



CLUB NEWS



Nicholas Rust

May Meeting

by Janis Croft

Welcome and Thanks.

President Tom Sullivan opened the meeting at 6:45 pm with 58 attendees. Tom stated that the SAOS Picnic was a great success and wanted to thank all who participated. He also thanked the grillers and Dianne for organizing. He then stated that the Silent Auction plants would conclude before tonight's

presentation began and reminded all to "Drop a Dollar" for the treats which were provided tonight by Dottie Sullivan, Dianne Batchelder and Julie Smith.

Club Business. Membership VP Linda Stewart welcomed our visitors and introduced our new members who joined this evening Dianna Christakos, Dat Nguyen, Alicia Zervos and Sandra Thompson, along with Dave Dumas and Melissa Jackson who joined at the picnic and Jan Camper who joined online. Linda then asked those with birthdays this month to raise their hands for their free raffle ticket. As our Sunshine Coordinator also, Linda asked that you let her know (by emailing info@staugorchidsociety.org) of anyone in need of a cheering up or a get-well card.

Culture Classes - Jerry had attempted to conduct a beginner's culture class before the meetings but only a few showed interest. If you are interested in having these start again, let Jerry know. He is also available to answer your "newbie" questions about orchids.

Growing Area Tour - Jerry announced that Leslie and Chip Brickell will host the tour of Leslie's greenhouse and growing area on May 21st. Address and map link is available on the website.



Virtual Show Table – The virtual show table will be on the 2nd Wednesday, May 10 at 7 pm. Email invitations will be sent out. Each month's Virtual Show Table is recorded and posted on our website. Also plan on sending in your photos for May's

bloomers by 5/25.

Orchid Shows in Florida this Month – Platinum Coast's show is this weekend, Volusia's is held on Mother's Day weekend and then the Redland's festival is May 19-21. Check out the SAOS calendar for more details.

Repotting Clinics – Our monthly repotting clinics continue on the first Saturday of each month from 10 am til 1 pm at the Southeast Branch Library, [6670 US-1 N, St. Aug 32086](http://6670-US-1-N-St-Aug-32086).

Supplies – email info@staugorchidsociety.org if you need supplies.

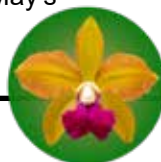
Library – Librarian Howard Cushnir brought in two large orchid books, New Encyclopedia of Orchids and Illustrated Encyclopedia of Orchids. Remember to use the library collection listed on our SAOS website. If you would like a book or magazine, send a request to info@staugorchidsociety.org and he will bring the item(s) to the next meeting. Howard also finished his series of acknowledgements by thanking President Tom and his wife Dottie Sullivan as well as the "glue that holds the club



together", Sue and Terry Bottom.

Show Table Review – Courtney and Sue started the Show Table with an outstanding, well grown Zygo, lanclarkara Cheyenne Marie. Harry McElroy said he purchased the plant from a grower in Hawaii and grows it with his oncidiums and paphs. He also brought in a Cym. Devon Fire with beautiful burgundy red blooms. A Gomesa Moon Shadow, one of the "Dancing Ladies," had striking dark brown almost black flowers with a bright yellow skirt. There was a Miltonia with yellow flowers that it is growing well here in Florida. A Phal. cornu-cervi, red form, has a flattened stem. This species branches and often grows basal keikis. The Show Table

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Upcoming Orchid Events

May

- 5-7 Platinum Coast Orchid Society Show
Kiwanis Island Park Gym, Merritt Island
- 6 SAOS Repotting Clinic, 10 am til 1 pm
Southeast Branch Library
6670 US-1 N, 32086
- 7 JOS Picnic, 12 pm
1658 Holly Oaks Lake Rd. E.
Jax 33225
- 9 JOS Meeting – Picnic on 7th in Lieu of Mtg
- 10 SAOS Virtual Show Table
Courtney Zooms into Cyberspace
Invitation Will be Sent by Email
- 13 FL North-Central Judging, 1 pm
Clermont Garden Center
849 West Ave
- 13-14 Volusia County Orchid Society Show
Volusia County Fairgrounds
- 19-21 Redland International Orchid Festival
Fruit and Spice Park
- 21 Keiki Club Greenhouse Tour, 1-3 pm
Leslie and Chip Brickell's Home
1319 Wentworth Avenue, Jax 32259

June

- 3 SAOS Repotting Clinic, 10 am til 1 pm
Southeast Branch Library
6670 US-1 N, 32086
- 6 SAOS Meeting, 6:30 pm
Unusual Mounts and Auction
George Hausermann, EFG Orchids
- 10 Florida North-Central AOS Judging, 1 pm
Clermont Judging Ctr, 849 West Ave.
- 13 JOS Meeting, Vanda Breeding, 7 pm
Robert Fuchs, RF Orchids
- 14 SAOS Virtual Show Table, 7:00 pm
Courtney Zooms into Cyberspace
An Invitation Will be Sent by Email

July

- 1 SAOS Repotting Clinic, 10 am til 1 pm
Southeast Branch Library
6670 US-1 N, 32086
- 4 **SAOS Meeting Rescheduled to July 12**
Enjoy the Fourth with Family & Friends!
- 8 Florida North-Central AOS Judging, 1 pm
Clermont Judging Ctr, 849 West Ave.
- 11 JOS Meeting, Topic TBA
Ron Kaufmann, Orchid Conservation All
- 12 SAOS Meeting, 6:30 pm
101 Ways to Kill Your Orchid
Ron Kaufmann, Orchid Conservation All
- 19 SAOS Virtual Show Table, 7:00 pm
Courtney Zooms into Cyberspace
An Invitation Will be Sent by Email

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ended with several encyclias hybrids that were blooming profusely.

SAOS Program. Sue introduced our speaker, Nicholas Rust of RustyExotics Orchids (rustyexoticsorchids.com). Nicholas operates a small orchid nursery based in Georgia, selling uncommon orchids such as Habenaria, jewel orchids, and Bulbophyllum as well as other unique plants like Amorphophallus. His background in biochemistry and molecular biology led to an interest in the entire growth cycle of orchids and the start of his own hybridization program in 2015. Nick's talk was entitled Habenaria: A basic overview of the breeding traits of species. The genus Habenaria was first defined in 1805 by Carl Ludwig Willdenow. There are approximately 900 species with only ten being commonly used in hybridization. They are terrestrial, very diverse, grow in all temperatures and all over the world (except Antarctica.) According to Nick, Habenarias are all about the lip. The labellum is a prominent, three-lobed lip with each species having uniquely different lip characteristics.



Hybridization started in the early 20th century with one French orchid grower. Then subsided until the early 21st century when Hoosier Orchids re-introduced Habenaria hybridization and Leon Glicenstein started producing a majority of hybrids. Nick talked about the different color forms. Nearly all the colors in hybrids come from 5 species: *Hab. rhodocheila* (orange), *Hab. roebbelenii* (scarlet), *Hab. xanthocheila* (yellow), *Hab. erichmichelii* (pink), *Hab. carnea* (pale pink to white), *Hab. janellehayneiana* (orangey pink). He showed a slide of *Hab. Hampson* (a cross between *Hab. rhodocheila* and *Hab. roebbelenii*) that produced a stunning neon red orange flower. He continued to show various crosses and had the audience guess what color the resulting flower would be. The next set of slides were crosses of hybrids so guessing the flower color became more intriguing.

The next part of Nick's analysis was shape of the flower. Few species contribute more to the unique shapes seen in hybrids: *Hab. medusa*, *Hab. lindleyana* and *Hab. crinifera*. The most common is the *Hab. medusa* which is

multi-floral, fringy flower on a large plant. He then showed fantastic slides of hybrids made with *Hab. medusa*—all had fringes of some format on the lobes of the lip. He then moved on to Intergenerics which are crosses between to different genera, e.g. *Habenaria x Pecteilis = Pectabeneria*. *Pecteilis* has dense inflorescence on a compact plant. The flowers have a large dorsal sepal, lateral sepals that extend backwards, two distinct petals and a large labellum. The resulting hybrids had more enlarged dorsal sepals along with distinct side lobes.

Nick grows under full spectrum LEDs. He advised small growers to grow their Habenarias under medium light, less than cattleya and more than phalaenopsis. He uses a Base Mix of soil commonly used for azaleas with peat moss. Then he mixes his habenaria soil using 6 parts of the base mix, 3 parts perlite, 2 parts fine charcoal and 1 part play sand. You can substitute Promix HP with charcoal added or adapt the mix for your own watering habits. Pot the tubers in deep plastic pots so there's room for the tubers to form and multiply. Don't let the media dry out during active growth and then when dormancy starts, stop watering usually for 3-4 months. He fertilizes with 1/2 tsp/gal of 20-20-20 very 2-3 weeks. The pests to watch out for are Spider Mites and Snails or Slugs. With good air flow, one shouldn't have fungal problems but if you do, he uses Thiomyl or Banrot for treatment. Usually in November and December, the inflorescence will begin to die back and foliage starts to turn yellow. When that happens, stop watering. When everything is dry, you can remove the tubers and put them in plastic bags with a small amount of dirt. Then put the bags in a dark place until February. Then start watching for sprouts at one end. This is time to repot by putting the tuber in soil 1/2-3/4" below the surface. Lightly mist the top of soil every 1-2 weeks. After the sprout breaks the service, watch for the rosette to open with leaves showing fully. Now you can water. Nick has full instructions on his website and is available to answer questions as well as to sell you more Habenarias!



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



CLUB NEWS



June 6 Meeting Mounting Orchids & Auction

Buckle up for a wild meeting. George 'The Toolman' Hausemann will demonstrate how to attach orchids onto unusual mounts. Sue will have a nice variety of different orchid divisions, cattleyas, phals, oncidiums and more. George will show his creativity with different ways of attaching orchids on eye catching mounts, orchid art! Then we will auction the mounted orchids to the highest bidder, should be fun!

EFG Orchids was founded in 1939 outside of Chicago furnishing the wholesale market with cut orchid blooms and gardenias. George is a fourth generation orchid grower, who relocated to DeLand to create an innovative new greenhouse with a wide variety of exotic plant species.

Keiki Club – Orchid Swap and Picnic

We had about 30 people at the picnic and orchid swap. Jan had some great orchid mounts and baskets to offer as well as plants to swap. Bob, Roberta, Jan and Sue brought plants to swap or trade for cash. Charlie and Tom cooked the hamburgers and hotdogs and everybody brought a side dish to share. We all had fun yakking away on a beautiful Sunday afternoon...and Coral really enjoyed cleaning up after us!

May 21 Growing Area Tour Leslie and Chip Brickell's Growing Area

We'll be traveling up to Leslie and Chip's in May to see their beautiful growing areas, which include a greenhouse and shade structure not to mention beautiful vegetable garden and landscaping. This is an opportunity to see how other SAOS members grow their orchids and learn some of their tricks.

Where: Leslie and Chip Brickell's Home
[1319 Wentworth Ave, Jax 32259](https://www.google.com/maps/place/1319+Wentworth+Ave,+Jax+32259)

When: Sunday, May 21, 1 - 3 pm

American Orchid Society Corner

Webinars

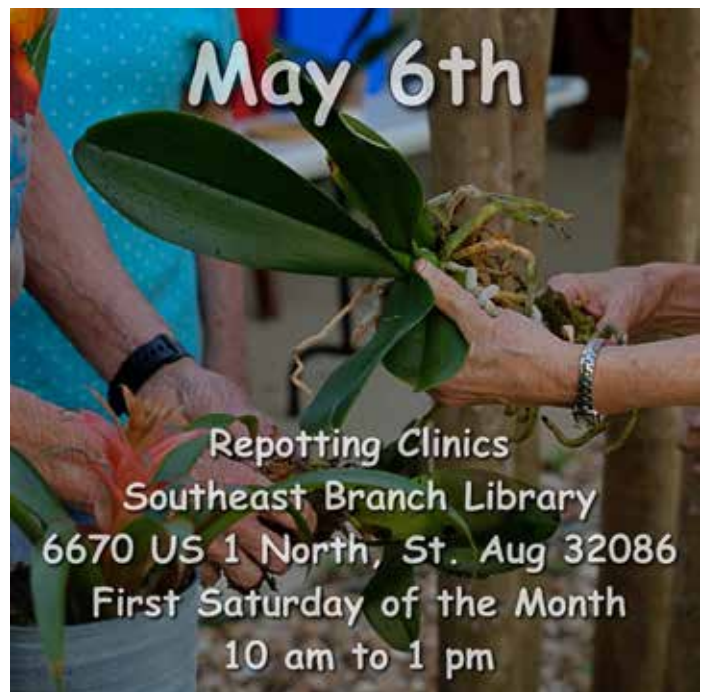
May 11, 8:30 pm, Everyone Invited
Greenhouse Chat - Ron McHatton

May 16, 8:30 pm, AOS Members Only
The Land Down Under – Tom Miranda

Orchids Magazine this Month

White Habenarias – Leon Glicenstein
Male Catasetum Flowers – David Nickerson
Bulbophyllum bicolor – Judith Rapacz-Hasler

[Photos of Latest AOS Awards](#)



INSPIRATION



Habenaria Regneri

© Terry Botta



CULTIVATION

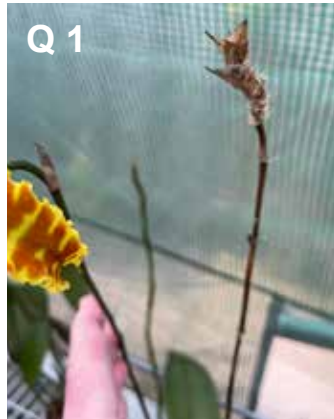


Orchid Questions & Answers

by Sue Bottom,
sbottom15@hotmail.com

Q1. Somehow, my second spike got damaged in its development stage. Her twin bloomed and luckily I have a new spike in the back coming! I think now I can cut the failed second spike. How far down should I cut?

A1. I wouldn't cut the flower spike unless it browns and withers. Even if the flower bud is damaged, as long as the spike is green and viable, you might think about getting it to bloom from the next node down. Gently tug back the paper sheath protecting the node, and then just wait and watch to see if a flower bud forms there.



Q2. This oncidium has bloomed in the past with many flower spikes. It recently put out spikes which have gotten deformed. They do not strengthen, are curling and tend to break off. None of the leaves are accordioned, so I don't think it's poor watering. It was in a south facing, filtered window for a long time. When it looked like the new spikes were going to be deformed, I moved it to a nearby east facing window with a full spectrum LED light, but that didn't improve the situation.



A2. The flower spikes grow towards the light, and sometimes a spike starts out under a leaf and then curls a little bit til it finds the light to grow towards. So maybe it



did not respond well to being relocated from the south to the east facing window, although the deformity apparently started while it was still in the south window. I would move it back to the south window, where it apparently thrived. It is possible there is a calcium deficiency causing the spikes to not strengthen, but my guess it is likely mostly a light issue.

Q3. Something has been snacking on the orchid flowers. Could it be a caterpillar, although we have not been able to spot any, or any other insects. Any suggestions?

A3. It could be caterpillars although you would think



you would see some caterpillar poop, and it could be cockroaches, it could be snails/slugs but you'd think you'd see slime trails or maybe rodents. The bigger the bites, the bigger the critter, so probably cockroaches or mice/rats would be my suspicion. If it were caterpillars, you would spray with BT, if it were cockroaches, bait with boric acid, there are various baits for snails and slugs and traps/poison for rodents. Best of luck!



CULTIVATION



Watering Redux by Dr. Courtney Hackney

Once again, I find that I have misjudged how quickly my orchids are drying out. While the humidity has been low for the past few months with lots of bright sunny days, it still surprises me how quickly pots dry each year. This year, the wakeup call occurred when I began to repot cattleyas from a crowded bench. Despite a heavy drenching earlier that morning, some of the pots were very dry. Clearly, I was not getting water into the interior of the bench. Many years ago, an old-time commercial grower demonstrated how his growers were instructed to water. It seemed silly at the time, but his method of watering at a sharp angle really does work. When cattleyas are placed on a bench and allowed to grow, their leaves will cover the surface above the pot to maximize light capture. Watering directly onto these plants from above allows water to flow around the pot. A good drenching means that the water flows generously through the pot. Watering at an angle can accomplish such a drench and soak the medium.

This time of year, soaking orchids is necessary if you are going to deliver adequate water to the roots. Later in the year, when air humidity is high, it is much easier to get pots soaked. The same is true for vandias and other orchids hanging in baskets. It is necessary to water more frequently and to make two trips across the benches to really wet plant and their roots.

Watering at night or late afternoon is strongly discouraged in most "how to" books. However, this is what happens in Nature and is practiced by many commercial growers, especially in the tropics. It also works for me here in Florida if I can meet the following criteria. The daily humidity is relatively low, my greenhouse is open with great air movement, and night temperature is above 60 F. I water late afternoon and plants are still wet in the morning when I water again with a dilute dose of fertilizer. As soon as I began the practice this spring my orchids immediately perked up. Once humidity gets high again, usually in May or early June, the rate of drying declines and I begin the normal early morning soaking practice.

Obviously, if other media are being used, e.g., sphagnum, it is relatively easy to wet your medium. While it is easy to wet sphagnum, some media that hold water well most of the year may be hard to wet. Media (and soil



too) become hydrophobic if they are dry too long under low humidity. Fir bark is vulnerable, especially if a white mold appears on the surface. Once this appears, it becomes almost impossible to adequately wet the bark and repotting becomes necessary.

Soaking all media is best, even if it wets easily. My experiments using sphagnum showed me that tightly packing sphagnum in the pot worked best for that medium. If packed properly, water will actually sit on the surface and only slowly drain through the medium. If you are growing in sphagnum, which is a common medium for pot plants, be sure you flush the pot at least once a month or high levels of salts will accumulate. This may require two passes through the greenhouse or in your sink.

Air conditioning has or will become necessary throughout the South soon. If you grow inside under lights or in a window, you will experience what those of us growing in a greenhouse have been experiencing, low humidity and rapid drying of pots and plants.

If there are spikes with a few flowers left on your phals, consider cutting the spikes off. First bloomed orchids will appreciate this and start their growth cycle earlier, if you remove remaining flowers.

You should already be applying fertilizer so that increased light levels can be converted into more roots and leaves by your orchids. Remember, fertilize weakly weekly, using just ¼ the recommended fertilizer concentration. This remains one of the hardest things for most new orchid hobbyists. If you are using Nutricote, also known as Dynamite, no additional fertilizing is necessary, but continue to flush once a month.

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 2011.



CULTIVATION

Lovely *Laelia purpurata*

by James Rose, reprinted with permission



Laelia purpurata, by Roberta Hicks

One of the most majestic orchids is *Laelia purpurata*. Further validation of this opinion is the fact that it is also the national flower of Brazil. So popular is this plant that it is often found in the background of many of today's modern hybrids.

May and June is the bloom season for this anise-scented species in the Northern Hemisphere, so this is the time to learn about the many color forms available. A Brazilian nursery at one time listed almost 100 color forms. Since then, these different cultivars have been consolidated into approximately 10 groups. Some of the most common in cultivation are: *carnea*, white with a pink lip; *coerulea*, the blue form also known as the *werkhauseri* type; *striata*, those with red veining on the petals; *sanguinea*, the deep reddish purple form; and *semi-alba*, with its unusual varieties of dark purple on the lip. One could build a fantastic and varied collection with just this one species.



Laelia purpurata var. *flammea*, by Terry Bottom

Laelia purpurata is vigorous and easy to cultivate. One unwarranted criticism is that *L. purpurata* is too large for most collections. Though a well-grown specimen can be 3 feet tall, the characteristically upright knifelike leaves take up less bench space than modern *Cattleya* hybrids, which tend to grow out laterally. The only drawback to a plant of this size is that it is top-heavy, but a clay pot will support it.

Light. *Laelia purpurata* in nature grows epiphytically, close to the canopy in wooded hillsides. As such, plants prefer bright light. When passing your hand over the leaf, you should see a good shadow. Many problems will occur if the light levels are too low - weak, soft growth and poor flowering performance. If growing indoors as a houseplant, the plant will profit greatly by being placed outdoors in brighter light during the summer.



Laelia purpurata var. *carnea*, by Sheila Nathanson

Temperature. Though generally considered to grow alongside most *cattleyas*, *L. purpurata* seems to do well under a wide variety of temperatures. In Brazil, the general temperature range is likely to be between 55 and 60 F at night and 80 and 85 F during the day, with some variance in accordance with the seasons. These temperatures make *L. purpurata* a fine candidate for the intermediate greenhouse. Coastal Southern California growers will often raise it outdoors because the plants tolerate short periods of drops into the 30s.

Humidity and Air Movement. This durable orchid is also quite tolerant of periods of lower humidity, but the optimum range is 50 to 60 percent. Higher humidity creates some problems such as flower spotting. As with most orchids, a fresh environment with good air movement is preferred. If temperatures get quite high, increase both humidity and air movement.

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L. purpurata var. *schusteriana*, by Courtney Hackney

Water and Fertilizer. *Laelia purpurata* has two distinct periods of growth - one of active growth, and corresponding root action, and then a dormant period when flowering occurs. Your watering and feeding should be in tune with these two periods when new pseudobulbs grow and mature and active rooting is seen. Water more often and provide a sufficient supply of nutrients to facilitate strong growth. As the pseudobulb matures, a sheath should appear, heralding the season's flower spike. At this time, decrease watering somewhat and apply a fertilizer lower in nitrogen and higher in potassium and phosphorus.

Potting. The medium of choice for most growers is the blend of ¼ to ½ inch fir bark. This has been in use for many decades, and is still the most common medium. Occasionally, *L. purpurata* is grown in New Zealand sphagnum moss, particularly when plants are seedling size. Allow for one to two years of new growth when choosing pot size. If dividing, make strong divisions of at least three bulbs because this *Laelia* can struggle if divisions are too small.

The most important aspect with regard to repotting this species is timing. Most orchids are repotted as soon as new roots emerge. This is perhaps the worst time to divide *L. purpurata*. Although you will see new roots, the strength is really diverted to the flowering. Wait until after the flowering, when the actual new growth of the plant is in progress. This way the plant will establish quickly and prepare for the next year's flowering season.

Pests and Diseases. Like most cattleyas, *L. purpurata* has a few problems that pests that seek it out. The most

prevalent is scale, especially Boisduval scale. This pest hides under the old bulb sheaths and can be quite difficult to eradicate. Dip the plant, and use a systemic pesticide with follow-up treatment as indicated on the label. If you prefer "contact kill" pesticides, such as soaps and alcohol, you will have to be diligent in checking your plants over and over again for signs of live pests. Clean the bulbs of old sheath material.

Bacterial and fungal diseases are fairly rare and, as in most cases, prevention by way of good culture is the best measure. Do not crowd plants, allow for ample air movement, light and water appropriate to the age and composition of the medium and stage of growth of the plant and seasons.

This species is one of the most beautiful of all orchids. Growers are fortunate to have a wide variety to choose from through the efforts of commercial growers who have made clones and selfings available at competitive prices. *Laelia purpurata* is certainly the highlight for this time of year.

This article appeared in the American Orchid Society Orchids magazine in May 1994 (Vol.63:5, pp.542-544).



Laelia purpurata var. *werkhauseri*, by Terry Bottom

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If You Can Grow Potatoes, You Can Grow Habenarias by Sue Bottom

Habenarias have a lot of things in common with potatoes, although their flowers are a lot more attractive. They both go through five distinct stages in the course of their annual development. Once you understand their life cycle, you get many insights into their cultural needs. Here's a side by side comparison of the life stages of growing potatoes and habenarias, and how best to grow them during each stage.

	Potatoes	Habenarias
<p>Stage 1 Sprout Development</p> <p>New sprouts emerge from growth buds on the previous season's mature tubers</p>	<p>When new sprouts emerge from a planted seed potato, the sprouts grow upward and eventually push above the surface of the soil. At the same time, new roots begin to grow from the potato's eye at the base of the sprout.</p>	<p>Habenarias have only one growing tip from which a growth will start. Once you notice the growing tip greens up, it is time to pot the tuberoid. Once potted, a quick sprinkle of water around the edge of the pot is all that is needed.</p>
<p>Stage 2 Vegetative Growth</p> <p>The plant develops its above ground structure, including stems, branches and leaves.</p>	<p>The plant's root system develops at this time, and the horizontal root shoots, called stolons, from which new tubers will grow begin to develop.</p> <p>During the initial part of this vegetative growth stage, the plant gets nourishment from starch and sugars stored in the seed potato. Then, as leaves develop, the process of photosynthesis begins and the plant becomes capable of nourishing itself in preparation for new tuber growth.</p>	<p>As the first rosette begins to form from the growing tip, the plant has no roots. Plant growth is fueled by converting the starch in the tuberoid into sugar. As the roots emerge from the base of the sprout and grow into the media, you can begin to water carefully, keeping water from entering the rosettes. As the leaves develop, the plant generates sugars from photosynthesis, so increase watering frequency to match growth rate. Keep them evenly moist.</p>
<p>Stage 3 Tuber Initiation</p> <p>Tubers being to form and the plant flowers</p>	<p>The tips of the stolons begin to swell, the first step in the development of new tubers, but the tubers do not yet grow substantially in size. This stage usually happens just before the plant flowers, but there is no direct connection between flowering and the beginning of tuber development.</p>	<p>Keep watering and feeding your habenarias as they reach their full height. Keep them evenly moist. Flowers are going to reward you soon!</p>
<p>Stage 4 Tuber Bulking</p> <p>Most of its energy is directed toward the growth of new tubers</p>	<p>Water, sugars and nutrients begin to build up in the cells of the tubers. The cells swell, and the tubers increase dramatically in size.</p>	<p>This is the time when next year's tuberoids are developing, the future of your plant. After the blooms fade, slowly reduce watering frequency. Let the plant dry slightly between waterings.</p>
<p>Stage 5 Maturation</p> <p>Plant's growth slows and eventually ceases entirely</p>	<p>Photosynthesis in the leaves slows down, and the tubers stop growing. Above ground, the plant turns yellow and starts to drop its leaves, and below ground, the skins of the tubers thicken in preparation for their dormant period. At the end of this stage, the plant dies. During the maturation stage, sugars in the tubers are converted to starch, an efficient source of food for next year's plants.</p>	<p>When the leaves yellow, it is time to stop watering and let the plant dry out. The plant turns brown and dies, while the tuberoids are hardening off for their dormancy. Leave the brown vegetation in place. After several weeks, when a gentle tug separates the dried vegetation from the tuberoid, it is time to unpot the tuberoids and store them for the winter.</p>

Source: Information about potatoes extracted from Life Cycle of a Potato Plant, Evan Gillespie, Updated July 19, 2021, <https://www.ehow.com/13763954/best-indoor-gardening-kits>.

Something About Orchids, Sarah Hurdel Facebook blog site, is a great resource with many useful tips and photos for growing habenarias, <https://www.facebook.com/askmeaboutmyplants/>

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The new growth consumes the starches stored in the tuberoid. Once the leaves develop, the plant can start producing its own energy from photosynthesis.

The new roots emerge from the growing tip at the base of the new growth. No point in watering until the roots can absorb the moisture.

Store your tuberoids over the winter in clear plastic bags so you can check for new growth in the spring..

Growing and flowering habenarias is pretty straightforward, keep them moist and in brightish light while in active growth. Where it can get a little tricky is what to do with them as they are breaking dormancy at the beginning of the growth cycle and entering dormancy at the end of their annual life.

Breaking Dormancy. If you store your tuberoids in clear plastic bags, you can check them weekly for signs that the tuberoid is breaking dormancy. You will see the beginnings of green growth at the growing tip of the tuberoid in the spring. This is the time to pot up the tuberoid.

Tall Pots. Use tall pots for your habenaria tuberoids. You want the growing tip at the top of the tuberoid to be about ½ inch below the top rim of the pot. Your hope is that by the end of the growing season, the plant will produce two tuberoids for each one planted, so select a pot that can comfortably hold the tuberoids hoped for at year end. Many use plastic pots which tend to hold more moisture, while clay pots are more stable and resistant to tipping over. Whichever type you use, make sure it is tall.

Bottom of the Pot. Add an inch or so of perlite to the bottom of the pot before adding your potting mix. This gives the tuberoids an airy place to grow into. Don't use peanuts or other drainage materials in the bottom of the pot.

Potting Mix. A peat based soilless mix like Pro-Mix is often recommended. This stayed too dry under my conditions. Perhaps the pot had been overfilled with Pro-Mix so it couldn't be watered properly, or perhaps sponge rock shouldn't have been blended with the Pro-Mix. This year the habenarias were potted in long fibered New Zealand sphagnum moss instead of Pro-Mix. The sphagnum was wound around the tuberoids to about ½ inch of the growing tip. Once the leaves began to emerge, a final layer of sphagnum was added up to the top of the tuberoid/base of the new growth. The sphagnum was prewetted, but

water should be added only sparingly, if at all, until the first rosette of leaves appears. The new roots grow from the top of the tuberoid/base of the plant. There is no point in watering until there are roots that can absorb the moisture, although some suggest that a little moisture can encourage the habenaria to break dormancy, while too much moisture will just cause the tuberoid to rot. Once the leaves have formed, keep the plant constantly moist.

Entering Dormancy. After flowering, you will start reducing your watering frequency, letting the plants dry a bit between waterings. Eventually the plants will start to yellow, and basically they have stopped growing so you should stop watering them. Let the plants dry out. The leaves will brown and wither. Leave the top growth in place for another couple of weeks, until the plant can be separated from the tuberoid with a gentle tug. That is the time to unpot your tuberoids and store them for the winter.

You might read some recommendations about putting the plant and pot in a plastic bag for the winter, or just isolating the plants and not watering until you start seeing top growth in the spring. This approach worked for me for several years, and then around year three there was a mass extinction event. Unpotting the tuberoids for the winter dormancy has made all the difference for successfully growing habenarias in my growing area.

Habenarias are basically annuals, unlike so many of our other orchids. Pretend you're a potato farmer and grow those tuberoids, the flowers make it all worthwhile.

Acknowledgements: Credit to the Mad, I mean Translational Scientist Brandon Silvester for my potato epiphany. He told me "use blue light for tuber growth, it works for radishes!"



ORCHID ADVENTURES



Apopka International Spring Orchid Festival

Frank Smith of Krull Smith Orchids in Apopka is revolutionizing orchid festivals in Florida. Several times a year he invites other vendors to his greenhouses to sell orchids and tropicals, at no charge to the vendors, with free admission and parking to the attendees. This allows everyone to spend all their money on orchids, yahoo! Krull Smith has an incredible inventory of blooming orchids, and you can also buy orchids from Accent, Blue Ridge, Bredren, Gold Country, Miranda, Orchid Eros, Paph Paradise, Springwater and Sunset Valley. He hosts the Vanda and Slipper Symposium in the fall. If we can only get him to do the Cattleya Symposium we'd be in seventh heaven!



SHOW TABLE



Grower Jeff Milkins
Paph. Hung Sheng Master



Grower Suzanne Susko
Neof. falcata var. Manjushage



Grower Sue Bottom
Leptodes bicolor



Grower Allen Black
Pot. Been Lucky



Grower Courtney Hackney
Phal. lueddemanniana 'Woodlawn'



Grower Mary Ann Bell
Galeopetalum Starburst 'Parkside' AM/AOS



Grower Leslie Brickell
Bulb. mastersianum



SHOW TABLE



Grower Leslie Brickell
Tttna. Dark Prince 'Breckinridge' HCC/AOS



Grower Bob Schimmel
C. intermedia var. alba 'Lines'



Grower Sue Bottom
Bulb falcatum var. velutina 'Gold Country' HCC/AOS



Grower Suzanne Susko
Blc. Ports of Paradise 'Emerald Isle' FCC/AOS



Grower Courtney Hackney
C. mossiae var. reineckiana



Grower Shelia Nathanson
Paph. Cream Sorbet

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

