

CLUB NEWS

**Fred Clarke**

June 7 SAOS Meeting

by Janis Croft, secy@staugorchidsociety.org

Welcome and Thanks.

President Bob Schimmel opened the meeting at 7:15 pm with 56 attendees. Bob thanked Jeannette Smith, Shirley Browning, Doriana Borrero, Rae Coletti, and Persia Tuvim for the refreshments while reminding all to drop a

dollar in the jar. We welcomed four new members Howard Cushnir, Doug Smith and Eleanor & Doug Adams to the meeting along with ten guests.

Our Membership Veep Linda Stewart recognized our seven June birthday people with free raffle tickets. Bob encouraged all to vote for their favorite orchid on the show table, to be announced after the program.

Club Business. The June 12 Keiki Club will be on Repotting Phalaenopsis at Sue and Terry Bottom's Home, 6916 Cypress Lake Court 32086.

The Ace Repotting Clinic will be on July 2 from 9 am til 1 pm.

Email Sue Bottom if you need potting supplies, special quantities or different items and she will bring them to the next meeting for purchase.

Sue Bottom (covering for SAOS Librarian Penny Halyburton) brought in a DVD on Brazilian Catasetums, Cattleyas and Laelias. Check out the club's library collection on the website and email Penny your request and she will bring the book(s) to the next meeting.

Orchid Events. There are no Florida orchid shows this month. Check out our SAOS website for future dates and locations.

Show Table Review. Courtney Hackney started by discussing the small Phalaenopsis on the show table. He noted that they tend to stay in bloom all summer long. He held up a deep purple "waterfall" Phal. with no name. He reminded us that these type of orchids were rare years ago,

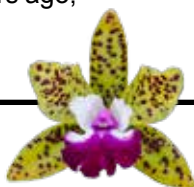


then the Taiwanese hybridizers started introducing them at high prices and now they are readily available in grocery stores. How fast things change! He then moved to his favorite color orchids, the coeruleas or blue orchids. There was an Lc Canhamiana and Mishima Elf on the table. He noted that a sad aspect of commercial hybridization is pale lavender colors such seen in the L. lobata 'Elly' aren't as commercially popular today.

He then showed one of his Cattleya hybrids, Blc. Cornerstone x Blc. Raye Holmes, that he donated to the SAOS so we can auction the right to name this cross as a fund raiser. The club has set up an Ebay Auction site where the highest bidder can name the orchid and all crosses of it!. Courtney continued with the Laelia purpurata var. carnea, he had expected more color forms to be on the table since this is their blooming season. Courtney noted that there are so many varieties of this species that in Brazil they have an orchid show dedicated only to this Laelia species with 169 color forms. He ended with a huge Paph that he admitted to growing. He advised us to put 1 tsp of dolomite limestone on each paph plant once a month for successful blooming. Check out the photos of our show table examples at the end of the newsletter.

SAOS Program. Sue Bottom introduced Fred Clarke of Sunset Valley Orchids, who has presented to the club several times before and tonight talked about Catasetums and how easy they are to grow as hobbyists. Sue noted that he is the premier hybridizer in the US and is responsible for the variety of Catasetums we have today. Fred started

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Upcoming Orchid Events

June

- 12 Keiki Club for Orchid Beginners, 1 pm
Growing and Repotting Phalaenopsis
Sue and Terry Bottom's Home
6916 Cypress Lake Ct, St Aug 32086
- 14 JOS Meeting, Topic TBA, 7 pm
Fred Clarke, Sunset Valley Orchids

July

- 2 SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine
Repotting and Plant Clinic
- 5 SAOS Meeting, 7 pm
George Hausermann, EFG Orchids
Landscaping with Orchids
- 12 JOS Meeting, Topic TBA, 7 pm
Louis Del Favero, Del Favero Orchids
- 17 Keiki Club for Orchid Beginners, 1 pm
Orchid Pests and Diseases
Mark and Kathy Young's Home
160 West Genung St, St. Aug 32086

August

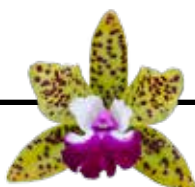
- 2 SAOS Meeting, 7 pm
Managing Your Orchid Collection
Alan Koch, Gold Country Orchids
- 5-6 Sixth Annual Cattleya Symposium
Sponsored by Odom's Orchids
Indian River Research & Education Ctr
Fort Pierce
- 6 SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine
Repotting and Plant Clinic
- 9 JOS Meeting, 7 pm
TBA
- 14 Keiki Club for Orchid Beginners, 1 pm
Photographing Your Orchids
Mark and Kathy Young's Home
160 West Genung St, St. Aug 32086

September

- 3 SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine
Repotting and Plant Clinic
- 6 SAOS Meeting, 7 pm
Ten Unusual and Easy to Grow Orchids
Thanh Nguyen, Springwater Orchids
- 13 JOS Meeting, Topic TBA, 7 pm
Tom Kuligowski, The Angraecum Blog
- 17-18 Ridge Orchid Society Show
Lake Mirror Center, Lakeland
- 18 Keiki Club for Orchid Beginners, 1 pm
Get the 'chids Ready for Winter
Dianne and Drake Batchelder's Home
728 Old Loggers Way, St. Aug 32086

St. Augustine Orchid Society Organization

President	Bob Schimmel schimmelr55@bellsouth.net
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by defining the lexicology of *Catasetum* as being from the Greek, “cata” meaning downward and “seta” meaning stiff bristles—both clearly define the flower.

Catasetums are members of the *Cymbidieae* tribe and have been in cultivation since the 1800s. Naturally occurring varieties occur in harbor areas and botanists on explorers’ boats easily collected them when they got off on the shores and the plants were growing right there. They are found in Mexico, Latin American and South America on the pasture lands with plenty of rocks and palm trees. They like plenty of light and love to grow on palm trees in the pockets where the fronds meet the trunk. They live in semi-deciduous environments with monsoon rains half the year and dry conditions the other half.

Their flowers are widely variable in shape, color and form and they can flower 1 to 5 times a season. They are also sexually dimorphic—meaning they have male and female flower forms with the male flowers being the more spectacular. Fred then proceeded to show us slides of numerous varieties starting with the showiest species, *Ctsm. pileatum*. Many have a large number of flowers on each inflorescence, some up to 50 flowers. One slide showed a plant up to 5 ft tall while other slides were of miniatures ranging from 4 - 5 inches tall, with up to twenty 2 inch flowers on one inflorescence.

Catasetums are sexually dimorphic to guarantee their survival. They depend upon their pollinator, the male *Euglossine* bees, to visit the very attractive and large male flower and then travel to pollinate the female flowers. The bees collect floral fragrance compounds from the male flower and adorn themselves in pockets on their legs as an attractant for female bees. In order to ensure the pollination process, the male flowers have a trigger which ejects pollen



and in the process, vigorously slaps the bee away. The bee flees to the much safer looking female flower nearby and goes in to the “hood.” He then rubs his legs, drops the pollen, and the female flower closes to prevent entry by another bee carrying more pollinia. Off the bee goes with his attracting fragrance looking for a female bee. This entire dynamic brings up one drawback to growing *Catasetums*. You don’t know if you will get male flowers, female flowers or a mixture of both. Fred reassured all that if you have female at first, keep waiting because as the season continues, the plant is less vigorous and the male flowers will eventually emerge as a reassurance that pollination will happen and the *Catasetum* will survive. This is why they are so hardy and make great hobby plants. Fred has developed an artificial genus called *Fredclarkeara* which is produced by interbreeding with *Mormodes*, *Catasetums* and *Clowesias* and gives you a perfect flower, a horticultural term meaning there are both male and female reproductive parts. Also, he is noted for producing the blackest black orchid whose blooms called the *Fdk. After Dark*.

Fred ended by discussing how to grow these unusual orchids which require seasonal changes. When they are in active growth, fertilize heavily, e.g. 1/2 tsp/gal every watering, and use well draining media such as sphagnum moss or fine bark. As their leaves start to yellow and drop, reduce watering since the plant is entering its dormancy stage and getting ready for a 3 - 4 month rest without any watering. Some of the plants may still flower on leafless bulbs. The beginning of semi-dormancy usually happens around Thanksgiving when you should stop watering altogether. Then in early spring, watch for new growth. Repot and divide then but still do not water. When you see new roots, you can start watering when they are 3 - 8 inches long. 90% of the prior year’s roots die during dormancy so you need the new roots to be long enough to absorb the addition of water in the spring. Fred ended by noting that there is usually only one pest, the spider mite, that bothers *Catasetums*. Watch for it and start insecticide treatment immediately if you see stippling on the leaves. Usually you will need a minimum of 3 treatments. Excellent program!

Meeting Conclusion. Bob Schimmel announced the Member’s Choice Award as the *Paph. kolopakingii* grown by Courtney Hackney. The Raffle table closed out the evening. Thanks to those that volunteered to stay and clean up the room.

Thanks to Watson Realty and Jeanette Smith for the use of their meeting space at 3505 US 1 South



Shop at Smile.Amazon.com, Help the SAOS

You can name the St. Augustine Orchid Society as your favorite charity using the AmazonSmile program and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the St. Augustine Orchid Society. Here’s a link to [register SAOS](https://www.smile.amazon.com/register) as your favorite charity. Don’t forget to log into [Smile.Amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com) (rather than [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)) when making purchases so the club is credited.



CLUB NEWS



May 15 Keiki Club Watering and Fertilizing Your Orchids

About a dozen SAOS members met up at Leslie and Chip Brickell's home in St. Johns to view Leslie's new greenhouse. Her greenhouse is beautiful and the reports of many packages of orchids being delivered are all true, lots of unusual and interesting orchids! Leslie seems to have a naturally green thumb judging by her beautiful beds of roses, vegetables and perennials. When we were done oohing and aahing over Leslie's set up, Sue talked a bit about watering and fertilizing orchids. Matching your watering frequency with your potting mix is your first step. More open and freely draining mixes must be watered more often than finer textured and organic mixes. Finding the mix that works for you for a given type of orchid is step 2, because if all similar types of orchids are potted in a similar mix, you can set your watering frequency for that entire group of orchids. Once you satisfy the watering, light and air requirements of your orchids, you have mastered 90% of the art of orchid growing. Then you can get incremental improvements by proper fertilization and using various snake oils. If you find you don't have the time to apply water soluble fertilizers weekly, than perhaps you should consider using a timed release fertilizer to provide your plants with some mineral nutrition.

July 5 Monthly SAOS Meeting Landscaping with Orchids

George Hausermann of EFG Orchids in DeLand will be talking about Landscaping with Orchids at our July meeting. George will talk about planting terrestrials in the ground as well as using mounted orchids in the landscape. George is a fourth generation orchid grower with EFG, a nursery that was famous for its cut flowers through the 1980's. The business relocated to DeLand and now specializes in orchids, tropicals, epiphyllums, carnivorous plants and other unusual plants. Orchids will be available on the sales and raffle tables. Friends and guests are always welcome.



June 12 Keiki Club Repotting Phalaenopsis Orchids

Your phalaenopsis has probably been in bloom for 3 months or so. Perhaps it's time to think about removing the flower spikes and allow the plant to garner its strength for next year's blooming. Many have received phalaenopsis orchids as gifts and wonder how to grow them. Mary will talk about their cultural needs with an emphasis on proper light and watering, as well as demonstrate how to repot your plant after it is done blooming. Bring a phalaenopsis that needs repotting, more than one or two plants should be brought to the Ace repotting clinic. To cover the cost of supplies, we'll charge \$2 for repotting in a 4 inch pot and \$3 for a 6 inch pot.

Moderator: Mary Colee

Where: Sue and Terry Bottom's Home
[6916 Cypress Lake Court, St. Aug 32086](#)

When: June 12, 1 to 3 pm

SAOS Fund Raiser Name Cattleya Hybrid

Winning bid receives naming rights, prepaid horticultural naming certificate, 4" seedling of plant and 11" x 14" framed print of the orchid.



Bic. Cornerstone 'Hawaii' x Bic. Raye Holmes 'Mendenhall'

[Ebay Auction Link](#)



INSPIRATION



L. purpurata var. schusteriana

© Terry B. '16



CULTIVATION



Orchid Questions & Answers

by Sue Bottom,
sbottom15@hotmail.com

Q1. I noticed that my phalaenopsis flower buds have been drying up and falling off before or slightly after blooming. When inspecting them, I lifted the bark and

discovered these things growing under the top layer. Yikes! Is it some sort of mold or pest?



A1. That looks an awful lot like snow mold, that grows on decaying bark and will smother your roots. You should repot your orchid pronto into fresh mix, and wash the roots thoroughly to remove any snow mold spores that might be on them.

Q2. Can you tell me why my orchid looks like this? It has pretty much looked this way since I bought it from my Orchid Society, it may have had white blooms. I grow it the same as my other orchids and they are all great. Once a month I fertilize, I water very little and mist the air. It gets bright light but no direct sun.



A2. That looks like one of the soft caned dendrobiums. I think the tag says Den. Sea Marian 'Snow King' which is



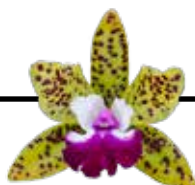
one of the Dendrobium section Dendrobiums, commonly referred to as the nobile group. This type of dendrobium goes semi-dormant during the winter months when you water maybe twice a month and let it get cool to say into the 40's and then it flowers profusely in the spring. During the growing season you water and fertilize it like mad. It has very definite seasonal growth patterns. You can read about how to care for different types of dendrobiums under [cultural requirements](#).

I'm not sure what you mean when you say you water little and mist the air. I'm gathering you're growing inside in a northern climate. As a rule, when you water you should water well and then not water again until the plant needs more water. Misting is okay to supply humidity but it doesn't have the same benefit as watering the roots.

Q3. What is going on with this orchid?



A3. I suspect that you have mites. To confirm, get a magnifying glass and look at the underside of the leaf or take a kleenex and wipe the underleaf and see if you see reddish brownish smudges. If you do, that's mite poop. Take the plants to the sink, wash top and bottom leaves with soapy water, then spray with straight isopropyl alcohol. Walgreen's sells it in a little sprayer that is very handy, I keep one in my growing area. Do this for any plant close to the infected one, and you'll probably have to repeat weekly for a month or so. The plant is stressed right now, so let it stay a little drier and when you start to see new root growth you can repot.





Watering During Drought Conditions Courtney's Orchid Growing Tips

I have always been curious about what it would be like to grow orchids someplace where the humidity was very low. Extreme drought and low humidity these past three months have provided me with an experience that

taught me a great deal about my normal culture and the importance of water to orchids.

Initially, I tried to outlast the drought and occasionally misted lightly with the limited water supply in my cistern. Not only did bulbs shrivel and roots die, but there was a covering of salt on the medium that continued to buildup. Eventually, it was necessary to try something different. The key has been to water extremely thoroughly and often, which would not be possible in the normal summer's heat and humidity. Under drought conditions, which have included very low humidity, the medium dries very quickly allowing more frequent, but time consuming watering, which works to keep my orchids alive, at least until the rains come.

Clearly, it is extremely difficult to grow orchids well without good water. Good water contains few dissolved solids; these are mostly salts. The amount of dissolved solids are measured with a simple instrument that measures the amount of current water will carry; i.e., more dissolved stuff in the water equals more current. Pure rainwater or distilled water contains 0 parts per million (ppm) dissolved stuff, while seawater contains 35,500 ppm.

Recall that most orchids in your collection are derived from ancestors that grew attached to trees, so their only water source was rainfall, and their primary nutrient source was dust that falls on the leaves of trees and drips down with each rainfall. Most orchids evolved in this nutrient poor environment, which is why they are very intolerant of water with lots of dissolved minerals.

When we add fertilizer to our water we raise the dissolved solids in the water because fertilizers are nothing more than nutrient salts. Most commercial orchid growers try to add 100 ppm of nitrogen when they fertilize. Fertilizers typically also contain other nutrients, e.g., phosphorus and potassium, further raising the dissolved nutrient levels.

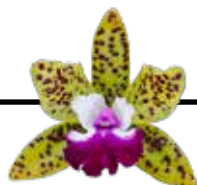


My primary water source is normally rainwater collected from the greenhouse roof. There are always a few dissolved solids, but rainwater flowing into my underground cistern is still very pure, usually between 10 - 20 ppm dissolved solids. When I add fertilizer, my water contains about 280 ppm dissolved solids. Under the present weather conditions my rainwater already contains 250 ppm dissolved solids because less than 1 inch of rain has fallen over three months, and numerous ocean storms have caused heavy surf, putting lots of salt in the air and on my roof. Worse yet, these salts are mostly sodium chloride, both of which are very toxic to orchids.

What is an orchid grower to do? The only other source of water available to me is from a community well, which is 360-380 ppm. Fortunately, most of the stuff dissolved in this water consists of calcium, magnesium, and iron. These salts are not toxic at these levels but do leave unsightly residue on leaves. This water is also extremely basic, which severely limits the ability of orchids to absorb nutrients. Some orchids in my collection have surprised me and thrived because they are not epiphytes and instead were derived from orchids that grew on the ground, notably paphs. Many paphs grow in limestone rich soils and have thrived in the basic well water. Others have done very poorly, most notably phrags and some pleurothallids. They need very pure water and could not tolerate hard water.

Much to my delight, and surprise, almost all the cattleyas, phals, and vandas are growing extremely well despite the high dissolved solid content of the water using the following process. First they are watered thoroughly with well water. This dissolves any salts that have accumulated on the medium since that last watering, but does render the medium surface basic. Then the surface of the medium is misted lightly with my very limited supply of rainwater to which fertilizer had been added. Most high nitrogen fertilizer is acidic, neutralizing the well water. This does, however, take a lot more time.

Note: Courtney Hackney wrote a monthly column of his orchid growing tips for about 20 years, we're reprinting some you might have missed, this one from June 2007.



Catasetums Part 1

The Dinner Plates!

by Nollie Cilliers & Tinus Oberholzer

[Plantae Orchids](#), South Africa

Reprinted with Permission

Pictures courtesy of Fred Clarke

Different plants, carrying female or male flowers and even the same inflorescence carrying both male and female flowers, have puzzled early botanists who struggled to come to terms with their dimorphic flowers. The forceful way in which they project their pollen when triggered is unique in the orchid world as many unsuspecting victims have come to realize when they touch the flowers after being coaxed to smell them by the cunning grower.

It is from these downward pointing triggers or antennae that the name for the genus *Catasetum* is derived (from the Greek word *cata* indicating “downwards” direction and the Latin *saeta* or *seta* meaning “a bristle”). These antennae extend downwards from the column into the lip cavity and are found only in the male flowers. When touched by a pollinator, usually a euglossine bee, it triggers the



Fred Clarke

Ctsm. Orchidglade 'Davies Ranches' showing male, female and a perfect flower.

explosive release of the pollinarium at a speed measured at more than 3m/s or 18km/h. The whole process is expertly shown in the BBC production “*The Private Life of Plants*”, episode 3 - Flowering. This is a series no plant lover should be without.

The genus *Catasetum* was described in 1822 by Kunth and consists of approximately 100 species, occurring from Mexico to Argentina in the New World. *Ctsm. macrocarpum* is considered to be the type species for the genus. Anyone interested in the history of the genus will find an excellent chapter on this in “*The World of Catasetums*” by Arthur W. Holst. This is the only book currently available for those interested in the genus.

The trigger-happy nature of the plants ensures that they have very little commercial value except for the hobbyist. Secondly the sexual dimorphism of the flowers makes breeding a bit more difficult than in other genera. Goodale Moir, one of the leading hybridists of the 20th century, registered the first *Catasetum* hybrid in 1959, viz. *Ctsm. Grace Dunn*. This was followed by 6 hybrids registered by Jones and Scully in the seventies and a few made by RF Orchids. In the nineteen eighties and nineteen nineties, JEM Orchids became the only specialist Catasetinae

nursery in the United States. They introduced several new species and hybrids to the enthusiast, including the “black” *Catamodes* Black Magic. Jumbo Orchids of Taiwan also produced many intergeneric hybrids in the late nineteen nineties and the early years this century. They even added *Galeandra devoniana* and *Ansellia africana* to the mix. Antonio Schmidt of Bela Vista Orchids introduced several new Brazilian species to horticulture and he is still offering some interesting hybrids for sale. It is, however, the release of the amazing *Fredclareara* After Dark, arguably the most successful hybrid grex made in recent years, that has ignited the interest in Catasetinae in the last few years. Fred Clarke of Sunset Valley Orchids registered the cross and a few of the clones have been described as the ‘blackest’ orchids yet seen. Looking at his current flask offering there are many more surprises yet to come.

If we were to go back to the early years of hybridizing in the

nineteen sixties, when the big *Cattleya* hybrids were in their prime, one would naturally expect the hybridizers to combine the biggest flowered catasetums with each other.

Ctsm. pileatum and *Ctsm. expansum* produce the biggest flowers of the genus and so were used extensively to produce the dinner-plate hybrids, so named because of the large lips produced by these plants.

Ctsm. pileatum, native to the northern parts of South America was introduced into cultivation by Messrs. Linden and described by H.G. Reichenbach in 1882. The huge white concave lip is the

most prominent feature of the flower, the largest of all the catasetums. 6-12 flowers can be produced on an arching inflorescence and the floriferous nature of the species adds to the desirability of using it in hybridizing. The “red *pileatum*”, *Ctsm. pileatum* var. *imperiale* or *Ctsm. imperial* (depending on whom you want to cite) was also introduced by Jean Linden in 1890. Endemic to Venezuela, (but is now considered to be extinct), is essentially a red flowered form of *Ctsm. pileatum*. It can produce up to 15 flowers on a spike. The RHS, however, does not recognize it as a separate species. One of the best known cultivars is ‘Pierre Couret’.

Ctsm. expansum, from Ecuador, was described by Reichenbach in 1878 and the species name refers to



Fred Clarke

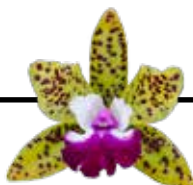
Ctsm. pileatum var. *imperiale*.



Fred Clarke

Ctsm. pileatum ‘Dinner Plate’.

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the large, flat, "spread out" lip. Two colour forms exist - the mainly green or lowland form and the more colourful highland form with more wine-coloured spotting. The flowers are only slightly smaller when compared to *Ctsm. pileatum* and slightly bunched on the inflorescence. The lip has a prominent dark red callus in the centre that is passed on to its progeny.

Jones & Scully registered *Ctsm. Orchidglade* in 1974 combining *Ctsm. pileatum* with *Ctsm. expansum*. Due to the wide range of colour forms *Ctsm. Orchidglade* has become quite popular. One of the best known clones is 'Jack of Diamonds' AM/AOS. Another clone worth mentioning is the extremely dark 'Jamie's Tortured Midnight'. As with most types of line breeding it is always beneficial to back cross a hybrid with one of the parents to enhance a particular trait.

Crossing *Ctsm. Orchidglade* back onto *Ctsm. pileatum* produces even bigger flowers, with a reduced callus from the *Ctsm. expansum* grandparent. *Ctsm. Bound for Glory* was registered in 1978 by Jones and Scully. Crossing *Ctsm. Orchidglade* back onto *Ctsm. expansum* produced *Ctsm. Susan Fuchs*. The flowers are very similar to *Ctsm. Orchidglade* but with more intense colouration. Crossing *Ctsm. Susan Fuchs* with *Ctsm. pileatum* produces *Ctsm. Penang*. RF Orchids back crossed *Ctsm. Susan Fuchs* in 1986 with *Ctsm. expansum* to produce *Ctsm. Fuchs Delight*. Along a similar line, i.e. crossing progeny with a parent, in this case *Ctsm. Susan Fuchs* with *Ctsm. Orchidglade* we get *Ctsm. Kidney Beans* registered by Fred Clarke in 2004.

Combining *Ctsm. Mary Spencer* (*Ctsm. trulla* x *Ctsm. pileatum*) with *Ctsm. pileatum* var. *imperial* produced the intensely red coloured *Ctsm. João Stivalli* in 1995. In 2007 Ryan Kowalczyk registered *Ctsm. John C. Burchett* a hybrid made by Bela Vista Orchids of Brazil. It unites the red coloration of *Ctsm. João Stivalli* with the intense coloration of *Ctsm. Susan Fuchs* to produce *Ctsm. John C. Burchett*. The cultivar 'Ursa Major' received an FCC



Ctsm. expansum 'SV0'.



Ctsm. Orchidglade 'Jamie's Tortured Midnight'.

of 94 points from the American Orchid Society. This is the highest scored plant in the genus. The heavily saturated colour and flat form add to the beauty of this striking flower.



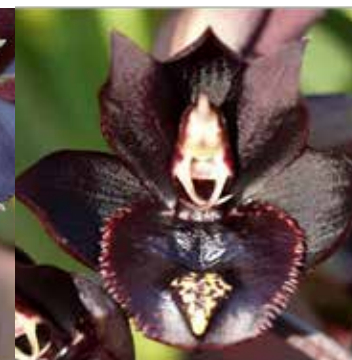
Ctsm. Orchidglade 'Jack of Diamonds' AM/AOS.



Ctsm. Susan Fuchs 'Burgundy Chips' AM/AOS.



Ctsm. John C. Burchett 'Ursa Major' FCC/AOS.

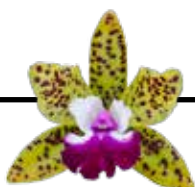


Ctsm. Donna Wise 'Susan' AM/AOS.

Another worthwhile hybrid is *Ctsm. Donna Wise*. A cross between *Ctsm. Orchidglade* and the green and "black" *Ctsm. tenebrosum* registered by Mark Dimmitt in 1995, it produced intermediate sized flowers with excellent shape and in a myriad of colours. The inherent qualities of this grex are apparent in its progeny, since it is a parent of *Fredclarkeara* After Dark.

Fred Clarke has crossed *Ctsm. Susan Fuchs* and *Ctsm. Donna Wise* to extend the line breeding. Antonio Schmidt did the same with a cross of *Ctsm. John C. Burchett* with *Ctsm. Orchidglade*. These two crosses should be the pinnacle of this type of breeding and we cannot wait to see the results.

To summarize: the flowers might not be long lasting, but they make up for it with sheer size and the intensity and variety of colours.



CULTIVATION

Orchid Triage

by Sue Bottom, sbottom15@hotmail.com

The one thing no orchid grower has enough of is bench space. Your available bench space determines how closely you have to pack your plants together. You know how important it is to have enough room around each plant for free air movement, but inevitably you start crowding your plants. You go to an orchid show and find one, or two or three orchids that you must bring home.



1. Set up a triage area in your growing area, an area where you stage plants rather than grow them and set a time limit on how long plants are allowed to remain in the triage area.

This year I started doing the unthinkable, maintaining an orchid triage area, one area of the growing area that is normally an empty bench. The triage bench area is a dedicated staging area. This bench space is not an infirmary or orchid isolation area. It is a place that orchids sit for a short period of time where they are highly visible forcing you to take action.



2. You can stage your new plants in the triage area before you move them into the growing area. This gives you a chance to treat for pests and diseases and repot after they have finished blooming.

During the Orchid Buying Season. New plants coming into the greenhouse first pass through the triage area before they are treated, repotted, incorporated into the growing area. Many advocate putting plants into isolation for several months to make sure any latent pest or disease problem is discovered before the plants go into the general population. As an alternative to isolation, why not just assume all new plants are carriers and treat them with drenches of a systemic pesticide and preventative fungicide? All new orchids are also repotted immediately,

or after they've bloomed out if bought in flower. This gives you a chance to see what condition the roots are in. You can put the orchid in your mix of choice for that particular type so you know how best to water it, you know how fresh the mix is and how long it should last in the pot. Newly acquired plants sit on the triage bench until they've been treated and repotted, and only then are they moved into their new home in the growing area for them to live long and prosper.



3. Move your most severely overgrown plants to the triage area to give you some room to reorganize the rest on the plants on your bench.

During the Repotting Season. In the spring, when you get ready to begin the annual repotting marathon, first inspect your benches and pull those plants that are severely overgrown and move them over to triage. This will free up some bench space and you can start reorganizing plants. Identify those that plants don't require repotting this year and group them together, those that are ready to bloom and will be repotted afterward into a second group and those that should be repotted this year into a third group and you'll find you have created a little open bench space. Start repotting plants on the triage bench and placing them in their permanent home and moving plants to be repotted over to triage until they too are repotted. When you're done you may find that you even have extra space for the seedlings you wanted to move up in pot size, particularly if you give away your extra divisions to friends or put them on the raffle table at your club.

When You Discover Plants that Require Attention. When you are watering, really look at your plants rather than thinking about what you have to do later in the day. When you see a problem, put down the hose and carry the plant to your triage area. You may notice all kinds of potential issues while watering. There is that plant with the chlorotic spots on the leaf and when you turn the leaf over you see those devilish scale. You might see some general

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CULTIVATION

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leaf yellowing and when you feel the potting mix, you notice that the organic matter is degraded and the plant is wobbly so you know it is time to repot. Anytime you see a plant that doesn't look right, move it to triage. Don't think you'll remember which plant it was when you're done watering and will go back to take care of it. Just move it to triage and continue watering. Once you're done watering, you will be forced to deal with that plant just by virtue of the fact that it is sitting in triage where there should be no plants.



4a. As you find plants that require some attention, move them over to triage to force you to make those sometimes difficult decisions. See that plant in the center of the photo with the yellowing leaves?



4b. Look a little closer. See the brownish discoloration moving upward from the base of the pseudobulbs at the back of the plant? Move the plant to triage for evaluation. It turned out to be brown rot.

Reclaiming bench space is an important part of managing your orchid collection. You want the most vigorously growing, healthy and floriferous orchids you can possibly have. Those orchids that you spend so much time watering and repotting should reward you with blooms that you thoroughly enjoy. There comes a time in the lives of all orchid growers when you must decide which orchids are worthy of your attentions. Fred Clarke of Sunset Valley Orchids was the first to teach me the fine art of culling. His advice was to walk through your growing area at dusk when the light is starting to fade and take a critical look at each of your plants.

Not Enough Blooms. Look for plants that take up a lot of bench space without having evidence of bearing lots of flowers. If you can't find spent flower blooms on plant in a largish pot, you are not being sufficiently rewarded for your efforts. Either move it to a location where it will get more light and bloom better, or give it to someone who has a different color green thumb.

Poor Growth Habit. Sometimes you have plants that just don't look happy and don't grow vigorously. You may check the plant tag and find that even though you repotted that plant 2 years ago, it has only put out one or two new growths for you. Assuming the potting mix is still fresh,

you may have a plant that is simply a genetic weakling or perhaps it is suffering from a disease. No matter, you aren't running a hospital for sick orchids. Discard the plant and replace it with a plant that will grow and bloom well for you.

Flower Doesn't Meet Expectations. Sometimes when a seedling grows up and blooms for you the first time, you may decide the flower is okay but it doesn't float your boat. Some people mark that plant with a special colored tag so it can be brought to the raffle table for someone who will enjoy it more than they do.

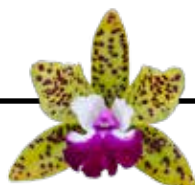
One weekend Alan Koch of Gold Country Orchids was staying with us between orchid talks. I asked him if he would look at the plants in my greenhouse through his eyes and tell me which ones he thought were not worthy of the bench space. My Sainted Mother warned me to never ask a question I didn't really want to hear the answer to, so be prepared for some brutal truths if you ask an orchid grower how he would cull your collection. We walked up and down the aisles and Alan pointed to this and that orchid that should be given the boot, mostly because they were just not vigorous growers. Those poor growing plants are now long gone and forgotten but the healthy plants remaining on the benches give me much pleasure even before their blooms open.



5. This plant is taking up a lot of space, and there isn't a single sheath indicating that it has bloomed.

6. Though it has bloomed, this plant just looks unhealthy. You have to learn when to hold them and when to fold them.

Having a dedicated triage area will help you manage your orchid collection and your bench space. It gives you a staging area for new plants, for plants that have overgrown their pots and plants whose fate you must decide, and quickly because that staging area should normally be empty. Set a time limit, no plant is allowed to sit in the triage area for more than 2 weeks. Having plants that require your attention in a dedicated area will force you to make those difficult decisions you wouldn't have to make if you could just hide your sick plants amongst your other orchids. Learning to cull unhealthy plants from your growing area will leave you with a little extra bench space, not to mention a collection of healthier and happier plants that will bloom more often and better than those weak sisters.

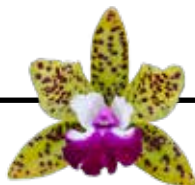


ORCHID ADVENTURES



Redland International Orchid Festival Orchid Adventures

The Redland International Orchid Festival is one of the biggest east coast orchid shows of the year, held in the Homestead area every May and featuring more than 60 vendors from around the world. Many of the orchid nurseries are familiar faces that have talked to us in St. Augustine, and there are many new faces that we may yet coerce into coming to St. Augustine. It's hard to imagine anything better than going to a show with that great a variety of orchids, but add this to the equation. This year Courtney joined us for his first trip to the Redland festival. We had all that travel time to talk about orchids and everything else under the sun. Great fun and great learning experience!



SHOW TABLE



Grower Linda Powell
Phal. NOID



Grower Yvonne & Bob Schimmel
Asctm. miniatum



Grower Sue Bottom
Den. parishii



Grower Sue Bottom
Lc. Canhamiana var. coerulea 'Azure Skies' AM/AOS



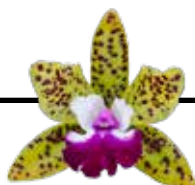
Grower Sue Bottom
L. purpurata var. carnea



Grower Sue Bottom
Lc. Mishima Elf



Grower Carolyn Smith
Phal. NOID



SHOW TABLE



Grower Linda Stewart
Zygo. Advance Australia 'H.O.F.' AM/AOS



Grower Courtney Hackney
Paph. kolopakingii



Grower Suzanne Susko
Phal. cornu-cervi



Grower Wes Dean
Oncidium sphacelatum



Grower Linda Powell
C. Piñata Surprise



Grower Linda Stewart
Ascf. A. F. Buckman

