

**Subject:** Catasetinae plant culture 2020 October Newsletter  
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## Sunset Valley Orchids It's October! Catasetinae plant culture

As we can all tell the weather is changing and your Catasetinae should now be in their final stages of growth. This was an excellent year for Catasetinae; many growers from around the country reported a fantastic flowering season.

The first signs of dormancy will soon be evident, with some areas of the country already see the start of the dormancy. Soon it will be time to stop fertilizing and begin to decrease irrigation frequency, in effect lengthening the dry period in-between watering, mimicking the end of the rainy season.

In nature the rainy season is nearing its end, the rains are less frequent, nights are cooler and day length is shortening. These are the environmental factors that start the dormancy process. With less rain fall fewer nutrients are moved to the root system (thus stop fertilizing) and the roots stay dryer longer (thus reduce irrigation frequency). This increasing dryness is an indicator to the plant to harden off their pseudobulbs in preparation for the 2-4 month winter dry period. Hardened off bulbs are better at storing water through dormancy. Humidity should be maintained at 40-60% however brief periods outside this range is not a problem. Maintain light levels and keep night temperatures at or above 55 degrees.

No re-potting at this time, the roots are well-developed and will resent being disturbed. If you were negligent (how could that be?) it is better to wait until next spring at this point. As soon the new growth begins in the spring, that's the time to re pot, as you can now see the best way to position your plant in its new pot. With Catasetinae the roots follow the new growth usually several weeks behind. In nature, the roots grow out and then the rains start. So, as I have said many times, "wait to water until the new growth has new roots 3-4" long." This gives the best results as large healthy root systems make for strong healthy bulbs and better yet, excellent flowering.

One of the great attributes of the Catasetinae is their deciduous nature, if you experienced leaf damage, don't worry, as those leaves are going to drop off and next spring/summer you will have a new set. How many orchids are that forgiving when the leaves are damaged?

When walking around the greenhouses these days it looks like almost everything is blooming! This is my favorite time of year as there are Catasetums in flower, the Cycnoches are blooming, and the first of the Mormodes are in spike! But there is still more to look forward to as the blooming season for Clowesia rosea hybrids begin flowering in December and January. These late season plants bloom on deciduous bulbs, with inflorescences cascading over the side of the pot with many fragrant flowers.

Here at SVO we had a remarkable growing season, the size of the 3" plants are the largest I have ever seen! Many plants are spiking now. This is a great

time to order as the 3" pots will all be ready for 4" pots next spring.

If you haven't done so, please post your pictures to these Facebook group pages:

- [Catasetinae \(Can\)](#)
- [Catasetinae Fever](#)
- [Catasetum Brazil](#)
- [American Orchid Society](#)
- [Sunset Valley Orchids](#)

I am always available to take your calls and E-mails, so please feel free to contact me. I love to talk orchids!

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