming Phalaenopsis during winter and spring. It is not unusual for a single, well-grown, mature plant to have 15-25 four-inch flowers that can last for months. Under the right conditions, they will continue to add new blooms through the spring and into summer. But what are those conditions and how can the hobbyist create them inside the house or in a greenhouse?

First the hobbyist must remember that there are different breeding lines among Phalaenopsis and they are not all equal when it comes to holding onto their flowers. The multiflora-type that is bred from Phal. equestris is among the most temperamental. This line of breeding can produce individual plants with 50 or more 2 ½ inch flowers on magnificent upright spikes. Unfortunately, rapid changes in humidity, temperature, or a little unburned gas byproducts can cause these plants to drop buds and flowers.

Many types of gas heaters do not fully vent all combustion gases. During very cold weather these gasses can accumulate leading to flower and bud loss, especially among equestris hybrids. Semi-alba Phalaenopsis are included in this group because they are bred largely from Phal. equestris. Although larger, they share the tendency to drop buds and flowers. This group is also warmer loving than other breeding lines and likes to be kept at or above 65 F at night. Pink Phals, especially those with beautiful mottled leaves, and those with Phal. stuartiana, another multiflora type, also like warmer temperatures. They share, with Phal. equestris hybrids, the tendency to drop buds and flowers when rapid changes in temperature or humidity occur.

Standard Phals, those bred largely from Phal. amabilis, seem to have the most resistance to environmental fluctuations and perform the best for hobbyists. Greater substance in the flowers and a genetic background that includes ancestors that tolerate cool nights gives them additional tolerance. While they also prefer to be 65F at night, they seldom drop flowers if temperatures drop to 60F but may do so if it gets much cooler.

Hobbyists growing indoors are plagued by low humidity during cold weather because home heating systems dry air, reducing the relative humidity of the air. There can also be problems when Phals produce flower spikes indoors. Do not let the spike get too near lights or touch the cold glass on the window, as the tip of the spike will be damaged. Most commercial growers tie spikes once they begin to form buds. In the windowsill, plants have a tendency to grow spikes in unusual directions so it may be necessary to tie spikes before they begin to form buds.

Stakes should be tied just below the first bud if you want the spike to arch gracefully. To accomplish this place the uppermost tie about halfway between the last two nodes on the spike before the first bud. Be careful to avoid blocking the little sheath on these nodes as branches can emerge from the small soft tissue hidden there. Do not tie the spike tightly near the top until the first flower is open. Typically, the spike will elongate until buds have fully formed. As flowers appear it may be necessary to add weight to the rear of the pot, especially if the plant is in a plastic pot. Many growers put plastic pots inside clay pots to avoid having the whole plant crash off the windowsill or bench as flowers open.

What do you do if your Phals have not begun to spike yet? This is not an unusual problem for indoor growers. First be sure these Phals are not summer bloomers. Other Phals with a strong dose of Doritis, correctly called Doritaenopsis, may also begin flowering later in the spring or early summer. Otherwise healthy Phals should be in spike now. If they are not they may not have gotten enough light during the growing season. Or they may not have gotten the environmental notice that it is time to flower. Nature sends that message with decreasing day lengths and cool nights. Plants inside or under lights may not get the message. Try shortening the day length and cooling them at night by shutting off vents slightly to keep them cooler at night.

Paphs are also preparing to provide flowers. These spikes are usually easier to manage, as they do not typically grow as long. Given the long life of these flowers it is worth spending some time to get them oriented properly. One odd thing about Paphs is that many also begin new root growth while in flower. New root growth is always a good time to repot even if most good growers usually advise against repotting Orchids while in flower. If you do repot it will be necessary to tie the flower spike so that the plant stays firmly in place while new roots are growing.

Note: Dr. Courtney Hackney wrote a monthly column of his orchid growing tips for about 20 years; we're reprinting some you might have missed, this one from February 2001.



CULTIVATION

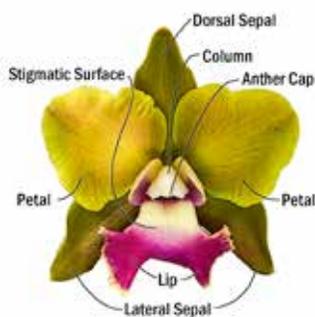
What Is an Orchid?

by Dr. Carl Withner, Canadian Orchid Congress

How many times have people asked me if an iris isn't some kind of orchid? No. Orchids are not lilies, amaryllids, gingers, cannas, bananas or irises, but all are closely related. These families are grouped together to form the monocots of the botanical world, and the orchids are noteworthy for having the most specialized flowers, habits and life histories in the entire group.



Flower Characteristics. The major distinction of the orchid flower is the column, the single reproductive structure formed by a fusion of stamens and pistils that are separate in the flowers of the other families mentioned above. Though there are basically three stamens and three pistils, usually only the anther of one stamen remains functional, bearing its pollen at the tip of the column. The stigmatic surface, the part of the column that receives the pollen, is just below it. The orchid flower has three sepals, alternating with three petals. The sepals protect the flower in the bud, but become colored and petal-like when the flower opens, often giving the impression of a six-petaled flower, or five petals plus one that is different. The different petal (and one always is) is called the lip. The lip petal is marked by unusual form, veining patterns and usually a series of keels and protuberances called a callus. The shape of the lip and its callus - sometimes the whole flower - is highly adapted for insect attraction with resulting pollination. In fact, the evolution of the orchid family closely parallels the evolution of pollinating insects.



Fruits and Seeds. If pollination takes place, a seed pod forms that may require as long as 14 months to develop. Usually about nine months will suffice, and the pod may have literally millions of seeds in it. The seeds are almost dust-like in size and are easily carried by wind and water for great distances. The embryo of the orchid seed is so tiny and underdeveloped, in comparison with other

types of seed, that special conditions are necessary for its germination and growth. Until the little ball of undifferentiated cells becomes green, forms a growing point and finally begins to develop tiny leaves, it must live in symbiotic association with a favorable fungus. It is not surprising that from the many seeds produced in a single pod only a few survive to grow to adulthood - a process that may occur in a few months but with most species takes from six to twelve years.



Orchid Evolution. Orchids most likely originated in the warm regions of southeastern Asia and spread from there throughout the world. While the majority remained in the tropics, others, in migrating, became adapted to colder climates by means of seasonal growth that responds to changes in temperature. In the tropics, some orchids can grow more or less continuously, but most are seasonal there, too, responding not to winter vs. summer, but to the effects of alternating wet and dry periods. Such factors must be considered in the culture of these plants.

Growth Patterns. The orchid plant itself has a variety of forms that merge into three basic patterns, one terrestrial, the other two epiphytic (epi=upon; phyton=plant). Terrestrial orchids in both tropical and temperate zones form leaves and flower stalks from underground corms or rhizomes that enable the plant to winter over. In fact, the name orchid is from the Greek orchis, meaning testis, in reference to the appearance of these underground parts. Theophrastus, Dioscorides, and other ancients of Europe and Asia Minor were the first to describe such orchids. In those days people were interested in the presumed medicinal uses of plants and whether or not they had souls, and thought that the shape or structure of a plant "told" what it was good for.



Continued on page 9



CULTIVATION

Continued from page 8



In the tropics, the habit of most orchids is to perch on the branches of trees, or sometimes rocks, from which they derive support but nothing else - they are not parasites. If the orchid grows constantly from the tip, and propagates itself by forming offshoots (known as "keikis" from their Hawaiian name) from the base of the plant, we refer to the growth pattern as monopodial (single-footed). Monopodial orchids are found especially in the forests of southeastern Asia, the Philippines, Madagascar (Malagasy) and Africa. If the plants grow seasonally, responding to wet and dry periods, sending up a new branch each season from the main rhizome, they are considered sympodial (with feet). Such orchids are found especially in the New World, but also where the monopodial types grow.

Learning to grow orchids in cultivation and to recognize the different sorts are among the intellectual challenges constantly presented by these plants. No other family involves so many aspects of horticultural activity, from laboratory to greenhouse or garden. No other family can present some 30,000 species and some 75,000 hybrids for the grower to choose from. To anyone who becomes attached to them, orchids soon become much more than botanical curiosities—they are likely to become a way of life.

Note: This article by the late Dr. Carl L. Withner was published in the Canadian Orchid Congress [newsletter](#), a great searchable source of orchid information, in February 2001.



Words of Wisdom

by Sue Bottom, sbottom15@hotmail.com

Can't you just hear your mother giving you this advice, with an orchid twist?

A Fool and His Money Are Soon Parted

– The orchid books often advise growers to learn about the needs of different types of orchids and select orchids that are most well suited for your growing conditions. Get real! Everyone has brought



home a new and irresistible orchid and then struggled with making the plant thrive.

Think of all those determined people trying to grow *Zygopetalums* in Florida. Sometimes you learn how to grow orchids by making cultural mistakes that end up teaching you what conditions that orchid requires. And sometimes you learn the definition of insanity by continuing to buy beautiful orchids that will never achieve their potential in your environment.



The Redland International Orchid Festival is a big East Coast show with over 50 orchid vendors from all over the world. Orchid shows are a great place to find that special orchid you've been coveting.

Caveat Emptor – The best place to buy orchids is from a commercial orchid grower who actually grows his or her own orchids, and sells them at orchid society meetings, shows and often online on their own website or perhaps eBay. Commercial growers and hybridizers are a dwindling population that are an invaluable source of interesting plants, information and growing tips. Meet the orchid vendors, visit their nurseries, learn who has the healthiest

Continued on page 10



CULTIVATION

Continued from page 9

plants and then buy from them. Everyone has bought plants from the grocery or big box stores or from strangers online and sometimes it works out well and sometimes not so much.

Do As I Say, Not As I Do – You spend so much time with your orchids, watering, repotting, admiring, why not make staking your orchids a part of your routine? Start staking when the buds are developing so the flower can be encouraged to orient itself to its best advantage. You want to lift and separate, sort of like a Playtex bra. Don't wait until the flowers are formed and say if only...



Those orchids always look so great in the exhibit. When you take the time to stake them, they really present themselves well. Problem is, who has the time?

Grower Know Thyself – Your watering habits and choice of potting mix or lack thereof are irreversibly intertwined. It may be true that that Aerangis will do best if it is grown mounted rather than potted. But if you get busy with your day job and only have time for watering once or twice a week, that mounted Aerangis will wish it had been potted with some mix that would hold a little moisture while you are toiling away for orchid money. Accept the time constraints life imposes on you and adjust your cultural conditions to accommodate that reality, your orchids will thank you!

A Man Works from Sun to Sun, an Orchid Grower's Work Is Never Done – Have you ever walked through your growing area and said everything has been repotted, everything is watered and fertilized, my new buds are staked, there are no weeds in the orchid pots or under the benches, and I've followed my preventative spray schedule? Me neither.

All Work and No Play Makes Jack a Dull Boy – It's all worthwhile when you see the first bloom on that seedling or smell that fragrant orchid. Spend time puttering around in your growing area so you can enjoy the sight and smell

of your orchids. Bring blooming orchids into the house so you can enjoy them longer.

Cleanliness Is Next to Godliness – Keep your growing area clean. Remove ferns, oxalis and other weeds from orchid pots before they take over and smother the orchid root system. Keep the area under the benches weed free to make sure pests cannot proliferate there. Spray the outside of the pots and under benches with one of the fungicides containing quaternary ammonium compounds periodically to sterilize and help keep diseases in check. Sterilize your cutting tools between plants to prevent spread of disease.

All Good Things Must Come to an End – Your orchid bloomed and it was beautiful, absolutely beautiful. Some flowers last longer than others but all eventually will fade and it's time to remove the bloom spike. Most orchids enjoy a bit of a rest after blooming, let them recoup some of the energy they expended putting on that floral show. Keep them a bit drier. They'll let you know when they're ready to start growing again when you start seeing those little green root tips.

An Ounce of Prevention Is Worth a Pound of Cure – Preventing disease is much better for you and your orchids than treating disease in your growing area. Watering your plants properly and providing enough air movement will prevent many diseases from occurring, which will help minimize the need for chemicals as well as your exposure to those chemicals while applying them. Keen observation of your orchids will keep you attuned to their health and the adequacy of the cultural conditions you provide them.



The vanda houses at RF Orchids are always immaculate. You can learn a lot about how to grow orchids by just looking at how Robert Fuchs and Michael Coronado grow their plants.



CULTIVATION

A Stitch in Time Saves Nine - Never put off until tomorrow what you should do today. If you're watering, don't think about what you have to do this afternoon, look at each plant as you water it. Stop when you see a problem. Put the watering wand down and move the plant to your triage area, then resume watering. When you're done, you plant will be sitting in a high profile place to remind you that you now must address whatever problem it has.

You Gotta Be Cruel to Be Kind – Remember when you used to visit the 50% off table to buy all the bloomed out or sick orchids? When you used to pot up all the back bulbs cause you couldn't bear to throw them out? Eventually you tire of running an orchid infirmary and decide only to give bench space to healthy, vigorous plants that will bloom well for you. As you get more proficient in the fine art of culling, each plant you grow becomes a treasure rather than a liability.

Don't Be a Bull in a China Shop – Want to be invited back to someone's nursery? Learn the rules of greenhouse etiquette, no bags or heavy coats in the growing area, don't touch the flowers, don't pull the tags out of the pots, don't move the plants around. Ask the grower if you have a question about this or that plant, keep your elbows tucked in and keep your hands in your pockets.

Learn from Your Mistakes – The sin isn't in making a mistake, it's making the same mistake twice. If you discover your roots are a sodden mess when repotting, ask yourself why. Did I water too much? Did I wait too long to repot? Is the mix too water retentive? Should I have added more Styrofoam or lava rock at to the bottom of the pot for improved aeration and drainage? If you can figure out why something bad happened, you might just be able to prevent that problem from happening again.

Knowledge is Power – The more you learn, from people, from books, from observations, the better you'll be able to grow your orchids. Say you read about some minerals being translocatable within the plant (like magnesium) and some not (like calcium). Pretty dry stuff, but if you don't supply enough magnesium to your plant it will rob magnesium from the older leaves to fuel the growth of the new leaves. In the spring, when the new growth begins, if you see an inordinate amount of leaf yellowing on the older growths, this little nugget of information would suggest you have a magnesium deficiency. Break out the Epsom salts!

Change is Constant – We're always tinkering with our potting mixes, fertilizers, snake oils and growing conditions. Many moons ago, I grew cattleyas in a pure tree fern and redwood bark mix, an open freely draining mix that would last for 4 or 5 years in the pot. Then the cost of the tree fern increased as the availability and quality decreased to



Ruben Sauleda was my first orchid god. I also turn to Courtney Hackney, Alan Koch, Roy Tokunaga and Fred Clarke for advice and guidance, and am always learning new things from our Orchid Society speakers. If you can, offer to host the out of town speakers. It's like getting a house call from the orchid doctor.

the point where snow mold would occur in the pots within 2 years of repotting. Gradually more and more inert materials like hydroton, sponge rock and charcoal were added to the mix in lieu of most of the tree fern. Now redwood bark is no longer available. This year I am substituting the coarsest Orchiata bark for about half of the dwindling amount of tree fern in the cattleya mix. Who know what the mix du jour will be next year?

Everything Old is New Again – Cypress mulch is back in vogue again. The South Florida orchid growers used it for many years, growing many of the terete vandas in it. Now different growers are using it for cattleyas and other genera, either by itself, as an additive or as a top dressing.

Trust Your Instincts Luke –The speakers at your Orchid Society and your fellow orchid growers all will recount experiences of what worked for them under their growing conditions. This is a beautiful thing, but it doesn't mean that what worked for them will work for you. If someone's suggestion seems interesting, try it, experiment with it and with variations on the theme. Listen to what everybody says but in the end, trust your instincts and do whatever seems like the right thing to you.

Live Long and Prosper – Grow your plants well and they'll reward you with bloom after bloom. To paraphrase the Irish blessing:

*May the bench rise to meet you,
May the wind keep away the black,
May the sun shine warm upon your leaves,
The rains fall soft upon your roots.
And until you bloom again,
May the orchid gods hold you in the palms of their hands*



HOME & BACKYARD



Orchid Adventures Tamiami International Orchid Festival

The Tamiami Orchid Festival is now a three-day affair, running from Friday through Sunday. We saw many of our favorite orchid vendors there from all over the lower 48 as well as Hawaii. There was more than a handful of international vendors too. We saw lots of beautiful blooming orchids as well as unusual plants that you do not often see offered for sale. Amidst the shopping frenzy, there was a little time to chat with our orchid friends. Save up your mad money, the Jacksonville Orchid Society Show is coming up in March!



SHOW TABLE



Terry Bottom

Grower Janis Croft
***Laelia lundii* 'Laurelwood'**



Terry Bottom

Grower Marilyn Costanzo
Den. Spider Lily



Terry Bottom

Grower Suzanne Susko
Slc. Barefoot Mailman



Terry Bottom

Grower Bob & Yvonne Schimmel
***Epi. polybulbon* 'Golden Gate'**



Terry Bottom

Grower Sherrie Jenkins
Phal. NOID



Terry Bottom

Grower Sue Bottom
***Cl. Jumbo Circle* 'Claire' AM/AOS**



Terry Bottom

Grower Sue Bottom
***Cl. Jumbo Grace* 'Jumbo Orchids'**



SHOW TABLE



Grower Sue Bottom
Lc. Orange Trick x Epi. ciliare



Grower Suzanne Susko
Dtps. Green Field Red Zuul 'Harlequin Queen'



Grower Courtney Hackney
Blc. Mem. Grant Eichler 'Lenette' HCC/AOS



Grower Harry & Celia McElroy
Cym. Dick Swain



Grower Bob & Yvonne Schimmel
Cym. Mimi 'Lucifer'



Grower Tom & Dottie Sullivan
Lc. Mari's Magic

