



**C**onnecticut

**O**rchid

**S**ociety

# Newsletter

*Affiliated with the American Orchid Society*

**April 2012**

***53 Years & Growing***

## Next Meeting

Date: Wednesday, Apr. 11, 2012

Time: 6:30 P.M. "Orchid Health Department" help session starts.  
7:00 P.M. Socializing begins. Show & Sale Tables open.  
7:30 P.M. Business meeting begins followed by the featured event.

Place: Farmington Senior Center  
321 New Britain Ave.  
Unionville, CT

(See pg. 25 for map & directions.)

Program: **Marvelous Miniatures, Gems of the Orchid World**  
Presented by Harry Phillips of Andy's Orchids, Encinitas, CA

Meeting Status: For notice of last-minute or inclement weather cancellation, visit our website [www.ctorchids.org](http://www.ctorchids.org) or call Judy Becker at (860) 435-2263.

### Contact us

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Connecticut Orchid Society (COS) is an incorporated non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization founded in 1959. Please consider making a charitable contribution to COS. Most donations made to COS are tax deductible.

**COS Membership Information : \$20/yr. Individual \$25/yr. Family  
New category: \$200 Individual or \$250 Family Lifetime Membership (never pay dues again!)**

**Contact Membership Chairperson Mary Rampone at (860) 649-7952 for more details.  
A membership application is located on pg. 26 for your convenience.**

## Connecticut Orchid Society Mission Statement

The Connecticut Orchid Society is an incorporated, non-profit association for the preservation and extension of knowledge concerning the conservation, ecology, science, cultivation, hybridization, appreciation and uses of orchids; and to carry on such activities as may be necessary or desirable to effectuate such purposes.



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## Connecticut Orchid Society Officers and Posts -- 2012

PRESIDENT	<i>Cheryl Mizak</i>
VICE-PRESIDENT	<i>Vacant</i>
TREASURER	<i>Judy Arth</i>
DIRECTOR -AT- LARGE	<i>Dottie Kern</i>
DIRECTOR -AT- LARGE	<i>Roger Heigel</i>
RECORDING SECRETARY	<i>Carla Koch</i>
MEMBERSHIP CHAIRPERSON	<i>Mary Rampone</i>
CORRESPONDING SECRETARY	<i>Sharon SmithDelisle</i>
EDITOR, LIBRARIAN/HISTORIAN	<i>Sharon SmithDelisle</i>
AOS REPRESENTATIVE	<i>Sam Hinckley</i>
CONSERVATION CHAIRPERSON	<i>Vacant</i>
SPECIAL EVENTS COORDINATOR	<i>Cheryl Mizak</i>
REFRESHMENT CHAIRPERSON	<i>Judy Becker</i>
WEB MASTER	<i>Deidra Crewe</i>

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### Mentor List

The following COS members are available to answer your culture questions and help you with any orchid growing problems you may have:



Judy Becker     [judybecker40@att.net](mailto:judybecker40@att.net)  
Greenhouse growing methods: Wide variety of species & hybrids

Sam Hinckley     [samuelhinckley@comcast.net](mailto:samuelhinckley@comcast.net)  
Windowsill growing methods: Species & hybrids

Jeffrey Richards     [Jeffrey.richards@snet.net](mailto:Jeffrey.richards@snet.net)  
Greenhouse growing methods: Specializing in Paphiopedilums.

Sharon SmithDelisle     [editor@ctorchids.org](mailto:editor@ctorchids.org)  
Under lights & windowsill growing methods: Bulbophylums, Cymbidiums, Dendrobiums, Paphiopedilums, Miltoniopsis & mixed genera.

David Tognalli     [dtog54@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dtog54@sbcglobal.net)  
Windowsill & outdoor growing methods: Warm growers, Cattleyas, Dendrobiums & mixed genera.

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### Membership Policy

Membership is open to anyone interested in orchids. Members join the Society by payment of annual dues. Memberships may be individual, student, family, life or honorary. Honorary membership is for life and is made by nomination of the Board of Directors and majority vote of the membership present at a regular meeting.

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### Content Acknowledgement

All information, opinions, reporting and recommendations that appear in this newsletter are those of the editor, unless otherwise noted.

## Upcoming Events



- Apr. 11 Connecticut Orchid Society Monthly Meeting: Harry Philips of Andy's Orchids, Encinitas, CA. will present "Marvelous Miniatures, Gems of the Orchid World" 7:30 pm, Farmington Senior Center, 321 New Britain Ave., Unionville, CT. Harry will be bringing plants for sale.
- May 9 Connecticut Orchid Society Monthly Meeting: Michael Sinn of Canaima Orchids, Palmetto, FL. Topic to be announced. 7:30 pm, Cheshire Senior Center, 240 Maple Ave., Cheshire, CT.
- May 19 Northeast Judging Center: Hampton Inn, 200 Tarrytown-White Plains Rd. (Rt. 119), Elmsford, NY. Slides & presentations begin at 10:00 am. Judging begins at noon; bring your own lunch.
- June 13 Connecticut Orchid Society Monthly Meeting: TBA, 7:30 pm, Farmington Senior Center, 321 New Britain Ave., Unionville, CT
- June 16 Northeast Judging Center: Hampton Inn, 200 Tarrytown-White Plains Rd., (Rt. 119), Elmsford, NY. Slides & presentations begin at 10:00 am. Judging begins at noon; bring your lunch.
- Sept. 12 Connecticut Orchid Society Monthly Meeting: TBA, 7:30 pm, Cheshire Senior Center, 240 maple Ave., Cheshire, CT
- Oct. 10 Connecticut Orchid Society Monthly Meeting: Hadley Cash of Marriott Orchids, NC will give a presentation. He will bring plants for sale. Topic will be announced. 7:30 pm, Farmington Senior Center, 321 New Britain Ave., Unionville, CT.
- Oct. 19 ~ 21 Connecticut Orchid Society Show & Sale: Orchid Harvest 2012, Van Wilgen's Garden Center, 51 Valley Rd., North Branford, CT
- Nov. 14 Connecticut Orchid Society Monthly Meeting: Bill Thoms of Central Florida will give a presentation about growing outstanding bulbophyllums. 7:30 pm, Cheshire Senior Center, 240 Maple Ave., Cheshire, CT
- Dec. 12 Connecticut Orchid Society Holiday Party & Mini-Auction: 7:00 pm, Farmington Senior Center, 321 New Britain Ave., Unionville, CT



## AOS corner



American Orchid Society  
*Education. Conservation. Research.*

One of the more interesting advantages of being the AOS Affiliated Societies Chair is that some of the societies send me their newsletter. I scan those that I directly get as well as go on to the AOS forum and read some of the newsletters that are posted there. By going through these newsletters, I realize how active, vibrant and healthy many of our affiliated societies are. Through their commitment and love of orchids, they manage to share their knowledge and passion with other like-minded individuals. Through the advancement of social media and computerized publishing programs, these newsletters are filled with great photographs of orchids of their shows and meeting show tables, more regional cultural information. Through these AOS Corners, I provide information for the societies to use in their newsletters about the American Orchid Society and its programs, activities and resources. I appreciate it when I see them posted in these newsletters.

The Kansas Orchid Society will be hosting the AOS Annual Members meeting at its annual orchid show April 25-30, 2012, Wichita. SWROGA and other alliances will be holding their meetings as part of this meeting. These national and regional meetings provide the opportunity to shop, meet the vendors and others in the world face to face, talk about what is new in the orchid world or have someone just listen to your own theories and tips. The speakers for the AOS Members Meeting and Kansas Orchid Society Show are diverse and definitely provide something for everyone. They are [Dr. Leonid Averyanov](#), [Keynote Speaker](#), Senior Researcher and Professor of the Herbarium of Komarov Botanical Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences (St. Petersburg, Russia), and Vice President of the All-Russian Botanical Society. He will speaking on '[Orchids of Vietnam: Ecology of Ornamental Species](#)'. [Dr. Raymond A. Cloyd](#), Professor and Extension Specialist in Ornamental Entomology/Integrated Pest Management, Department of Entomology, Kansas State University, who will be speaking on '[Pests of Orchids](#)'. [Robert Fuchs](#), R.F. Orchids, who will be speaking on '[Vandaceous Intergeneric Hybrids](#)'. [Patricia Harding](#), AOS judge and Author, speaking on '[Brazilian Oncidiums](#)'. [Norito Hasegawa](#), of Paphantics, Unlimited and an 'over extended hobbyist' presenting '[What's New in Paphs?](#)' [Alan Koch](#) of Gold Country orchids speaking about '[Species Habitat and Hybrid Culture](#)' and [Bryon Rinke](#), presenting a presentation on '[Phalaenopsis lobbii and parishii, the species and hybrids](#)'.

There are many other regional orchid events going on and they are listed on the AOS website under events. If your society is hosting a show as an affiliated society, make sure to have it posted under the AOS Events Calendar. ~ Lynn Fuller, Chair

## Around the Greenhouse -- *Editor's keikis*



Letters to the editor are always welcome. Your feedback about any issue that is on your mind will help us improve our Society, as well as the newsletter. Please write to me at [editor@ctorchids.org](mailto:editor@ctorchids.org) or 38 Robinhood Rd., Danbury, CT 06811.

The deadline for submissions to the May Issue of the newsletter is Apr. 20th



Dave Tognalli talks to new member Donna Quill about an orchid she brought to the meeting for repotting.

### New member welcome ☘

Joan Andrews of Guilford  
Virginia Freye of Mystic  
George Jones of Plantsville  
Dean Delgindice of Plantsville  
Donna Quill of Startford  
Rosa Woodruff of New Preston



New member George Jones , Pres. Cheryl Mizak and



On left, Mary Rampone sets up for the repotting workshop, while Judy Becker (in blue COS shirt) looks on.



Ladies night! Joyce Daniels (on left) and Carla Koch (on right) enjoyed getting to know our guest Judy Nash.

## April's Featured Event

Join us as our guest speaker  
Harry Phillips  
of  
Andy's Orchids, Encinitas, CA  
speaks to us on  
"Marvelous Miniatures,  
Gems of the Orchid World"  
Harry will discuss growing and choosing  
miniatures orchids, and creating a growing  
area with minis in mind.

## Presidents' Message

Hello —

I am not sure where spring went but it was nice while it lasted.

WOW, such interest in the potting workshop at our meeting last month — bags and boxes of plants were lined up for review by our plant doctors. It sure put the doc's to the test. Everyone went home with happier plants and we had a chance to learn some new growing tips.

Interest and curiosity in orchids is growing with the general public, too. We just had two standing-room only informational and potting sessions at Hollandia Nurseries and Gardens in Bethel. We welcome two new members from those sessions.

On April 14th, Dave Tognalli will be giving a talk on Orchid Care and a Repotting Demonstration at Gledhill Nursery in West Hartford at 1:00 pm. Also, don't forget Earth Day in Woodbury is coming up on Sat., April 21<sup>st</sup>.

This month, we look forward to welcoming back Harry from Andy's Orchids. His talk is on miniature orchids. I hope you remembered to check their web site to pre-order some goodies. If you did not get a chance to check out the site he will be bringing plants for sale.

Good Growing!  
Cheryl



President  
Cheryl Mizak



## March's Meeting Minutes



Carla Koch  
Recording Secretary

COS MEETING, 3/14/12

This meeting featured a repotting clinic, with demonstrations by members and much potting media and supplies available for purchase. Of particular interest were three nice terrariums that Sharon SmithDelisle brought in, housing *Masdevallias* and *Pleurothallids* from J & L. Some were simply large jars, with the little potted plant raised on a bottle cap inside, and water below. Every so often, fresh air is let in, and such plants should not be in direct sun, or they will get too hot—otherwise, it is a simple and very effective solution for these tiny plants. Cheryl Mizak talked about getting the plastic trays that supermarkets use for fish, and recycling them for plant use. Also, Roger Heigel demonstrated how he creates the equivalent of Rand air-cone pots. He takes a plastic juice container and cuts off the top. Next, he drills holes in the base and sides; some of these holes were used for hanging wires, some for drainage. Orchids will grow in these, with potting medium visible and roots flourishing. The top of the bottle can form a cloche, or temporary terrarium for fragile plants. Many people took advantage of the advice of experts such as Judy Becker in refurbishing their plants.



Sharon SmithDelisle did a show & tell about using ordinary lidded jars and small terrariums as suitable environments to grow *Masdevallias* and *Pleurothallids*.

~ Carla Koch





Roger Heigel demonstrates making a plastic juice container for use as a Rand air-cone like pot. We applaud Roger on his recycling efforts!

“Doctor” Judy Becker, on right, works at checking out and repotting a member’s plant.



On left, Morgan Daniels (in plaid shirt) works at repotting plants for new member Donna Quill in blue sweater on right.

## February Show Table

<u>Genus</u>	<u>Plant/parentage</u>	<u>owner</u>	<u>conditions</u>
Cattleya Drumbeat 'Heritage' HCC/AOS (Syn. Lc.) Bonanza x Horace		S. Smith Delisle	i,w&l
Cattlianthe Gold Digger 'Fuchs Mandarin' (Syn. Lc.) Ctt. Red Gold x C.Warpaint		S. Smith Delisle	i,w&l
Cattlianthe Orglade's Spotlight (Syn. Slc.) Gold Digger x Hazel Boyd		D. Tognalli	i,w
Coelogyne chloroptera		C. Mizak	i,g
Dendrobium hybrid		C. Koch	i,g
Dendrochilum convallariiforme 'Fishing Creeks Spiral'		C. Mizak	i.g
Dendrochilum wenzelii		C. Mizak	i,g
Doritaenopsis I-Hsin Waltz 'Hello Kitty' I-Hsin Black Jack x Sinca Sunday		D. Tognalli	i,g
Laeliocattleya Liptonii L. anceps x C. labiata		C. Koch	i,g
Masdevallia grossa		M. Rampone	i,g
Maxillaria tenuifolia		M. Rampone	i.g
Maxillaria variabilis		J. Becker	i.g
Odontoglossum pulchellum		C. Mizak	i,g
Oncidium Issaku Nagata (Syn. Miltonidium) leucochilum x fuscatum		D. Tognalli	i.g
Oncidium Hawaiian Sunset (Syn. Miltonidium) Pupukea Sunset x fuscatum		J. Becker	i.g
Oncidium maculatum		C. Mizak	i,g
Phalaenopsis hybrid ign.		D. Tognalli	i.g
Zygopetalum hybrid		M. Rampone	ig



(On left) Cattlianthe Gold Digger 'Fuchs Mandarin' grown by Sharon Smith-Delisle. (On right) Cattlianthe Orlade's Spotlight grown by Dave Tagnalli. Gold Digger is one of the parents of Orlade's Spotlight. It is always interesting to see which characteristics of the parents come through in the offspring. In this case the orange/yellow color is very prominent. Also, Orlade has a delightful fragrance just like its parent Gold Digger.



(on left) *Dendrochilum convallariiforme* 'Fishing Creeks Spiral' brought to Show Table by Cheryl Mizak. (On right) *Maxillaria tenuifolia* brought to Show table by Mary Rampone. (Below, left) *Zygopetalum* hybrid brought to Show Table by Mary Rampone. (Below, right) *Dendrochilum wenzelii* brought to Show table by Cheryl Mizak.



## News, Notes & Happenings



### Al DeLuca

It is with great regret that we inform our membership that long-time member Al DeLuca passed late last month. Al has “left the greenhouse” and we hope he has gone in search of that elusive Paphiopedilum he was so fond of. Cards of sympathy may be sent to his wife Pia & family at 75 Soundview Ave., Stamford, CT 06902. Pia told us that she and her daughter will try to keep the orchids in Al’s greenhouse going. I’m sure she would appreciate some help if anyone would like to lend a helping hand.

## Out Reach Programs



*Van Wilgen's Escape to Spring Raffle Plant Winner* ☼ Sarah Williams from Hamden, CT was the winner of our raffle plant at the Van Wilgens “Escape to Spring” event, March 9 ~ 11th. Sarah is shown here posing with her family and her winning orchid.

### Connecticut Flower & Garden Show Raffle Plant Winner ☼

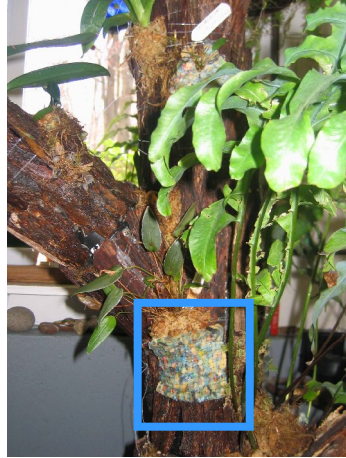
Sue Mauro of Wethersfield, CT was the winner of the raffle plant featured at the Connecticut Flower & Garden Show in Hartford, CT, Feb. 23—26th. Sue told us that this is her very first orchid. Unfortunately, there were no pictures available of Sue receiving her prize but we hope she has great success with growing it.

### Gledhill Nursery Seminar

**Saturday, April 14th** ☼ Dave Tognalli will conduct a seminar about orchid care and repotting at 1:00 pm on Sunday, April 14 at the Gledhill Nursery, 660 Mountain Rd., West Hartford, CT. Visit [www.gledhillnursery.com](http://www.gledhillnursery.com) for more details and directions.



## Now Showing on the COS Epiphyte Tree...



### The Blue Coats are coming, the Blue Coats are coming....

If you attended the May meeting last year, you were treated to a special demonstration by Phil and Ann Jesup about a new mounting process that Ann invented. She has discovered that a little bit of rug padding fixed over a small mound of sphagnum moss and tied snugly around the roots of mounted orchids seems to help establish the roots more quickly; and helps hold moisture at the roots a little longer. The photo and caption on left are from an article published in the AOS magazine *Orchids*, Jan. 2011 about Ann's innovative technique.



Near blooming-size *Cattleya aelandiae* five months since removal from pot and tied on sassafras log with rug padding in root zone.

We thought we would try this technique on new plants recently added to the COS Epi Tree. The rug padding has an overall blue color and the plants look like they are wearing little jackets — hence, the "Blue Coats".



## Beginner's Corner

*Editor's note: These columns were written by our previous editor Larry Kuekes and were run quite regularly over the past years. Larry's perspective is refreshing and some of our new members may welcome this introductory advice.*



Larry Kuekes

### Expert Advice

By Larry Kuekes

What qualifies me to write about orchids? I've only been growing them for forty-plus years. But I remember what confused me at the start, and I have some practical experience to share – hard-won, as evidenced by the trail of dead plants I've left behind on the way. Do your orchids vie for windowsill space with your cat? Do you buy a Vuylstekeara Cambria 'Plush' every winter and it dies every summer? Do 8 out of your 10 orchids never bloom, even though the books said they were "easy to grow"? This column is for you.


I've found two problems with all the orchid books and articles I've read. First, the authors forget what it's like to be a beginner. I had a *Coelogyne ochracea* which was supposed to be "easy to grow". The books said you have to withhold water for a month or two. When? After it blooms. Not very helpful, since it never bloomed. If it bloomed, I wouldn't need the advice. I never did figure out when to withhold water. It finally got scale and I threw it out.

The second problem with orchid books and articles is that the authors all have greenhouses, so their advice is always for greenhouse growing. This is true even in books, which claim to be about growing indoors. How else can you explain statements like these:

"You may have read that orchids are as easy to grow as African violets. Well, they are, but you do not grow them like African violets." (Home Orchid Growing, Rebecca Northen, p.1)

"...African violets, which, incidentally, are far trickier to raise than orchids, I have discovered." (Growing Orchids at your Windows, Jack Kramer, p. vi)

Well, as one who grows both African violets and orchids indoors, I'm here to tell you it just ain't so. Light, temperature, and humidity are all harder to provide indoors for orchids than violets (except *paphiopedilums*, and as a beginner, you probably don't even like paphs), and lugging orchids to the sink to water them is physically far more demanding.

Once you realize that all the published advice applies to greenhouse growing, you can translate it to indoor growing conditions. 

## So, let's begin by talking about Summer vacation:

In May, when frost danger is past, it's time to put your plants outdoors. It's a vacation for them, and for you too, since they're easier to care for outside. If you grow indoors, nothing will make a bigger difference in getting them to bloom.

**Location.** Dr. Ben Berliner once suggested I summer my orchids in a spot with dappled sun all day, such as under high-branched trees. Unfortunately, my trees are maples, which cast shade so deep that grass won't grow. I ended up using an east-facing porch, which gets full sun all morning and shade from noon on. It works fine. Try to find a spot, which at least gets shade in the heat of the day. If you're ambitious, you can provide your own "dappled shade" with a lath structure or window screening (double thickness).

**Light.** The difference in light levels between outdoors and a windowsill, to say nothing of under lights, can have an amazing effect on your plants. One of my first orchids was SLC Jewel Box 'Dark Waters'. I bought it in flower. Then, on a windowsill for the next two years, it just grew leaves. Finally I put it, and most of my other orchids, outside on my porch. That winter my Jewel Box bloomed profusely. From then on I've been putting almost all of my orchids outdoors in the summer.

**Leaf burn.** Leaf burn isn't much of a danger outdoors. The heat can't build up like it does in greenhouses. Just use common sense. Don't put your orchids in full sun all day, and put the cooler-growing types in back of the sun-lovers.

**Watering.** Outside, you don't have to lug your plants to the sink to water them. This alone is a prime reason for summering them outdoors. Because of more sun and natural winds, they will dry out much faster than inside. Inside most of my plants get watered once or twice a week. Outside I water every plant every day. They dry fast enough that the medium doesn't decompose excessively.

**Fertilizing.** Because the orchids are growing faster outdoors, and because of the frequent watering, you should fertilize more often. I fertilize once a week outdoors.

**Temperature.** There is a much larger day-night temperature difference outdoors, as well as a lower night minimum most of the time. Both are highly beneficial for all orchids. Only during heat waves would cool growers (like odontoglossums) do better inside in your air conditioning or your basement. Also, many varieties are encouraged to set spikes by leaving them outside in the fall until the night temperatures get down to 50.

**Pests.** My porch is several steps above the ground, which seems to foil slugs and crawling insects. Last summer a bug chewed through a developing spike on my *Doritis pulcherrima*. That's been the only problem so far. ☘





## April: The Cruellest Month

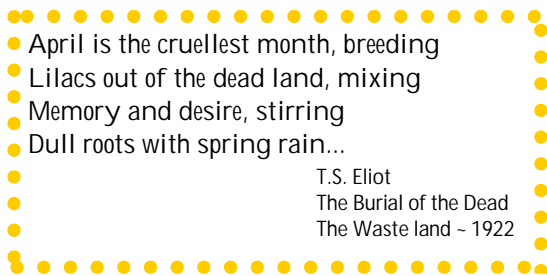
By Thomas Mirenda

Investing Effort Now Yields Excellent Growth in the Future

As an enthusiastic advocate of horticulture, especially orchid growing, it is counterintuitive to admit that April and its ubiquitous malady, spring fever, bring out the curmudgeon in me. You might ask, "How could anyone be unhappy in a field of daffodils? Or frown at the sound of the dawn chorus? Get the blues while tending a bench of fragrant miltoniopsis at their peak?"

To this I answer: Humph.


T.S. Eliot wrote that infamous line about this month of exuberant rebirth.



● April is the cruellest month, breeding  
● Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing  
● Memory and desire, stirring  
● Dull roots with spring rain...  
T.S. Eliot  
The Burial of the Dead  
The Waste land - 1922

Good poetry, having alternative resonances for every individual, allows for many interpretations of what he meant. But I think we all viscerally intuit that the stirring miracle we witness each spring is part of a dichotomous cycle; something larger and darker, at once joyful and tragic, powerful and fragile, gentle and ruthless. April inspires such ruminations. Or perhaps I'm just fixated on tax day. April is also a month where the investment of a bit of effort will yield excellent growth in the near future. It's surer than the stock market.

So, cruel as it may seem, cut out all the lazy daydreaming and instead pay attention to this month's checklist.

**Repotting** For most growers, April is the peak month for repotting. The appearance of new green root tips is the cue to dive in. Almost everything benefits from new potting medium. In general, it's best to repot shortly after a plant has bloomed. Often, you can remove old spikes at the same time. It's important to remove those spikes unless they're orchids that rebloom or bloom successively on the same ones (Psychopsis papilio, Paphiopedilum liemianum, 

Nageliella purpurea and all Sigmatostalix species are examples). Most of the winter-blooming plants (Cymbidium, Phalaenopsis, Brassavola and Cattleya) should be attended to in April and May to allow for optimum growth during the summer growing season.


**Dividing** While repotting, we sometimes find that certain plants, particularly cymbidium, having rotting pseudobulbs, usually in the middle of the plant. Never leave any necrotic tissue (roots, pseudobulbs, brown leaves, etc.) on plants. To do so would be inviting a nasty fungal infection. Instead of cursing, realize that this is your cue to divide the plant.

It may require a lot of physical strength to divide a cymbidium or any other large specimen plant. Cymbidium division is a two-person job. Enlist the help of a fellow orchid enthusiasts (especially if your spouse is horticulturally challenged) and be sure to return the favor. Here at the Smithsonian Institution, we usually break in our new interns with this task. If you think all orchids are delicate and touchy, you will be amazed by the rough treatment a cymbidium can handle. Rotten pseudobulbs can be gooey and smelly so wearing gloves and old clothes is recommended. To prevent spreading virus, we will often divide our plants on a stack of newspaper, removing any wet sheets before proceeding to the next plant. And we use a sterilized cutting tool.

**Propagation** This is a fine time to take small divisions of your favorite plants. Do not remove propagations from young or newly acquired plants. Use only plants that have been growing well for you for a few years. Often, these plants will make many more new growths where a lead was removed, and the process shouldn't hold back the plant. Once your divisions have become established, give them to other orchid friends or donate them to a society's auction. This will help you make friends in your local orchid community, and it will ensure that pieces of your favorite plants survive, even if your original plant dies or becomes infected with virus. Someday, you'll be glad you spread your favorite orchids around. Solid Cymbidium backbulbs, potted in individual small pots, can yield new blooming plants in two years. Stems of Phaius and Gastrochis can be rooted and sprouted this time of year as well.

**Repotting** Longer days account for more growth and transpiration in orchids. By now, most or all of your dormant plants need regular watering again.

Try to offer your plants the best quality water. While most hybrids manage with our municipal water and its chlorine and fluoride additives, these are mildly toxic to many species orchids and deadly to many terrestrials such as Disa and Cypripedium. If you can manage to collect and store rainwater or purchase a reverse osmosis water purification system, your orchids will astonish you with their clean and vigorous spring growth.

Windowsill growers report good results using bottled spring water, too. Pay close attention to how quickly your plants dry out. Often, lifting a pot and gauging its weight will indicate if it needs water. A series of hot sunny spring days can unexpectedly dry out plants significantly. Extra-dry plants will need to be watered 

thoroughly to rewet the medium and avoid serious desiccation. Most plants benefit from a high nitrogen formula fertilizer while they are in active growth. This can continue into the summer until the pseudobulbs are almost mature.

**Ailments** While plants are awakening in April, so are their enemies—pests. Examine new growths regularly for sucking insects. This a peak month for aphids and mealbugs.

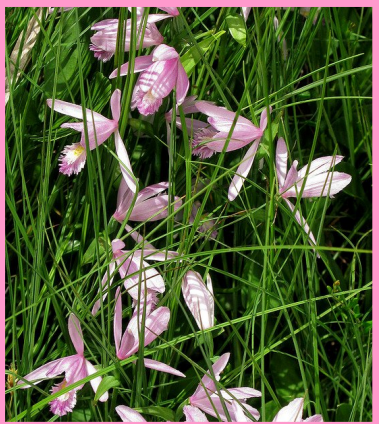
Treatments range from Safer soap and horticultural oils (best for smaller in-home windowsill set-ups) to harsh pesticides. At the Smithsonian, we use a combination of strategies called Integrated Pest Management or IPM for short. This can be a complicated program of various pest-control techniques but basically involves regular scouting of the collection for pest hot spots and individual solutions. If a serious infestation is discovered, a harsh insecticide (such as Orthene) might be applied (following the manufacturer’s application directions). Once they are quelled, we often can manage smaller infestations with nontoxic solutions, insect growth regulators or even beneficial insects. We’ve had great success controlling damaging Boisduval scale using Lindorus beetles. I encourage all greenhouse growers to incorporate beneficial insects and IPM concepts into their pest-management programs.



Thomas Mirenda

(Thomas Mirenda is the orchid collection specialist at the Smithsonian Institution. Tom invites you to contact him via his e-mail: [MirendaT@si.edu](mailto:MirendaT@si.edu). This article was reprinted form The American Orchid Society’s March 2007 edition of *Orchids*, pg. 176, *Orchid Checklist*. Photo taken from Feb. 2008 edition of *Orchids*, photographer unknown.)

take a moment,  
oh, let’s converse;  
stop and enjoy  
some orchid verse.



**Rose Pogonias**

We raised a simple prayer  
Before we left the spot,  
That in the general mowing  
That place might be forgot;  
Or if not all so favored,  
Obtain such grace of hours,  
That none should mow the grass there  
While so confused with flowers.

~ Robert Frost



***Sobralia virginalis***

Painting by Angela Mirro, 2005 Oil on board.

Reprinted from the American Orchid Society magazine *Orchids*, Feb. 2008

*Happiness is puttering around with our "little pretties" (as Steve Frowine likes to call them) and anticipating the arrival of those beautiful flowers. As our orchids grow and thrive so should our experience and knowledge about them. There is a tremendous amount of information that is important for understanding orchid culture and for growing better orchids. The goal of this column is to expand your general knowledge about the world of orchids and help you sound like a pro when you are talking to your fellow COS orchid growers. — Editor Sharon SmithDelisle*

## Beginners Start Here By Ken Slump

### A 12-Step Plan for Becoming a Successful Orchid Grower

This is Part II of a Two-Part Series. Please see last month's newsletter for Part I.

If you are new to the orchid and perhaps feel you are not enjoying the success with your plants that you had hoped for, read through these suggestions and see if you can find an idea or two that will help you turn your hobby in the right direction. Continued....

#### 7. Purchase blooming-sized orchid plants whenever possible.


Small, young orchid plants may take several years to reach flowering size, and it is likely that flowering will occur only if growing conditions are ideal. In most cases, it is easier to sustain a mature plant than it is to nurture a young one and you will not have to wonder if your plant is failing to bloom because it is immature or whether growing conditions are unfavorable.

The best way to know a plant is flowering size is to purchase it in flower, although a mature plant that has bloomed will often bear evidence of that. Buying a plant in bloom also guarantees that the flower you get is the one you are expecting, as some orchid species and hybrids exhibit considerable variability.

Blooming-size orchid plants are unquestionably more expensive than their juvenile counterparts, but I think they are worth it. This particularly true of beginners who may not have the patience to wait for a few years for their orchids to start producing flowers.

#### 8. Keep some records on your orchid collection.

It is the best way to help monitor your progress and assist you in keeping up with routine tasks.

Record keeping does not have to be extensive or involve a lot of technology to be useful. A few basic bits of information kept on a pot label often suffices. Most importantly, you need to have the name of the plant written legibly and indelibly. Other useful data might include the date the plant was acquired, where it was purchased, when it was in flower, the number of flowers it produced and the date the plant was last repotted. Some 

growers also like to keep track of the fertilizer schedule for their plants as well as treatments the plant may have received for pests and diseases.

This may seem like a lot of information for a plastic pot label, so some growers maintain card files or small databases on the plants in their collection. The amount of information you record is a personal decision, but at the very least, in addition to the plant's name, you should keep track of its repotting date to help prioritize your efforts at repotting time.


**9. Admit your failures.** Cull your collection regularly of those plants that are struggling and slowly dying. Many declining orchids seem to be able to cling to life for months or years, yet I do not think I have ever seen anyone bring one back from the brink of death to become a thriving, healthy specimen. Do not try to pass off such plants to a friend or unsuspecting novice, or worse yet, donate them to the divisions table at your local orchid society to resell or give away.

These plants need to go to the trash or compost heap, but try to learn from your mistakes. Attempt to determine why the plant declined. Perhaps it was a cultural problem that you have now solved so that you might succeed in the future with the same or a similar orchid plant. If, on the other hand, you suspect that the orchid failed due to limitations of your growing environment or some inability on your part to understand how to grow it, you would perhaps be well advised to avoid adding that sort of orchid to your collection in the future, at least until you are able to learn more and modify your cultural practices.

**10. Join your nearest orchid society, one of the best places to learn about growing orchids.** There you should find all levels of orchid growing expertise and experts who can advise you on how to grow orchids well in the particular area in which you live. You can find a list of affiliated societies on line at the AOS Web site ([www.aos.org](http://www.aos.org)) under "Affiliates."

Do not be discouraged if your first visit to an orchid society meeting feels a bit like a visit abroad. Orchid growers speak their own language and it takes a bit of time to understand and appreciate some of the terminology and nomenclature.

Orchid societies vary in their operation and organization, but most are welcoming of new members. Be sure to arrive a bit early when you make your first appearance at an orchid society meeting. Make sure you introduce yourself and let some of the members know you are new and interested in learning more about how to grow orchids successfully and are interested in how their organization might enhance that effort.

Thriving societies usually have a variety of activities that occur during the course of their meetings. Many have special events and sessions for novice members 

too. As you become better acquainted and involved in the organization, you will likely make lasting friendships and find opportunities to participate in activities such as orchid shows and visits to orchid growers, both commercial and private.

While it seems harder and harder in today's world to find time to join and participate in a special interest club such as a local orchid society, most who join and get involved will tell you it is a thoroughly rewarding experience. If you are not already a member, you should also join the American Orchid Society ([www.aos.org](http://www.aos.org)).

**11. Seek answers to your questions and solutions to your problems.**

People can and do successfully grow orchids in residential environments in an amazing variety of ways. If you are not enjoying success, there are individuals and groups out there that should be able to help.

Look to orchid societies, libraries, greenhouses and garden centers, botanic gardens and the Internet for help. Gather information and try to sort out the best of it, being aware that too much information can be more confusing than too little. Perhaps the best advice for a struggling orchidist might be to simplify things as much as possible, both in the number and kinds of plants being cultivated, as well as to simplify their cultural practices. Many orchids, indeed, thrive on neglect.

**12. Visit an orchid show.** You can locate one near you by checking the calendar in Orchids magazine or looking on the AOS Web site. A bit of a drive will be worth it. At the show you will have opportunities to meet and learn from orchid enthusiasts, to see and acquire beautiful orchids and to be inspired. It is virtually guaranteed to renew your enthusiasm for your orchid hobby.

(This article reprinted from the American Orchid Society magazine Orchids, March 2007, pg. 178-180)

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On left, Roger Heigel entertains the gents while Lois Sawtell, hidden behind the plants, checks out raffle table offerings.

## How Do You Say That?

Ever been tongue-tied trying to pronounce the name of an orchid species? Here's a helpful guide to some of the more common ones.

Aerangis	ay-er-RANG-giss
Aeranthes	ay-er-AN-theez
Angraecum	an-GRYE-kum
Aspasia	a-SPAY-zi-a
Bifrenaria	bye-fren-AIR-i-a
Brassavola	bra-SAH-vo-la
Brassia	BRASS-ee-ah
Bulbophyllum	bulb-oh-FILL-um
Catasetum	kat-a-SEE-tum
Cattleya	KAT-lee-a
Cochleanthes	kok-lee-AN-theez
Coelia	SEE-li-a
Coelogyne	see-LOJ-in-ee
Cycnoches	SIK-no-keez
Cymbidium	sim-BID-ee-em
Cypripedium	sip-ree-PEE-dee-um
Dendrobium	den-DROH-bee-um
Dendrochilum	den-droh-KYE-lum
Disa	DYE-sa
Encyclia	en-SEE-blee-ah
Epidendrum	eh-pi-DEN-drum
Habenaria	hab-en-AY-ri-a
Jumellea	joo-MELL-ee-a
Laelia	LAY-lee-ah or LIE-lee-a
Lepanthes	lee-PAN-theez
Listera	LISS-ter-a
Lycaste	lye-KASS-tee
Masdevallia	mas-de-VAL-lee-a
Miltonia	mil-TOH-nee-a
Neofinetia	nee-o-fin-AY-tee-a
Odontoglossum	o-don-toh-GLOSS-um
Oncidium	on-SID-ee-um
Paphiopedilum	paff-ee-oh-PEE-di-lum
Phalaenopsis	fal-en-OP-sis
Sophronitis	sof-roh-NYE-tiss
Spathoglottis	spath-oh-GLOT-tiss
Vanda	VAN-da





## Marketplace

*Need some supplies for repotting? As a service to our members, COS now offers a wide range of supplies at the Sale Table. Supplies may be ordered in advance, but must be picked up at a monthly meeting. Prices are only slightly above wholesale, no taxes and no shipping fees—what a deal!*

### **COS Potting Supplies Price List**

Basket –4" square slat w/hanger	\$3.00/ea.
Charcoal chips (4 scoops/bag)	\$2.00/bag
Coconut Husk (medium size chips) ½ cu. Ft.	\$10.00/bag
Coco Tek Coir 150 g. bag	\$5.00/bag
Dyna-grow fertilizer Grow 8 oz.	\$7.00/ea
Dyna-grow fertilizer Bloom 8 oz.	\$7.00/ea.
Grow More Orchids Food 1.25 lb.	\$6.00/ea.
Hydro rocks (one gallon bag)	\$3.00/bag
Mesquite slabs for mounting orchids	\$1.00 /ea.
Orange Guard Insect Spray 32 fl. oz.	\$9.00/bottle
Orchid Bark mix (Cattleya/Dendrobium/Oncidium) 2 gal.	\$5.00/bag
Orchid Bark mix(Cymbidium/Phalaenopsis) 2 gal.	\$6.00/bag
Orchid Bark—small 2 cu. ft.	\$25.00/bag
Orchid Bark – medium 2 cu. ft.	\$25.00/bag
Orchid Bark mix (cattleya/Dendrobium/ Oncidium) 1 cu.ft.	\$20.00/bag
Orchid Bark mix (Cymbidium/Phalaenopsis) 1 cu. ft.	\$22.00/bag
Physan 20 plant insecticide 8 fl.oz.	\$10.00/ea.
Plant labels (set of 25 yellow or white)	\$ 3.00/set
Pots – round, green, plastic 4 ½ " (set of 10)	\$ 4.00/ set
Pro-Teckt plant fertilizer 8 oz.	\$ 7.00/ea.
Rhizome clips—large	\$ 0.50/ea.
Rhizome clips – small	\$ 0.25/ea
Shagnum moss – ¼ lb. block	\$ 8.00/ea.
Superthrive Vitamins-hormones ½ fl. oz.bottle	\$ 3.00/ea.
Thermometer – digital min/max.	\$22.00/ea.
Tree Fern (medium) ½ cu. ft.	\$ 3.00/bag
Water breakers	\$ 5.00/ ea.

*How we measured quantities:*

*¼ cubic foot mix or bark will fill approximately:*

(15) 4" pots

(8) 5" pots

(5) 6" pots

(3) 7" pots

(2) 8" pots

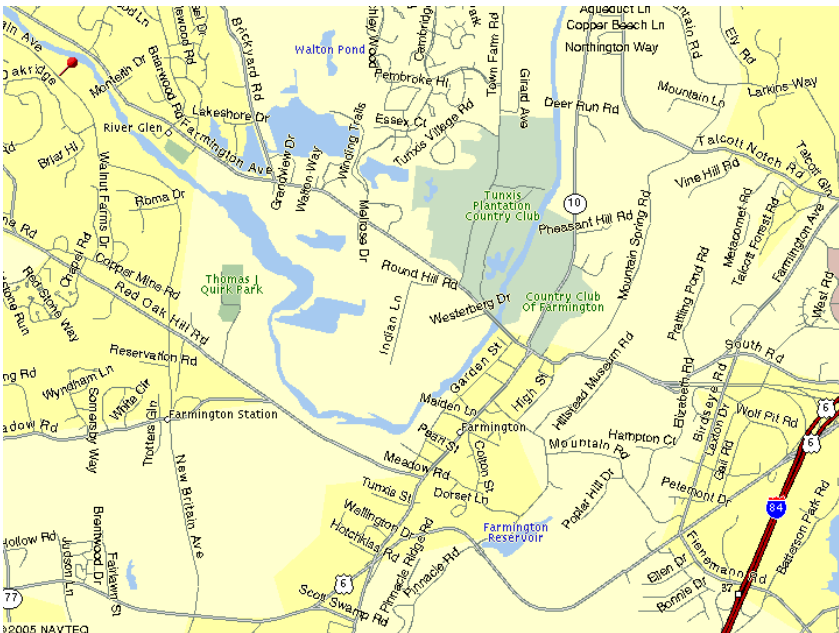
**Contact Cheryl Mizak at (203) 264-6096 to preorder.**

## Directions to Farmington Senior Center 321 New Britain Avenue, Unionville, CT

**From the North or East:** Take I-84 west from Hartford to exit 38 (Rt. 6). Proceed west. Turn right onto New Britain Ave. Farmington Senior Center is at 321 New Britain Avenue next to the police station.

**From the South:** Take Rt. 9 north to I-84 west. Proceed as above.

**From the West:** Take I-84 east to exit 37 (Fienemann Rd.). Turn left on Fienemann Rd., go over the highway, then turn left onto Rt. 6. Follow Rt. 6 west. Turn right onto New Britain Ave. Farmington Senior Center is at 321 New Britain Ave. next to the police station.



# Connecticut Orchid Society Membership Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. # \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

( Information provided to the Connecticut Orchid Society is not sold, shared or given out)

**Membership choice:**     Single \$20/yr. \*     Family \$25/yr. \*

Single Lifetime Membership \$200

Family Lifetime Membership \$250

**Newsletter delivery preference:**     U.S. Mail     E-mail

\* Please include an additional \$10 fee for postage costs for U.S. mail delivery of your newsltter. E-mail delivery is free of charge, please provide your e-mail address above.

At this time I would only like to receive the next three newsletters & directions to the meetings.

-----Fold Here-----

- Complete the information required above.
- Tear this form out of the newsletter.
- Fold in half.
- Insert your check payable to : “Connecticut Orchid Society”, for membership amount.
- Tape on three sides.
- Mail to COS (Address is printed on the back of this form) .

*Membership includes the monthly COS newsletter, monthly meetings Sept. through June with a featured speaker or educational activity, a vote at the annual election of the Board of Directors, opportunities to volunteer for many exciting orchid related activities, and COS sponsored field trips, clinics & shows. Join us!! You’ll be glad you did.*

First  
Class  
Stamp  
Here

***Connecticut Orchid Society, Inc.***  
***c/o Mary Rampone, Membership Chair***  
***53 Barbara Lane***  
***Woodbury, CT 06798***

