



CLUB NEWS



Linda Stewart

September 1 Meeting by Karen Ford

Welcome and Thanks. President Tom Sullivan opened the meeting at 7:00 pm with 38 attendees and informed us that SAOS members had sanitized the tables and chairs prior to the meeting. He then thanked Lady Di, Dottie Sullivan, and Ann McKenna for organizing coffee and treats and reminded members to “drop a dollar” to help defray

the costs. He also pointed out the locations of the Silent Auction Table, the SAOS Sales Table, the Raffle Table, and the Vendor Sales Table where orchids were available for purchase from George Hausermann of EFG Orchids.

Membership VP Linda Stewart welcomed 6 new members: Dolly Charron, Jill Nawrocki, Judie Armstrong, Josh Jones, Beckie Burkett, and Alex Romero. Raffle tickets were given by Lady Di to two members who have October birthdays. Acting as our Sunshine Coordinator, Linda asked us to let her know by email at info@staugorchidsociety.org if we knew of anyone needing a cheering-up or get-well card.

Club Business. Sue Bottom informed us that Courtney Hackney’s Virtual Show Table would happen on October 13th, the second Tuesday of this month. She also noted that although the Catasatum Competition Grow has ended, and the first-to-bloom and best-grown plants have been awarded, please continue to photograph your future blooms and send photos so that Frank Clarke can judge and award the best flower when he visits next year

Sue announced that she, Linda Stewart, and Dottie Sullivan will recommend next year’s slate of officers at the November meeting, which will be held on Election Night. This November’s meeting will feature a fun night playing “Bingo for Orchids”. Sue announced only one Orchid show this month: Orchttoberfest at EFG Orchids in Deland, October 16-18



Jim Roberts will be hosting an open house this weekend, October 10-11, in Myakka City.

Howard noted that we have more than 60 books in our library, which is currently underutilized. He recommended that members explore the SAOS website and request to borrow or even a light meter, and he will bring them to the next meeting. He recommended the following titles: Bloom Again and Again, Florida Orchid Growing Month by Month, How to Grow Miniature Orchids, and of course Courtney’s book on Cattleyas.



George Hausermann of EFG Orchids hosted the Sales Table.

SAOS Program. Linda Stewart, a much-valued member of SAOS, was our guest speaker. Her talk was titled “Transitions and Adaptations”, and she described the lessons she has learned while moving her orchids from Plantation, Florida in 2008, to Cracker Swamp Dirt Road in East Palatka in 2012, and finally to her smaller home in Palatka in 2019.

In Plantation, Linda’s growing areas were outdoors: on her screened porch, her front courtyard, and in a well-lit, enclosed atrium. She grew lots of “minis and mounties”, including 35 varieties of Neofinetias, and numerous Tolumnias. Her biggest challenges included lighting and air movement on the porch, which she addressed using artificial lights and two oscillating fans. She kept her outdoor plants warm during cold winter months using plastic sheeting, a trouble light, and old sheets. The orchids in her atrium only required that she leave her living door cracked a little on cold nights!

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Upcoming Orchid Events

October

- 10 Florida North-Central AOS Judging, 1 pm
Clermont Judging Ctr, 849 West Ave.
- 10-11 Coastal Carolina Orchid Society Show
Hope's Treasure Chest, James Island, SC
CANCELLED
- 13 JOS Meeting, Program TBA, 7 pm
Joshua Jones, Jax Orchid Society
- 13 SAOS Virtual Show Table, 7 pm
Courtney Hackney on Your Computer
- 16-18 Field Trip to EFG Orchtoberfest
4265 Marsh Road, Deland 32724
- 24-25 Gainesville Orchid Society Show
CANCELLED
- 31-1 Delray Beach Orchid Society Show
CANCELLED

November

- 3 SAOS Meeting, 6:30 pm
Play Bingo for Orchids
- 7-8 Fort Pierce Orchid Society Show
CANCELLED
- 10 JOS Meeting, Program TBA 7 pm
Speaker TBA
- 14 Florida North-Central AOS Judging, 1 pm
Clermont Judging Ctr, 849 West Ave.
- 14-15 Deerfield Beach Orchid Society Show
CANCELLED
- 17 SAOS Virtual Show Table, 7 pm
Courtney Hackney on Your Computer

December

- 1 SAOS Christmas Auction, 6:30 pm
Memorial Lutheran Church
3375 US 1 South, St. Aug 32086
- 5-6 Fort Pierce Orchid Society Show
River Walk Center
- 6 JOS Christmas Auction, 5:30 pm
Orange Park Country Club
2525 Country Club Blvd, Orange Park

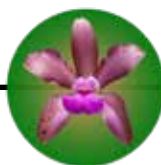
- 12 Florida North-Central AOS Judging, 1 pm
Clermont Judging Ctr, 849 West Ave.

January 2020

- 2-3 Sarasota Orchid Society Show
Sarasota Municipal Auditorium
- 5 SAOS Meeting, 6:30 pm
Brandon Silvester and Charlie Rowell
Home and Backyard Orchid Growing
- 8-10 Fort Lauderdale Orchid Society Show
Fort Lauderdale/Broward Convention Center
- 9 Florida North-Central AOS Judging, 1 pm
Clermont Judging Ctr, 849 West Ave.
- 12 JOS Meeting, Topic TBA, 7 pm
Speaker TBA
- 15-17 Tamiami International Orchid Festival
Dade County Fair Expo Center

St. Augustine Orchid Society Organization

| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
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Palatka Greenhouse

When Linda retired and moved to Palatka in 2012, she suddenly had a lot more space, including a 20' X 30' semi-automated greenhouse her brother Steve designed. The challenges of this location included excess humidity and horrible well water with a high pH (8.0) and 1100 ppm dissolved salts. Linda addressed these issues by reducing the misting from daily to every-other-day and collecting rainwater in large barrels. The rainwater was a huge improvement, and with a Siphonex system she was able to incorporate fertilizer and grow her orchid collection until it filled the new space.

But then it was time to downsize! Linda sold her rural home in April 2019, farmed-out her orchids to her brother and numerous friends, and eventually moved into a smaller home in Palatka in the late summer. To accommodate her many orchids, Linda currently uses a variety of spaces including a pergola, numerous aluminum benches, and some wood-framed wire fencing for hanging potted and mounted specimens. She continues to collect rainwater, adding fertilizer with her trusty Syphonex, and during the cold winter months she moves plants to a temporary pop-up greenhouse, covers her pergola with clear plastic tarps, and brings her more cold-sensitive Oncidium and Phalaenopsis orchids inside.



Summer setup for pergola

Linda summarized her lessons as follows: when you move, you will likely lose some orchids. You will probably also need to adjust your growing medium, your water, and your fertilizer. But the good news is, the majority of your orchids will adapt and within 6 months they'll be ready to bloom again!



Winterized pergola



Rainwater collection & pumping system

Meeting Conclusion. Following a refreshment break, the winners of the Silent Auction and Raffle tables were announced. The delightful evening concluded at 8 pm. Thanks to all who assisted with cleanup after the meeting!



Link to photos from meeting: <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmRfLAWH>



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Virtual Show Table

Courtney has continued his review of our blooming orchids in his mid-month Virtual Show Table presentations on Zoom. If you miss the live talk, the video of Courtney's presentation is uploaded to YouTube, with a link posted on our newsletter page. [Send](#) pictures of your blooming orchids by the Saturday before our meeting so they can be compiled for the newsletter and virtual presentation. Send in pictures any time before October 31st.

Catasetinae Competition Grow

Send pics to info@StAugOrchidSociety.org when your plant flowers and we'll archive them until next year, when Fred Clarke will choose the winner of the best quality flower. Stay tuned!

Covid Considerations

Everyone has been schooled on the guidelines on social distancing during the pandemic. Do a temperature check before attending events. Four people can space themselves about 6 ft apart at each of the large 8 ft diameter circular tables. Bring you face masks for when you are in close proximity to other members. We look forward to resuming our regular activities.

American Orchid Society Corner

Webinars

October 6, 8:30 pm, Everyone Invited
Greenhouse Chat Orchid, Q&A - Ron McHatton
October 20, 8:30 pm, AOS Members Only
Paphiopedilums – [Dave Sorokowsky](#)

Orchids Magazine this month:

Paph. sukhakuli - Steve Gonzalez-Costa
Growing Orchids is a Partnership - Allan Watson
Zealand Tree Fern - Graham Ramsey
Racemosae Section Bulbos - Charles Wilson

Photos of Latest AOS Awards



November 3 Monthly Meeting Orchid Bingo

We are going to try something new, Orchid Bingo. Bring some cash to buy your bingo cards so you can play for chances to win orchids as prizes. Our meeting is on election night, and we will be electing our 2021 officers too. Come join the fun, we'll get you home in plenty of time to watch the election returns. We will have our normal raffle at the end of the meeting. Friends and guests are always welcome!

When: Tuesday, November 3, 6:30 til 9 pm

Where: Memorial Lutheran Church
3375 US 1 South, St. Aug 32086



Keiki Club – Orctoberfest at EFG

How about a road trip down to EFG in DeLand for the Orctoberfest? George Hausermann Jr. is a fourth generation orchid grower and frequent visitor and speaker to the SAOS. Orchids and tropical plants will be offered for sale by EFG. There will be a food truck.

When: October 16-18, 9 am to 5 pm

Where: [EFG Orchids](#)

[4265 Marsh Rd, DeLand, FL 32724](#)



INSPIRATION



Aerides Puchinello

© Terry Botto



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Orchid Questions & Answers

by Sue Bottom,
sbottom15@gmail.com

Q1. Does the amount of sunlight exposure dictate frequency of male/female flowers on *Catasetum* plants? And, is it common to have both sex flowers on one flower stalk?

A1. Many commercial growers insist that female flowers are produced because of high light conditions. Fred Clarke has a more nuanced opinion, he says the the most vigorously growing plants (which of course require good bright light) are the ones that have female flowers because the plant has to be very



healthy to be able to produce seeds during the dormancy period. Taxonomist Francisco Miranda suggests that early in the season, light levels are higher as the tree hosts may not be fully leafed out and the *Catasetum* leaves are not fully formed so they are not shading the plant. You would also think early season female flowers would have greater evolutionary success because they have more of the active growing season to form the seed pods. My experience is that many of the *Catasetinae* form female flowers on the first flowering of the season with more male flowers later in the summer. Is this because I have both time release and Purely O mixed in with the sphagnum moss, so there are lots of nutrients in the early season (which is also the season of the most direct sunlight) and then the fertilizer gets consumed so later in the season (as the sun intensity diminishes) the flowers tend to be more male? In the in-between period, I get both male and female flowers. My experience suggests it's plant vigor plus seasonal bright light that sets the stage for female flowers. It may not be the norm to have both male and female flowers on the same inflorescence, but it is certainly not uncommon.

Q2. As I was enjoying my *Vanda* plants this weekend, I noticed some of the roots has this white fuzzy looking thing. Not sure what it is, mealybugs maybe? I used a Q-tip dipped in isopropyl alcohol and tried to rub them off. It seems to be attached pretty good so I used a little more



effort. The root tip skin came off but the fuzzy stuff is on the skin that came off real tight. Some of the ones attached itself to the other side of another root. It is not easy to scrape them off.

A2. This one was over my pay grade, so I turned to the good Dr. Hackney for his thoughts: "It looks like an attempt by the root to attach to something. Not sure exactly what it is called, but epiphytic orchid roots produce a substance which glues them to objects. I suspect this is what it looks like, but I seldom see it in the pot. When I detach some roots from a clay pot they actually pull some of the clay material off. That is what it looks like to me, which fits her description when she tried to remove it."



Q3. This plant of mine has leaves that keep getting yellow from the tip. I removed the affected tips many times but the issue is not solved. Is it because of some micronutrient deficiencies?



A3. Nutrient deficiencies are hard to diagnosis, but I don't think that is what is happening. It could be a fungal problem like anthracnose, but if it were anthracnose, you'd see lots of tiny spots (spores) in the dead tissue. My best guess is that it is salt toxicity, and the plant is trying to shed salts from the tissue. Looks like it's potted in coconut husks, and they can be loaded with salt unless you give it three 24 hour soaks and drain the water in between to remove the salts. Some even treat the coco with calcium nitrate to replace the sodium with calcium.





Temperatures for Orchids

by Dr. Courtney Hackney

One of the most frequently asked questions is “What temperature does this orchid like?” Many catalogs specify a temperature for species offered for sale usually classifying them as Cool, Intermediate, or Warm loving. These descriptions can be deceptive as some warm loving species may do poorly under hot conditions while intermediate species do great under these same conditions. There is much more to growth of an orchid than just average temperature. Hobbyists must understand the natural habitat of a species, which includes extremes, in order to interpret stated temperature preferences.

Equitant oncidiums are considered by many hobbyists to be difficult to grow. These beautiful miniature orchids are found primarily on islands in the Caribbean where it is always warm. Most books on growing these species and their hybrids suggest putting them up high in the greenhouse close to the glass where they get lots of light. The suggestion is that they also be grown mounted and avoid letting the plants be wet at night. While the Caribbean may be closer to the equator than most of the U.S., temperatures are usually milder than those in the Southern United States in summer. Constant trade winds tend to moderate the high temperature and as a consequence, equitant oncidiums are not tolerant of the “hot” mid-day conditions in a greenhouse. Night temperature also tends to be moderated by cool ocean breezes. The natural condition for these species is a very small change in temperature during each 24-hour period with just a slight seasonal temperature change.

Visitors to the islands in the summer learn quickly how showers come and go, even in the evening. Equitants are frequently wet from tropical rain at night. They also get soaked by dew each night. Being wet at night does not kill them despite everything you may read. In nature though, there is always air movement and plants dry quickly.

In winter, conditions change in the Caribbean. While the wind still blows, rains are infrequent but humidity is still high. Emulate this environment and you will be a successful equitant grower. Small variations in daily temperature, never cold, never hot, constant air movement and high quality water delivered very early in the morning or at night. Because most equitant species come from a

similar climate, their hybrids typically respond to the same conditions. As with most orchid groups, hybrids usually are more tolerant than are the species from which they were derived.

Unfortunately, that is not always the case. For years I avoided paphs because most books listed them as preferring intermediate or even cool conditions. Imagine my surprise when Paphs such as Paph rothschildiana, thrive in my hot greenhouse when equitant oncidiums suffer. Had I known more about the natural conditions in which this species is found I would not have been surprised. Its reputation for requiring cooler temperatures relates to flowering, not growth.

Most of the time hybrids are not classified according to temperature preference. While hybrids generally grow better than the species from which they came, their temperature preference may be difficult to determine without some knowledge of species in their backgrounds. Recognition of the requirements of an orchid do not mean that they cannot be grown in your greenhouse, only that you recognize the daily conditions in your growing area and place plants with different climatic conditions in a suitable location. More constant temperatures are always found lower in the greenhouse, cooler temperatures near fans, etc.

Most hobbyists do not have the luxury of a growing space where specific conditions are maintained for all types of orchids. That does not mean that you should give up growing one group because your conditions match another group better. Many area growers leave orchids outside in fall to stimulate growth and flowering. Cymbidiums that are supposed to be cool growing grow well in the heat as long as they are provided lots of shade. These same species and hybrids also flower well if left outside until just before frost. Some growers claim that the best flowers come during years in which they have light frost on their leaves. Look into the natural habitat of the species behind a hybrid and the reason these practices work will be obvious. The great thing about orchids is that there is always something new to learn about them.

It is now definitely time to begin the change in cultural practices from a growth mode to something else, no matter what kind of orchids you have. The day length is now less than 12 hours and the sun is getting ever lower on the horizon. This means less time to grow so water and fertilizer less. Go back over the orchids in your collection and do the same as last year for those that flowered well. For the ones that did not, spend some time with books or ask your orchid growing friends what to do. Blooming an orchid that would not bloom for you has rewards beyond the flowers.

Note: Dr. Courtney Hackney wrote a monthly column of his orchid growing tips for about 20 years; we are reprinting some you might have missed, this one from October 2002.



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An Environment for Growing

by Rebecca Tyson Northen



Orchids are grown in many climates and many different ways - in greenhouses, orchid cases, basements with artificial light, in garden rooms or sun porches and even on open window sills. And among the many kinds of orchids there are groups that like the same conditions and others that have individual peculiarities.

The big genera, those with many species, have a wide geographical range. Even some with few species have members that inhabit different climatic areas. Thus among epidendrums, laelias, oncidiums, odontoglossums, dendrobiums, bulbophyllums and many others, you can find kinds that will accommodate themselves to cool, intermediate or warm conditions. The largest numbers of orchids occur in the tropics between 3000- and 9000-foot elevations, where temperatures range from intermediate to cool. At the upper end of this range, and above it, occur those that are truly intolerant of heat; and below it are those that require greater warmth. Some genera more or less limit themselves to one elevation belt. With some exceptions, vandas, phalaenopsis and their relatives are found in the warmer regions, while lepanthes, masdevallias and pleurothallis grow in greater numbers in the cool heights. Paphiopedilums and miltonias have both cool and intermediate kinds, while cattleyas are true intermediate plants.

It is impossible to imitate exactly the native habitat of every orchid: for example, the gentle atmosphere of a cloud forest with its softly moving air and waves of mist rising through the trees; but we do the best we can. Fortunately, orchids have some built-in tolerances which they are not called upon to use in nature but which allow them to grow and flower under conditions somewhat different from those in their native haunts. While some can function only in a narrow range of temperature and light, many will accept

a wider range. What may be the threshold for one may be the top requirement for another, so they can be grown together.

Three general temperature ranges will accommodate most species and hybrids in cultivation. Night temperatures are the more critical, so these are given as the basis for temperature groups: for the cool-growing ones, nights as low as 45° F. but usually close to 50°; for the intermediate group, nights of 55° to 60° or perhaps to 62°; and for the warm ones, nights not below 60°, preferably hugging 65°.

Heating the greenhouse or other growing area can be accomplished by various means - hot water systems, a number of types of natural gas heaters, and electric heaters. Gas heaters must be completely vented to the outside. Fumes from incomplete combustion can blast buds and ruin flowers. The heat should be gentle. It is better to run heaters at a low level and have them on more or less continuously than to have sudden blasts of high temperatures followed by sudden drops. The closer you can come to maintaining the temperature within the given range, the better it is for the plants.

A temperature alarm run by batteries and connected to a bell in the house is a must for a greenhouse. It has a dial with hands that can be set for an upper and lower limit. Between them is a hand that responds to the actual temperature, and when it touches either of the set hands it rings the bell, warning that something is wrong and that the temperature has dropped too low or risen too high. Many a grower has lost plants through freezing or burning when he could have saved them if he had been alerted.

The desired night temperatures are easier to maintain during the winter or cool weather than they are in the summer. The choice of kinds to grow must be somewhat limited by what the summer nights offer in your area. You would not select those that need really cool nights if your summers are very warm; kinds from the intermediate or warm groups would be a wise choice. Amateurs in warm climates who have a modest number of plants, and even some who have fairly large collections, often put their orchids outdoors under trees or some sort of shade material during



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the warm months. The air cools off to a greater degree in the open, and the night breezes and cool dews are a help. Plants grown under artificial light especially receive a boost from an outdoor vacation, partly from having true sunlight for a change, and partly from being in the open air.

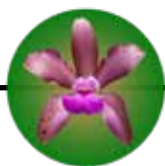
The physiological activities of plants are influenced by temperature. During the day they carry on photosynthesis, the manufacture of sugar, their energy food. Respiration (the use of food, similar to our own use of food) goes on continuously day and night, releasing the energy necessary for growth and for the manufacture of myriad chemicals - elaborate carbohydrates, proteins, enzymes, hormones, fats, pigments and so forth. These activities are speeded by rising temperatures, but beyond 85° they are thrown off balance. Excessive temperatures bring about too rapid use of food, with little left for growth, and if they prevail for long periods the plants become depleted; food that should go into growth is used up. Day temperatures should be kept in a range that allows photosynthesis to build a reserve of food; night temperatures should be somewhat lower to allow this reserve to be used for growth. Thus day and night temperatures should be in balance to allow all of the plant's activities to proceed normally and so bring about vigorous growth and flowering. Plants can, and often must, tolerate temperatures over 85° during the hottest days - it's sometimes simply unavoidable - but while they may come through without apparent harm, it does them no good. It is better to control the temperature as much as possible and to keep it under that upper limit.

Ideally, days should run about ten degrees higher than nights. During cloudy weather, the rise can be a few degrees less. It is easier to limit day temperatures during cool weather than in the warm seasons. In the winter, sun

heat is welcome, It may be provided by lath framing or any number of other methods not only because it is more gentle (less drying) than artificial heat but also because sunlight during the short days is beneficial. During spring, summer and early fall, the sun can build up heat in the greenhouse (or bay window or sun porch) quite dangerously. Plants absorb the light and become internally heated, even becoming warmer than the surrounding air, so that in too bright light they can become burned (actually cooked). It is usually necessary to use some sort of shading to reduce the light intensity and concomitantly the inside temperature. The shading can be a standard commercial compound, sprayed on the glass or fiberglass or put on with a paint roller; grids made of wood or aluminum lath fastened over the greenhouse; or any of a number of types of patented shade cloth. Never use green or blue plastic film for shading. The thickness of the sprayed compound, the spacing between laths or the density of the shade cloth is governed by the intensity you wish to admit; and this varies with the needs of the orchids grown. More light must be cut out in hot regions than in cool ones, unless a cooling system is used, but the intensity should not go so low as to impair the vigor of the plants, about which more in a moment. During cool weather, higher light intensity can be allowed and less shading is necessary. Where winters are dull, the glass can be entirely clear (shading scrubbed off), but where winters are bright some shading may have to be retained.

In addition to shading, there are other means of cooling a greenhouse. An evaporative cooler similar to those used in homes can be installed in one end to blow cooled air through the greenhouse. A ventilator or set of louvers must be open at the other end to allow air to move out at the same time. Another method is the pad and fan system. Aspen pads are installed to replace part of the glass at one end, with a circulating pump to keep them wet. An exhaust fan at the other end pulls air in through the pads and moves it through the greenhouse and on out. Both types can be operated thermostatically. Since the air is cooled by evaporation of water, it adds humidity to the greenhouse. The old method of hosing down the walks and under-bench areas also helps cool the air and furnish humidity. You may wish to do this once or twice a day, even if you use a cooler. If a cooler is not used, ventilators must be opened on warm days and some means be employed to keep the air moist - hosing, mist humidifiers or under-bench sprayers. Additional cooling can be furnished by leaving the vents open all night; everything, benches, pots and plants, is then well cooled to begin the next day.

Orchids do best when grown in moving air and circulating air helps to keep the temperature uniform throughout the greenhouse. Depending on the size of the greenhouse,



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one or more fans should be kept running continuously. The fans can do double duty if they are placed to circulate air from a mist sprayer installed under a bench. In a basement setup the problem is usually excessive heat from the lights; this has to be moved away from the plants. The grower will have to arrange a fan or two to accomplish this and the fans may be made to circulate dampened air at the same time.

The relative humidity in any orchid growing area should be such that it prevents dehydration of the plants and keeps them plump. In damp climates it may not be necessary to add humidity except when heaters are in use. The old idea that orchids have to be dripping wet has long since been abandoned. A relative humidity of around 50%, ranging between 40% and 60%, is sufficient, although some growers prefer it higher. It will naturally reach a high peak just after watering or in rainy weather. Constantly high humidity can lead to problems with disease, and in very damp climates, particularly during seasons of little sun, growers are plagued with a rather high incidence. Keeping the air moving briskly helps control it. Another means of disease prevention is to be sure the plants do not have water standing on the foliage at night. Mist sprayers and evaporative coolers have already been mentioned as sources of humidity. There are also unit humidifiers that emit a fine mist which can be used in the greenhouse and which are also useful in basement set ups, orchid cases, garden rooms and sun porches.

In general, it is a good idea to choose kinds that have the same requirements, particularly as to temperature. It means that all of your plants have a chance to do their best. But what amateur can resist a particularly appealing plant with slightly different requirements? "I'll try it anyway," he says. "I'll find a place for it." And unless its needs are absolutely impossible, he usually does! Even though the temperature in his greenhouse is quite uniform, it is always warmer closer to the roof. Hanging a plant higher than the rest also gives a bit more light. Additional shade, if needed, can be managed by putting a small plant between large ones, and heavier shade can be applied to the glass at one end for a group of shade-lovers. If you grow many species you will have to resort to all sorts of ingenious arrangements. Of course, you have to attend to their other needs - watering, fertilizers, dormant periods, for example - on an individual basis. Such variations make orchid growing all the more of a challenge.

This article was extracted from the sixth in the Orchids for the Beginner series by the legendary author of Home Orchid Growing Rebecca Tyson Northen, which appeared in the June 1973 American Orchid Society Bulletin (42:6, pp. 484-491).

After the Cull

by Sue Bottom



Do you really want to run a hospital ward for sick orchids?

Culling your orchid collection to remove the weak sisters is a difficult concept to adopt as your routine practice. It seems natural to want to nurture that ailing orchid back to health. You think you should pot up all those tired backbulbs to give them another chance. You wonder if you are a failure at orchid growing when a plant in your care declines. The sooner you can shed these feelings of kindheartedness and inadequacy, the sooner you can tailor your collection to include only the most vigorously growing and flowering plants.

This is the year I decided I wanted a virus free cattleya collection. Little did I know how this would decimate my collection. About a third of the cattleyas with no obvious symptoms of virus tested positive for Cymbidium Mosaic Virus or Odontoglossum Ringspot Virus. With a few exceptions, they were discarded leaving large empty spaces on the greenhouse benches and a very depressed orchid grower. After a month of mourning and an emergency order of bifoliate seedlings from Fred Clarke, I realized I finally had the bench space to move all those seedlings I keep buying into 5 inch pots. It is such a pleasure to walk through the greenhouse and see nothing but vigorously growing plants.

Overcrowding is another problem best avoided. This is not to say that you should stop buying orchids, perish the thought! You can often find new niches that your orchids will just love to inhabit. Once you finally run out of real estate, you may have to eliminate an orchid for each one you bring home. Better that than trying to smush them all together so you don't have enough air movement, not to mention room for their flowers to display properly.

Be careful of Greeks bearing gifts, like when you get the

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phone call from an aging orchidist that their orchids are available free or for a nominal cost. Sometimes the orchidist may not have been able to properly care for his plants for a period of time before your receive the phone call.

When I was in the height of my vanda obsession, I got that phone call and many new vandas came home with me. It has taken years for me to cull the diseased plants and those with unexplained poor growth. This year is the first that I can walk through the vanda house and enjoy each and every plant I see. Of course, the pure water from the reverse osmosis system together with proper spacing have contributed mightily to the better growth and flowering.



Anticipation... waiting for your seedlings to bloom for the first time!

It is important to learn from your mistakes, to learn what pests and diseases can cause problems so you can do your best to prevent them from recurring. Scale or mealy bug infestations can be treated fairly easily if caught early enough. You may have to repeat the chemical treatment and accept the damage that was caused, but the pests can be eliminated reasonably easily. Damage from virus and many of the fungal pathogens is more insidious. Once



Can you really enjoy orchids sitting on an overcrowded bench? This cattleya had six flower spikes blooming every which way, but there was no pleasure in its presentation.

the disease enters the plant, it can be carried through the vascular system and be difficult to eradicate, even after cutting away the damaged tissue. Once you become comfortable with diagnosing the various ills that may befall your plants, you should be able to administer first aid before the problem negatively impacts the overall health of the plant. Once the plant goes into decline, returning it to health can be a long, hard and sometimes unsuccessful battle.

You may think it is hard to throw out that struggling plant. What is really hard is to stroll through your growing area and see disease and poor growth. The pleasure in walking down the aisle and seeing plant after plant with new luscious growth and fattening flower buds is beyond description. Make your growing area your little slice of heaven, specialize in growing only the healthiest and happiest plants. Kick back and smell the orchids!



The vandas look better than ever this year. No more Thai crud or palm tree vandas, look at those roots!



ORCHID ADVENTURES



Repotting Clinics

The pandemic put the kibosh on our repotting clinics at Ace Hardware from April through August. We were able to open up for business once again in September at the Pavilion behind the Memorial Lutheran Church. Our SAOS members and the local orchid community visited with us in September and October to catch up on some last minute repotting. We will resume our repotting activities in February. You can email us if you need emergency assistance in the meantime, but generally it is better not to disturb the root system of resting plants. We hope to see you in the new year!



SHOW TABLE



Grower Debra Brandt
Lc. Luminosa (1901)



Grower Courtney Hackney
Otr. Sugita Spots 'Select'



Grower Penny Halyburton
Den. Enobi Purple



Grower Leslie Brickell
Schoenorchis buddleiflora



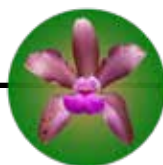
Grower Sue Bottom
Aerangis biloba



Grower Janis Croft
Stlma. Kelly 'Lea'



Grower Leslie Brickell
Bulb. baileyi



SHOW TABLE



Grower Leslie Brickell
Smbc. Louise Adel Fuchs



Grower Sue Bottom
Blc. Dora Louise Capen 'Lea' AM/AOS



Grower Linda Stewart
Cym. Chen's Ruby



Grower Bob & Yvonne Schimmel
Blc. Marg Putman



Grower Walter Muller
Blc. Aloha Mermaid



Grower Courtney Hackney
Blc. Serengeti Sands 'Hackneau'

Link to all plant Pictures. <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmRfJuXv>

