



CLUB NEWS



Jim Roberts

May SAOS Meeting

by Janis Croft

Welcome and Thanks. President Tom Sullivan opened the meeting at 6:50 pm with 45 plus attendees. He thanked Dianne Batchelder, Ann McKenna and Dottie Sullivan for the treats and coffee while reminding all to remember to Drop a Dollar for the treats and informed us that the Silent Auction would end after the Show Table.



SAOS website. If you would like a book or magazine, send a request to info@staugorchidsociety.org and he will bring the item(s) to the next meeting.

If you need supplies, email info@staugorchidsociety.org. We have potting Mixes, butterfly clips, plant tags and time release fertilizer.

SAOS Program. Our program was broadcast via Zoom to our out of town members so the program preceded the Show Table. Sue introduced Jim Roberts from Florida SunCoast Orchids in Myakka City, FL. They specialize in growing Cattleya and Encyclia hybrids and also a large number of Cymbidium, Dendrobium, Vanda and Phalaenopsis orchids. Jim's presentation was about growing orchids outdoors and he showed slides featuring various outdoor growing methods from all over the world. He reminded us that the necessities required to grow and bloom orchids remain the same, indoors or outdoors. These are Location, Light, and Water as well as an understanding of potential pests and diseases.

As for outdoor growing, Jim listed these basics: Conditions, Containers, Chemicals, Kinds of Orchids and Care. He showed a slide detailing the sun's path at certain times of the day and year at his location and suggested we remain watchful of changes in sun angles. In the summer, the sun's path is very different than its winter path. Many people in Florida move their orchids out to their lanais. He showed slides of various ways to install benches and hanging poles on the lanai structure. One slide showed lattice anchored between upright pool screen verticals filled with hanging plants. Another showed a PVC pipe structure

Club Business. Membership VP Linda Stewart welcomed our visitors and introduced our new members, Jennifer Adams (Bradenton), Sharon Carter (Orange Park), Arthur Culbert (St. Aug), Kymberly van Konijnenburg (Merritt Island) and Beverley Vycital (Ponte Vedra). Linda then asked those with birthdays in May to raise their hands for their free raffle ticket. Linda asked that if you know of anyone in need of a cheering up or a get-well card, let her know by emailing her at info@staugorchidsociety.org.

Orchid Shows in Florida this Month include Volusia County OS (May 7 and 8) and Tamiami (May 13-15), the Redland Festival is postponed until October. Check website calendar for details [here](#).

We will continue conducting our Courtney Hackney led Virtual Show Table via Zoom. The next one will be tonight, May 4 at 7 pm. Watch for an email invitation. Each month's Virtual Show Table is recorded and posted on our website.

Join us May 7 at the Southeast Branch Library, 6670 US-1 N, Saint Augustine, FL 32086. Learn how to repot your orchids, or just come to talk and observe. The clinics are held on the first Saturday of the month through October and run from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm.



Librarian Howard Cushnir brought in two books of interest—Orchid Specialist by David Squire and Understanding Orchids by William Cullina. He encouraged all to use the library collection listed on our



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Upcoming Orchid Events

May

- 4 SAOS Virtual Show Table
Courtney Zooms into Cyberspace
Invitation Will be Sent by Email
- 7 SAOS Repotting Clinic, 10 am til 1 pm
Southeast Branch Library
6670 US-1 N, 32086
- 7-8 Volusia County Orchid Society Show
Volusia County Fairgrounds
- 10 JOS Meeting – Picnic on 1st in Lieu of Mtg
- 13-15 Tamiami International Orchid Festival
Dade County Fair Expo Center
- 13-15 Redland International Orchid Festival
Fruit and Spice Park
POSTPONED TIL OCT 7-9
- 14 FL North-Central Judging, 1 pm
Clermont Garden Center
849 West Ave

June

- 4 SAOS Repotting Clinic, 10 am til 1 pm
Southeast Branch Library
6670 US-1 N, 32086
- 7 SAOS Meeting, 6:30 pm
Wild, Weird and Wonderful Orchids
Peter T. Lin, Diamond Orchids
- 9? SAOS Virtual Show Table, 7:00 pm
Courtney Zooms into Cyberspace
An Invitation Will be Sent by Email
- 11 Florida North-Central AOS Judging, 1 pm
Clermont Judging Ctr, 849 West Ave.
- 14 JOS Meeting, Topic TBA, 7 pm
Speaker TBA

July

- 2 SAOS Repotting Clinic, 10 am til 1 pm
Southeast Branch Library
6670 US-1 N, 32086
- 5 SAOS Meeting, 6:30 pm
Orchid Sex
Ben Oliveros, Orchid Eros

- 9 Florida North-Central AOS Judging, 1 pm
Clermont Judging Ctr, 849 West Ave.
- 13 JOS Meeting, Topic TBA
Speaker TBA
- 14 SAOS Virtual Show Table??, 7:00 pm
Courtney Zooms into Cyberspace
An Invitation Will be Sent by Email

August

- 2 SAOS Meeting, Topic TBA, 6:30 pm
What Can Go Wrong
Courtney Hackney and Sue Bottom
- 6 SAOS Repotting Clinic, 10 am til 1 pm
Southeast Branch Library
6670 US-1 N, 32086
- 9 JOS Meeting, Topic TBA

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with wire closet racks situated as shelves. He said these were easy to move quickly indoors when bad weather approaches.

The next of slides showed outdoor growing structures that are often wrapped up in plastic during winter. Another simpler example was a bench that had a simple shade cloth draped over it for sun protection. He then showed a slide of a bent over palm tree with orchids growing on the top of the bend. One would think they would get sunburnt but next to this tree were several tall oak trees that filtered the sun and the orchids thrived. Jim pointed out that this is an example of being aware of the little micro-climates in one's yard. He suggested using your hand to judge the intensity of the sun. Hold your hand up about three feet above the surface (or a white piece of paper) and if the shadow is sharp and defined, that's good for vandias, if diffused slightly, that's cattleya light and if barely discernable, it's phalaenopsis light. Some slides showed orchids growing under roof eaves. The ones hanging on the edge did not get rain water and on the outside, the leaves were sunburnt. Another slide showed phalaenopsis hanging on the wall, receiving no rain water nor sun. These were examples of plants that needed to be moved.

Watering was the next topic and his first advice was "when in doubt, dry them out." He feels that you wait till they are dry and then thoroughly water them. Plus he waters all of his hundreds of orchids by hand. He does this so he can look at each plant and see if there are any problems arising. Fertilizer helps your plants but he reminded us that no one in the jungle uses Miracle Gro. Whatever you use, remember it doesn't have to say "orchid fertilizer." He showed examples of what he has used, Dynamite and Miracle Gro for tomatoes.

We then got into a discussion about media we grow in. He uses bark and clay pebbles because they are cheap, he only has to repot every two years, and he finds other media have drawbacks such as sphagnum being too wet during the summer, charcoal retaining salts and sponge rock emitting fluorine compounds. If your orchids are to be mounted onto trees, you can use any flexible product to tie them on. He likes to use something that will disintegrate with time after the roots have taken hold. Otherwise, one can use wooden baskets (preferably out of cedar, cypress or teak), plastic baskets, or mounted plaques and hang them from tree branches. He took a timber bamboo and cut notches in it to hold several plants. If hanging on a wall or a tree, he showed a photo of a product called "Hang A Pot" which he said will hold a potted plant up to 60 pounds.

During the humid season, one needs to put on your protective gear and spray fungicides. He recommended

Kocide 3000 or Copper (not on dendrobiums though) along with Cleary's 3336, BanRot, Dithane M-45, Subdue and/or Protect DF. For insects, Jim commonly uses Orthene, Safer Insecticide Soap, Neem Oil, Avid or use a high powered hose sprayer and blast the critters off.



Show Table Review. Courtney wasn't able to be at the meeting, so Jim stepped in and reviewed the show table plants with Sue and Tom assisting. The plants discussed were a beautiful, large *Bulbophyllum maximum* grown by Linda Stewart, a *C. warneri*, an *Enc. cordigera*, a hybrid of *dowiana* and *brysiana*, a *Phal. Surf Song*, and a *Cymbidium Francino* and a fantastic *Cyrtopodium punctatum* from Harry McElroy.

Meeting Conclusion. The evening concluded with the Raffle table. Thanks to the helpful hands that stayed to clean and store the tables, chairs and room.



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SAOS Picnic

Two dozen SAOS members got together for the SAOS picnic, 25 if you count canine Coral, the Social Butterfly. We enjoyed hot dogs, hamburgers, salads and desserts while having plenty of time to chat and swap/buy orchids and divisions from other members. Always fun to have the time to talk to other members without all the craziness and running around that happens at meetings. A pleasure!

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Not Amazon.com



American Orchid Society Corner

Webinars

May 4, 8:30 pm, AOS Members Only
Orchid Pollination – Doug Martin
May 17, 8:30 pm, Everyone Invited
Orchid Pots & Media, Q&A - Ron McHatton

Orchids Magazine this Month

Slug and Snail Problems - Chuck Oldenburg
Jamaica, Land of Extremes – Tom Mirenda
Den. amethystoglossum-Judith Rapacz-Hasler

Photos of Latest AOS Awards

June 7 Monthly Meeting

Wild, Weird and Wonderful Orchids
Peter T. Lin, Diamond Orchids

Peter will talk to us from sunny California about some wild, weird and wonderful orchids. Peter will take us on a journey of some of the world's most strange, bizarre, yet wonderful orchid species from Bulbophyllums to Zootrophion. We'll see orchids that have wild colors, have crazy lips, or are fringed, hairy, or just alien looking! We will be live streaming Peter's presentation.



Peter will be offering a 10% discount on preorders from his extensive listing of interesting plants. The list will be posted on the website for you to order, deadline is May 27 for ordering. Peter will ship the entire order to Sue, who will bring plants to the meeting. Let Peter know you're with SAOS and make arrangements for payment by May 27th. If you are not able to attend the meeting, let Peter know and he will ship the plants directly to you.

We'll have plants available on the raffle table. Friends and guests are always welcome.

When: Tuesday June 7, 6:30 til 9 pm

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

Volunteer of the Year Ann McKenna

Congratulations to Ann McKenna, recipient of the 2022 Flagler Volunteer of the Year Award! Ann serves as Chair of Patient Transport.



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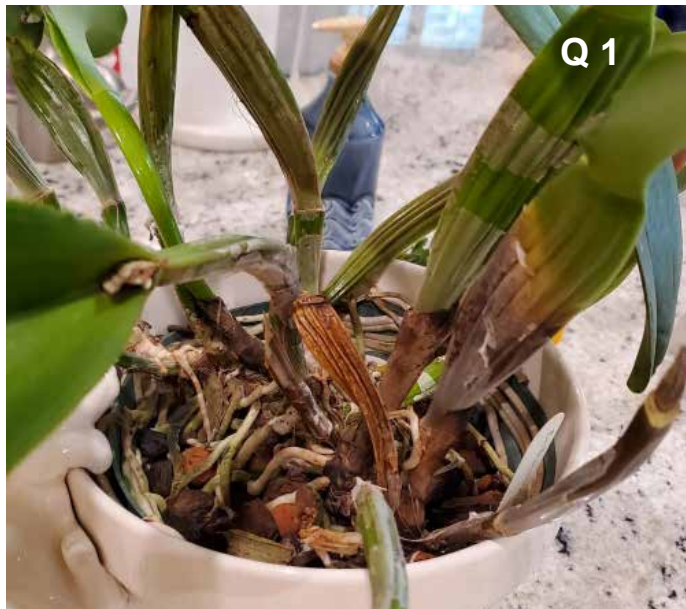
Orchid Questions & Answers

by Sue Bottom,
sbottom15@gmail.com

Q1. This poor plant is having a problem. Can you suggest a treatment?

A1. That is a fungal rot that is moving through the rhizome and up into the pseudobulbs.

All the diseased tissue has to be cut away and then the healthy part put into a fresh potting mix. Be sure to torch your shears between cuts. Drench with a good systemic fungicide like Heritage or Pageant afterwards. We'll be at the repotting clinic at the SE Branch library the first Saturday of the month if you need some help.



Q2. My orchid is not doing well, what should I do?

A2. It looks like it is losing its lower leaves and the flowers have faded. They usually bloom for around 3 months, but of course you don't know when it started flowering so it could just be the end of their normal life or it could be related to the leaf loss issue. It also looks like that sphagnum moss is getting older which means it is starting to break down and then it can compress and start smothering the roots. I would say it's probably ready to be repotted. Hopefully, there's no root rot going on, but that would be the fear, causing it to lose leaves and flowers. Knock it out of the pot and take a look at the roots, and be prepared to put it in fresh mix.



Q3. I was lucky to have won *Dendrochilum cobbianum* from the raffle table. I think I have the wrong potting material?



A3. I grow my dendrochilums in a shallow layer (about an inch or two) of long fibered New Zealand sphagnum moss placed over styrofoam. It looks like you have some moss in there and some river rocks, can't tell how deep the pot is. They like to be kept moist. It looks like the back bulbs on your plant are soft, if they are, you should consider removing them. It also looks like a pretty large pot for the size of the plant/root mass. A smaller bulb pan would work very well. Otherwise, use a smaller, shallow pot with lots of styrofoam in the bottom.



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Spring Checkoist

by Dr. Courtney Hackney

Spring is the busiest time of the year for Orchid. Sometimes it may be difficult for us to tell that spring has indeed arrived, but your orchids know. Cattleyas have begun to put out new growths and roots in response to increasing day length. Vandas too are starting to grow because

high daytime temperatures convince them that they are at home in the tropics. What you do in the next month will have a lot to do with your success as Orchid growers for the next year. Much of what is in my Spring Checklist is just common sense, but that is usually what we forget.

1. *Clean Growing Area* - Greenhouses have been cramped, as have windowsills and space under lights. Remove Orchids from your growing area and remove all dead material as well as algae. Some hobbyists spray growing space with a 5% Clorox solution to kill bacteria, fungi, and just about everything else. Repair benches or replace surface if it is needed while you have the area clean and open.

2. *Organize* - Straighten growing space by moving some plants outside or by eliminating non-performing plants. Remove weeds and ferns from pots.

3. *Plant Inspection* – If your collection is small, future problems can be avoided by carefully examining each plant. Use 10x-reading glasses even if you do not need them for reading. Look for scale, mites, or any signs of damage to leaves or roots. If you find damage on an Orchid look for the culprit that caused it. Tiny nicks on roots or under Phal leaves suggests snails while large chunks and slime trails indicate slugs. These pests have been relatively dormant during winter, but will now feast in summer's warmth. Repotting will eliminate snails and help you find slugs. If you find only minor damage try stale beer for slugs and snail bait for bush snails.

4. *Clean Plants* - Remove dead tissues around Cattleya bulbs and/or dead leaves. Check the base of dead tissues for sign of scale, especially if leaves died but did not fall from the plant. If scale is found use a soft tissue to wipe them off and then spray with insecticidal soap or light oil. If a major infestation is found the plant should be repotted. When the plant is out of the pot use a sterile toothbrush to gently scrub the underside of rhizomes in Cattleyas and around the base of Phals. If you find heavy infestations on



many plants, you may have to resort to harsher pesticides.

5. *Straighten Plants* – Orchids tend to lean towards the light in winter. Some growers prefer to tie plants up with either wire rings or bamboo stakes if they have fallen over because erect plants are easier to spray and water, and take up less room. In addition new growths and leaves will grow better.

6. *Repot* – Repot all plants whose media has decomposed and those that have reached too far from the pot. Rapid summer growth will quickly replace lost and damaged roots. Newly damaged roots are also less likely to be infected by fungi and bacteria in your now clean growing area in the less humid air of spring. Fungi and bacteria will become a problem in mid-summer. Newly repotted Orchids need a convalescence period while they recover. Accomplish this simply by giving them a little extra shade and humidity.

7. *Water More* – Orchids will use more water in the next month than they will in the heat of summer because of the lower humidity. Water thoroughly when you do water and review the moisture requirements of the different groups of Orchids you grow. In general, Cattleyas and Dendrobiums need to dry thoroughly before being watered while Phals and Paphs like to dry some but need constant moisture. Phrags and Bulbophyllums crave moisture while most of the Vanda group wants high light, abundant water, and lots of air movement. Air movement is just as important for Orchids in summer as during the winter, but for different reasons. Now it is important to keep leaves from overheating while in winter it was to keep bacteria and fungal infections at bay.

Work hard now and you will enjoy watching your Orchids grow and bloom all summer and fall.

Sterilizing Tools – A propane torch works well on most metal tools. This kills virus as well as bacteria and fungi. A concentrated solution of Tri Sodium Phosphate (cleaning agent) will have the same effect on flammable items, but will take 10 minutes to work. Similarly, a 10% Clorox solution will sterilize surfaces such as potting benches, but will quickly damage metal tools.

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 May 2001.



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Inside Out

It's Time to Move Orchids Outdoors for Summer
by Ken Slump, reprinted with permission



While most of us probably consider some types of orchids to be suitable for houseplants and the majority to be greenhouse subjects, all of their ancestors came from the great outdoors. For most, it was the tropical outdoors to be sure, but even though we have adapted them to culture in modified indoor environments of one type or another, many will thrive on and appreciate a few weeks or months outside during the warm season when the weather in some areas of the North is warm and balmy.

Before you hastily ship off your orchid collection to a backyard version of horticultural summer camp, put some thought into your plant. It is important to take a bit of time to compare the indoor environment our orchids enjoy to the outdoor situation in which you will summer them.

First and foremost, carefully evaluate the amount of light your plants are receiving in their protected environment with the amount they will receive in the location you propose to use for them outdoors. This is especially critical for indoor growers who cultivate their orchids on windowsills or under artificial light. The brightest indoor growing situations are, at best, comparable to what most would call a partially shaded environment outside.

Plants from rather protected indoor environments may actually thrive better outside if grown in a mostly shaded outdoor location that might receive direct light only for a short time in the early morning or evening when the sun is low in the sky. Certainly there is no quicker way to sunburn or kill most any sort of indoor plant than to set it in direct sun outside for even a few hours. Consider starting your plants off in a rather shady spot and moving them to brighter lighter, partially shaded locations gradually. Obviously, the type of orchid will to some degree dictate the amount of light it can and will tolerate outside.

Temperature is an important factor too. You must consider not only low temperatures but also the high ones. It is safe to say that many tropical orchids can tolerate chillier temperatures than most of us suppose. Hobbyists who grow their orchids outdoors in South Florida are seldom concerned when the nighttime temperatures slip into the 50s in the winter season – a common occurrence. When the occasional nights in the 40s come along, they may move some of the more cold-sensitive types indoors, such as some of the dendrobiums and certain members of the vandaceous clan, but often leave the cattleyas out in the chill. Still, orchids that are accustomed to a cozy life should probably be kept inside until night temperatures are reliably 60 F or higher, unless they are cool growing types.

Excessive heat can be as damaging to your plants as cold. If you live where summer temperatures are frequently in the mid 90s and higher, be certain that your plants have adequate shade and humidity to help them endure those warm hours. Some orchids that prefer intermediate temperatures and certainly those orchids that are cool growers will likely suffer if forced to endure many days or weeks of such conditions.

Some parts of the United States are humid in summer and indoor orchids will relish that. Growers in more arid regions may find the drier air a handicap. If you move your orchids outside, you will need to carefully monitor their watering needs. Relative humidity, wind speed, temperatures and rainfall will combine to affect how quickly your plants and their growing media dry out. You may need to water them much more or much less than you were accustomed to indoors.

Protection from the elements may be necessary or advisable as well. Consider what a week of daily rain could do to your plants' roots or how a hailstorm or severe wind could quickly turn your lush plants in to chopped salad. A simple shelter or bit of waterproof covering overhead could solve the problem.



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Orchids outside must be regularly checked for pests. Do not set the orchid pots on the ground. Use benches or shelves for your plants to avoid providing many insects and soil-borne critters a “leg up.” You will be wise to give all plants summered outside a good spraying and their growing medium a drench with an insecticide before returning them indoors at the end of the season.

Finally, consider which plants in your orchid collection are the best candidates for a summer vacation outdoors. Sturdy, mature plants in heavy pots will likely fare best. If you grow your collection in plastic containers, consider slipping each into a heavier clay pot for its outdoor excursion to counteract the tendency of orchid plants to be top heavy. Miniature or immature plants in small containers will tend to dry out quickly and may be unable to withstand stress. The same could be true for mounted plants as well, unless you live in a humid locale or are willing to commit to their frequent watering needs.

This may all sound like a lot more trouble than it is worth, but the effort could pay big dividends for some orchidists. Indoor growers who have the right outdoor summer climate and situation will likely discover that they can use the warm months to their advantage in cultivating orchids with higher light requirements than they could ordinarily supply with a year-round indoor routine. Since many orchids produce their new growth in summer, an optimum outdoor environment at this time will likely produce stronger plants that will flower better next autumn, winter or spring.

This article appeared in the American Orchid Society Orchids magazine in June 2008 (Vol.77:6, pp.420-421).

Organizing Your Growing Area

by Sue Bottom



Light loving cattleyas hanging high in the greenhouse and lower light orchids underneath on benches (RIO circa 2009).

Orchids come in all different size pots, with varying potting mixes, and different types of orchids have different light and watering requirements. So, how do you decide what to put where? After the repotting program, one of our members laughingly commented “*I had a bit of a laugh when you said about grouping the same sized pot and same type of media in groups together. Apparently, you haven’t seen the average grower that has a multitude of different plants, different sized pots, and different media all shoved into a small greenhouse. The mix of different sizes allows a grower to shove in plants between other plants much like a mix of different sized rocks in a bag so that no air spaces exist.*” Steve’s comment was on the mark. How should you go about deciding where to place orchids in your growing area?

Light. Light is a key concern for growing orchids in that it is the source of energy fueling plant growth. Too much light and your plants will be sunburned, and too little light and your plants will not flower. Vandaceous orchids, catasetinae and cattleya alliance plants like the brightest light while phalaenopsis, jewel orchids and mottled leaf paphs prefer shady conditions, with most of the rest of the commonly cultivated orchids falling in between the two extremes. As a practical matter, all plants love morning sun and can take direct morning sun up until around 10:30 am. This makes an eastern exposure perfect for your shady loving plants. The sun intensity is too great for almost all orchids between about 11 and 2 pm, so orchids must be protected from this direct light by growing under trees, a

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Keep all your mounted orchids together so you can easily water them once or twice a day.

shade cloth covered trellis or pergola, pool lanai, or roof eave. A southern exposure can work well for the bright light loving orchids as long as you have protection from the midday sun. A western exposure with late afternoon sun can also be suitable for many orchids. Feel the leaves during the brightest part of the day, if the leaves are hot the plant should be moved to a shadier spot or the area protected with shade cloth. Be aware of the changing sun angle through the year.

Many of the recommendations in orchid books talk about light intensity in foot-candles and give general ranges of light intensity for various genera. In my greenhouse where the bulk of cattleyas are grown, there is a 50% shade cloth covering the outside year-round, with another 30% shade cloth added inside at the spring equinox and taken down at the autumnal equinox. Using an estimated 10% shade factor for the polypropylene greenhouse skin, this means that at noontime when sunlight registers about 10,000 foot-candles, the inside light level is a hypothetical 3150 foot-candles ($10,000 \times 0.1 \times 0.5 \times 0.7$) in summer and 4500 foot-candles in winter. In winter, the plants can take more intense sunlight because the temperatures are lower, while in summer additional shading is required to try to prevent plants from overheating. Even with these hypothetical calculations, there are brighter and darker areas of the greenhouse and you can use these microclimates to your advantage. The bench along the northern wall is used for

seedlings that enjoy less light while the bench along the eastern wall has bifoliate, nodosa hybrids and encyclias that all enjoy brighter light. The area where the phals are grown along the western wall has a second 50% plus a third 30% shade cloth year-round, so they receive a calculated 1575 ft candles ($10,000 \times .1 \times .5 \times .7$), on the high end of recommended phalaenopsis light.

You can get meters to measure visible light intensity (in foot-candles) and photosynthetically active radiation (as Photosynthetic Photon Flux Density, measured in micromoles per second per square meter). There are many references to guide you if you are technically minded, particularly if you want to grow indoors under lights. When you grow under lights, you are supplying a constant light intensity for the entire period the lights are on, unlike in my greenhouse where the light starts to increase from zero at dawn to a maximum at noon and then dropping again to zero at nightfall. The light levels recommended in foot-candles in orchid books are really based on the maximum midday light level, which would be way too much light if a plant were exposed to that intensity for the entire day. Under light growers usually try to supply one-quarter to one-third of the light levels recommended for those growing in natural sunlight.

Watering. You spend many hours watering your orchids over the course of the year. Choosing your potting mixes

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to match your watering habits and time availability is a key aspect of your orchid culture. If you tend to water frequently, you can use coarse freely draining mix with lots of drainage without fear of overwatering your plants. If your time is limited, you may choose a more water retentive mix containing a higher percentage of sphagnum moss, peat or bark that holds moisture longer and thus requires more careful watering to ensure plants are not overwatered.

The SAOS coarse mix we offer for sale is a mixture of about 30% clay pebbles 30% coarse perlite, 30% Orchia bark and 10% charcoal. It is a freely draining mix that contains a small proportion of organic matter. It is intended for potting cattleyas and dendrobium type orchids that like to dry out between watering. It is freely draining enough to withstand extended periods of rainfall during tropical storms. Of course, if growing under cover or outside during the droughty season, it does require watering several times a week. Whatever mix you finally select for your cattleyas, you should be able to water this group of your orchids all at the same time.

If you group plants with similar watering requirements together, it's easy to know when to water what. This gets very complicated when you bring home new plants from a show, and one is potted in clay pebbles, another in sphagnum moss and a third in bark. If you water all these with the same frequency, you will likely be overwatering the one in sphagnum moss and underwatering the one in clay pebbles. This is when you should follow repotting rule number one. When you bring home a new plant, once it is done blooming, watch for it to throw off new roots and then put it in your preferred potting mix.

Pot Size. Pot size is another consideration in how often to water your plants. Other things being equal, smaller pots will dry out more quickly than larger pots and have to be watered more frequently. A 6 inch pot holds about 2.5 times as much mix as a 4 inch pot, and an 8 inch pot more than twice the mix as a 6 inch pot. Plastic pots don't breathe, so they hold more moisture with the evaporative surface limited to the top of the pot. For clay pots that breathe, the surface area of the pot helps determine how quickly the pot will dry out. As the size of the pot increases, the volume of the pot and the surface area increase, but the ratio of surface area to volume decreases so larger pots dry out relatively more slowly than smaller pots.

This is one reason why growers are often successful using sphagnum moss in small pots, but fail when they try to use the sphagnum moss in large pots. One way to overcome this problem is to add chunks of Styrofoam with the sphagnum in larger pots. I grow the phals in high



These seedlings in 3½" pots are watered every day or two.

quality sphagnum moss in clay pots. The smaller 3 to 4 inch pots have sphagnum moss with some Styrofoam in the bottom of the pot. With larger 6 to 8 inch pots, they are also grown in sphagnum moss but with liberal amounts of Styrofoam chunks added in the bottom of the pot and intermixed with the sphagnum moss in the upper layer of the largest pots. By adjusting the ratio of potting and drainage materials in various size pots, the phals can all be watered at the same time because the extra drainage material adds evaporative surface area in the larger pots.

There are many considerations in choosing a potting mix for your orchids. The longer you grow orchids, the more you will learn what works best for you in your growing area. Julia Child has a great cookbook, *The Way to Cook*. In it, she gives a master recipe for a dish, and then follows that with a variety of variations on the theme for different ways to modify the main recipe. If you are just learning about orchids, use the club's coarse mix for your cattleyas and dendrobiums, and the Pro-Mix blend or long fibered sphagnum moss for your phals. Then you can start mixing and matching, tailoring your mixes to the different orchids you grow. Perhaps some chopped sphagnum in the coarse mix for your oncidiums or some sphagnum as a top dressing on media surfaces. The best lesson you will learn is the one where you repot your orchids, and get to see firsthand how the orchid roots fared in last season's mix. If they look mushy, more drainage; if they look dessicated, more water retentive mixes; if they look great, hallelujah!



ORCHID ADVENTURES



Spring Orchid Festival at Krull Smith

The spring orchid festival at Krull Smith was delightful. The Krull Smith greenhouses are a treat to walk through, incredible variety of orchids and about a gazillion different types of vandaceous orchids were blooming beautifully, including many colorful falcata hybrids. High quality orchid vendors were also in attendance, so we got to yak about orchids and come home with some new orchid varieties. This time Frank had three food trucks. While we missed the taco truck, the fresh pizza in the wood fired oven was terrific. A fun day, and Coral got lots of pets!



SHOW TABLE



Grower Debra Brandt
Phal. KS Super Zebra 'Peter'



Grower Linda Stewart
Chysis limminghii



Grower Sue Bottom
Phal. tetraspis var. coerulea 'Wilson'



Grower Suzanne Susko
Mps. Rouge 'California Plum'



Grower Sue Bottom
Chysis Maritza Bielecki



Grower Leslie Brickell
Den. unicum



Grower Janis Croft
V. Molokini Delight



SHOW TABLE



Grower Courtney Hackney
C. intermedia var. *amethystina* 'Grezaffi'



Grower Keith Davis
C. intermedia var. *aquinii* orlata 'Miranda'



Grower Steve Dorsey
Blc. Memoria Marg Steele 'Carmela'



Grower Suzanne Susko
lana. Appleblossom 'Kalie's Pink'



Grower Joanne Stygles
Ascda. Dragon's Fire



Grower Leslie Brickell
Aergs. hildebrandtii

Link to all Submissions. <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjzMM6L>

