

Home and Backyard Orchid Growing

Dianne and Drake Batchelder, ladydi9907@aol.com
by Janis Croft, August 2022

Dianne Batchelder has approximately 150 orchids and was looking for a solution to help make her plant maintenance chores easier and less time consuming. All of her plants were spread around her back yard growing area. In the winter months, she had been using a small portable greenhouse to get her orchids through the cold winter nights we experience in St. Augustine. Unfortunately the units would disintegrate every two years so she was always replacing them.



The first step was installing pavers for the foundation of the structure



The finished structure attached to the house with sliding doors on the other three sides

In 2021, she decided to look for a more durable solution and purchased a Palram San Remo greenhouse from Costco. Dianne hired a contractor to handle the installation. First step was to match her patio pavers and lay a floor for the structure. The 14 1/2 'x 11' greenhouse sits directly on the pavers and is attached on one side to her house right outside her master bedroom. There are sliding doors on all the other three sides that she can open up in the warmer months and close down during the colder ones. The entire build took only three days. Dianne added shelving for her potted plants and strung wiring from the structural beams to use for her hanging and mounted plants. In one corner she installed her work bench. On the two short sides, bright sun came through the top panels. Dianne bought adhesive window film that solved that problem nicely.



Window film was attached to the upper glass surface to shade plants from too bright sunlight



A pole hung from the structural beams holds mounted plants

After testing her city water, Dianne decided to install a 50 gallon rainwater collection barrel and has noticed a marked improvement in her orchids health. She installed a 1/6th

Home and Backyard Orchid Growing
Dianne and Drake Batchelder, ladydi9907@aol.com
by Janis Croft, August 2022

hp pump inside the rain barrel, attached a flexible hose with sprayer and now easily waters her plants using the pump's power.



The submersible pump in the rain barrel allows easy watering in the greenhouse

When the cold winter days arrive, she uses a small electric ceramic heater at night and is able to keep the greenhouse temperatures around 55-58 degrees. Last year she only used the heater approximately 10 times and the increase to her electric bill was inconsequential. Her overall costs for the greenhouse, pavers and installation ran around \$13K Dianne is now a much happier and more time efficient orchid grower. Her rain watered plants are also quite happy in their new growing area and blooming away.



Dianne and her orchids enjoy the comfortable temps and good air movement from the sliding glass doors