

CLUB NEWS



July 2, 2019 SAOS Meeting

by Janis Croft

Welcome and Thanks. President Tom Sullivan opened the meeting at 7:00 pm with 84 attendees. He asked Carolyn to announce our four guests. First time visitors receive a free raffle ticket. Tom thanked Mary Ann, Dianne and Dottie for bringing in desserts and our guest speaker for bringing coconut cookies

from Colombia. He also thanked Jeanette and Dianne for organizing our refreshment table. Tom then reminded all to drop a dollar in the basket while enjoying their refreshments. Tom said the Silent Auction winners would be announced before the presentation. He encouraged all to vote for their favorite orchid on the Show Table.

Club Business. Spring shows are over and we all await the fall schedule. Ace Repotting Clinic will be on July 6, 2019 from 9 til noon at Ace Hardware, 3050 US 1 South. The Keiki Club is on vacation for the next few hot months. Email info@staugorchidsociety.org if you need supplies. New Meeting Location — Sue announced that due to our growing audience size, we are looking at moving our meetings to the Memorial Lutheran Church where we have our picnic and Christmas party. She thanked Jeanette for hosting us at Watson over the past years and everyone gave her a round of applause. Stay tuned for future announcements about this change of venue.

Sue presented Penny Halyburton with a framed photo of one of her winning orchids as a thank you for being our librarian for so many years. The gift was meant to be presented at our holiday party but better late than never!.



Catasetum Competition Grow – Sue held up a thriving catasetum plug to show how some of the plants are growing. This one was approximately 5" tall. We should all be watering now and watching our plugs

grow. She will continue to update us monthly on what to expect.

Birthdays this Month - Our Sunshine Coordinator and Membership VP, Linda Stewart asked all of the July birthday people to raise their hands and five received their free raffle ticket. Then she announced that if you know of anyone in need of a cheering up or a get well card, let her know by emailing her at info@staugorchidsociety.org.

Library – Librarian Bea Orendorff reported that all the books on our speaker's subject were checked out. The library collection is listed on our [SAOS website](http://staugorchidsociety.org). If you would like a book, send a request to info@staugorchidsociety.org and Bea will bring the item(s) to the next meeting.

Show Table. Courtney Hackney started the Show Table by saying he would be able to talk about each plant since we had fewer on display than normal. First up was the *C. schoffieldiana*, a bifoliate that Courtney reminded us we needed to repot with care since they should only be repotted as new roots are growing, which often coincides with the



Courtney does his Show Table magic.



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Upcoming Orchid Events

July

- 6 Repotting at Ace Hardware, 9 am til noon
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine
- 9 JOS Meeting, Dozen Orchids, 7 pm
Tom Wise, AOS Judge
- 10 SAOS Meeting, 6:30 pm
meeting on regular first Tuesday
- 13 Florida North-Central AOS Judging, 1 pm
Clermont Judging Ctr, 849 West Ave.

August

- 2-3 Ninth Annual Cattleya Symposium
Sponsored by Odom's Orchids
Indian River Research & Education Ctr
Fort Pierce
- 3 SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til noon
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine
Repotting and Plant Clinic
- 6 SAOS Meeting, 6:30 pm
Jim Roberts, Florida SunCoast Orchids
Hybridizing Our Orchids
- 10 Florida North-Central AOS Judging, 1 pm
Clermont Judging Ctr, 849 West Ave.
- 13 JOS Meeting, Orchid Propagation, 7 pm
Steve Arthur, Steve Arthur Orchids

September

- 3 SAOS Meeting, Catasetums, 6:30 pm
Francisco Miranda, Miranda Orchids
- 7 SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til noon
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine
Repotting and Plant Clinic
- 10 JOS Meeting, Repotting Session, 7 pm
Jim Roberts, Florida SunCoast Orchids
- 14 Florida North-Central AOS Judging, 1 pm
Clermont Judging Ctr, 849 West Ave.
- 21-22 Ridge Orchid Society Show
Lake Mirror Center, Lakeland

- 22 Keiki Club for Orchid Beginners, 1 pm
Growing Area tour
Leslie and Chip Brickell's Home
1319 Wentworth Ave, Jax 32259

October

- 1 SAOS Meeting, 6:30 pm
Recommended Species for Florida
Thanh Nguyen, Springwater Orchids
- 5 SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til noon
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine
Repotting and Plant Clinic
- 5-6 South Florida Orchid Society Show
University of Miami Watsco Center
- 8 JOS Meeting, Program TBA, 7 pm
Speaker TBA

St. Augustine Orchid Society Organization

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new bloom. Next he held up a beautiful Miltoniopsis Kelly 'Bull's Eye' that are very difficult to grow in our area. There were two miniature coerulea phalaenopsis that Courtney said are summer bloomers due to the influence of Doritis pulcherimma. A deep red flowering Blc. Serengeti Sands was one of Courtney's crosses that was distributed by Carter & Holmes. He also showed two examples of one of his hybrids (Encyclia tampensis x Lc. Emily Clarkson), showing how different the lips on the two plants were. Next up was an Encyclia Sarah Jesup which loves growing here and loves our current 100 degree weather. Its only issue is it grows quite large and one needs room for it.

Courtney brought in a plant he has had for over 12 years that never bloomed. Then he got a new well with a much lower soluble salt content and his Miltonia phymatochila began to produce yellow blooms. Marv Regan brought in an Encyclia steinbachii that had a proliferation of green flowers with wide peals. An older hybrid was the Lc Eximia var. coerulea 'Sea God' which is a 1970's cross from Raymond Burr's collection. One of our youngest growers, Sabrina Jacobson, brought in a Eulophia andamanensis that was blooming as it wakes up from its winter rest. Compared to her small plant, the Grammatophyllum scriptum 'Grasshopper II' was huge but as Courtney reminded us, it was not up to its full size yet. He then showed a Catasetum tigrinum x fimbriatum, and asked us what was unusual. We all answered that the flower was female due to its hooded form. Check out the photos of our show table examples at the end of the newsletter and on the SAOS website.



Andy Easton knows where all the bodies are buried in the orchid world.

SAOS Program. Courtney announced our famed guest speaker, Andy Easton. Andy has grown orchids all over the world, in the USA (Oregon, California, South Florida) to New Zealand and now Colombia. He is a world renowned hybridizer of cymbidiums and odontoglossums and has an incredible knowledge of orchid culture. His son has now moved to northeast Florida so Andy was here for a family visit and graciously spoke to our club.

Andy spoke about the history of the famous and notorious orchid growers. He plans on writing a book soon so he has been collecting his stories for some time. He credited his grandfather with teaching him how to grow plants. When he was of age, he received a scholarship to study opera. This changed and he started to become a serious orchid hobbyist. He was lucky to meet some of the orchid greats while he was young and just starting out. He learned that you can't really start growing orchids until you live in an area for some time and learn how to grow in that environment, e.g. water conditions, weather temperatures, what to avoid, etc.

Andy told us that the biggest orchid show in the Americas is in August in Colombia and encouraged all to visit. He felt that he could identify a good orchid society by its hybridizing component. We have Marv Ragan and Courtney Hackney so we are well set. Another show worth a visit is the German orchid show in Dresden.

Andy went on to describe interactions he has had with some of the great orchid growers. First up was the revered Rebecca Tyson Northern from Laramie, Wyoming. She had three greenhouses. She grew cattleyas and cymbidiums in two and sold the blooms to subsidize her "hobby". The third greenhouse was chock full of a wide variety of orchids with greatly varying care requirements. She also wrote articles and books, including the orchid bible Home Orchid Growing. If she didn't know the answer to a question, her husband, a botany professor, would connect her with someone that did.

Andy talked about many influential and colorful characters from the world of orchids. Some were greatly admired, like Ernest Hetherington and Frank Fordyce. Some had wandering eyes and some were rogues. Andy knows where all the bodies are buried. We will be looking forward to his tell-all book.



Meeting Conclusion. Sue Bottom announced the Member's Choice Award as a tie between Suzanne Susko's Miltoniopsis Kelly 'Bull's Eye' and Penny Halyburton's Grammatophyllum scriptum 'Grasshopper II.' The evening concluded with the raffle. Thanks to the few helpful hands that stayed to reset the tables and chairs and clean up the room.

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



CLUB NEWS

Keiki Club – Summer Vacation

The Keiki Club is on summer vacation. Keep watering and fertilizing your plants and watch for pest and disease issues. SAOS members will be available at the repotting clinics at Ace Hardware on the first Saturday of the month all summer long if you have any questions or problems. For those of you in the mentoring program, your mentor is just a phone call or email away. For those of you that would like to join the mentoring program, send an email to Mentoring Coordinator Susan Smith at info@staugorchid-society.org. It is a great resource for our newer growers that would like to get one-on-one assistance and answers to their orchid questions.



Changes are Coming!

We are really been thankful to Jeanette Smith and Watson Realty for hosting our meetings over the last 13 years. It has been a great location for us and Jeanette has done herself proud making everyone feel welcome. You may have noticed that the meetings have gotten pretty crowded with our membership level at a record high. We are evaluating alternate meeting locations such as the Memorial Lutheran Church where we have held our picnics and Christmas parties. Keep your eyes and ears open. We will let you know when we will be making the change!

American Orchid Society Corner

Webinars

July 11, 8:30-9:30 pm, AOS Members Only
Story of White Cattleyas – Jean Allen-Ikeson
July 18, 8:30-9:30 pm, Everyone Invited
Greenhouse Chat Orchid, Q&A - Ron McHatton

Orchids Magazine this month:

50 Years and Still Growing, J&L Orchids
Vanilla and the Big Island, Carol Zahaki
First Ladies-Melania Trump, The Chadwicks
In Search of Cattleya Quadricolor, Phillip Seaton
Apical Dominance, Sue Bottom

Photos of Latest AOS Awards

Catasetum Competition Grow

In January, we raffled off 20 plugs of this new hybrid, with the understanding that prizes will be awarded (1) the first to bloom, (2) the best bloom, and (3) the best grown plant. Each month we'll talk about what to do with your catasetum and show you how the plant is progressing. Let the contest begin!



In July: Many have started watering their catasetums, which is safe to do once the plant is 5 inches tall and the leaves have unfurled. Make sure they get plenty of fresh air and moisture. Top dress the pot with some timed release fertilizer. Catasetums are heavy feeders, they have to do all their growing in 7 months while other orchids get a full 12 months. Once the pseudobulbs fatten up enough that the plant has enough strength to flower, we should start seeing bloom spikes, perhaps later this year!



August 6 SAOS Meeting

Hybridizing Our Orchids

Jim Roberts, Florida SunCoast Orchids

Jim will talk about how orchid hybrids are made and what it takes to see them through to flowering. He will show how orchids are pollinated, talk about how the seed is flaked under sterile conditions and then deflaked when the plantlets can survive on their own. His talk includes a demonstration of deflasking orchids with seedlings given to club members for a competition grow.

Jim grows his beauties in three gutter connected greenhouses encompassing 10,000 square feet of growing space. As always, he strives to grow and sell the best quality orchid plants and to build a lasting reputation in the industry as one of the very best.

Bring your flowering orchids to exhibit on the Show Table. We will have our normal raffle at the end of the meeting. Friends and guests are always welcome!



INSPIRATION



CULTIVATION



Orchid Questions & Answers

by Sue Bottom,
sbottom15@gmail.com

Q1. I sent pictures of this orchid to the vendor, who told me it was thrips. I have many blooming orchids in my greenhouse and no other flowers have been affected. If it was thrips wouldn't other

flowers be affected?



A1. Thrips are evil, it probably had thrips hidden in the buds when you brought the plant home. You can spray buds and flowers with Orthene once or twice a week if you notice floral damage from thrips, or drench the pots every 6 weeks or so with an Orthene solution.

Q2. Is it too late to repot this Cattleya?



A2. People live in fear of repotting amethystoglossa! The roots are long enough that they will branch if broken, so you can repot. But think of doing it Keith Davis style where you situate the plant in its new home on styrofoam, lava rock or some other airy substrate and then just put in a handful of media, so you can watch for the roots to branch and when they do, you add a handful of media every week into the pot so the new roots will grow into the new mix.

Q3. My Lc. Blue Boy (C. Ariel x Lc. Elegans) had what appeared to be a healthy new growth. Several days ago I noticed a drop of ink black liquid on the tip. The following day there was some more. Yesterday the growth was black and mushy. The leaves all appear to be healthy. I repotted it and cut off the affected parts. There is still another new growth which I hope will develop normally.

What am I dealing with? I corrected my potting issue with a shallower pot, mixing in aliflor and charcoal along with large orchiat. I grow all my orchids outside under palms and large oaks and the rest of them are thriving!



A3. I'm guessing you had some water in the crevices of the new growth and it got a bacterial rot. I remember Keith Davis' tip on growing bowringiana, where he said he takes a plastic pill cup and puts over the new growth til it gets a bit larger to prevent rots. I don't think it had anything to do with the potting mix or roots. A peroxide spray might help too, after rain with new growths starting.





Summer Growing Tips

by Dr. Courtney Hackney
hackneau@comcast.net

Now is the time when many Orchids put on most of their growth. Those with pseudobulbs often have very discrete growth periods when they add new roots and

leaves. Many vandaceous Orchids grow anytime there is an adequate amount of heat, light, and water, but again this happens mostly during summer in the Carolinas. Providing your Orchids with everything they require will maximize the quality and quantity of the flowers you will see later. Fertilize now just about every time you water with a weak solution of a growth-type fertilizer. My favorite is Peters Cal Mag 15-5-15. The Nitrogen is mostly in a useable form and the extra Calcium and Magnesium make hard growths. The ideal strength is 100 ppm Nitrogen. If you use pure water at 0 ppm and the addition of fertilizer raises the soluble solids to around 220 ppm then you have reached your maximum.

It is always better to add less than more when it comes to fertilizers. Too much fertilizer makes soft growth that is susceptible to rots and which is easy to damage. Over-fertilized Orchids do not produce good flowers even though the plant looks great. Well-grown Cattleyas have leaves that are slightly yellow. Phals and Vandas should have light green leaves that are relatively hard and thick. If you are not sure how much fertilizer to add, be cautious and use a quarter of what you think you need. Most fertilizers that recommend 1/2 to 1 teaspoon per gallon are best at 1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon per gallon.

There are many tricks to adding fertilizer, some of which are useful for the hobbyist and some of which are not. One obvious one is to fertilize after the plant is wet. Dry Orchid roots shed water and any fertilizer it contains. Wet roots have already absorbed water and will not be damaged by fertilizer even if you add too much. How do you get the proportions just right when you fertilize? If you have a few plants a bucket of water or watering can is perfect for mixing fertilizer. Immerse the whole plant in the fertilizer mix. Plants will absorb fertilizer through leaves as well as through roots. When you remove plants be sure that you get all water from the crown of Phals and other soft-tissue Orchids. Soft tissues of Cattleyas and even Vandas can develop rots if fertilized water is left standing anywhere in the plant.

Most hobbyists are surprised at how infrequently many commercial growers fertilize. To fertilize in the ideal manner is a time consuming task so most commercial growers use stronger concentrations once a month or less. Others use Osmocote or some other slow release fertilizer. A new product from Japan, Nutricote, supposedly releases nutrients slowly enough that roots are not damaged. There are several plants in my greenhouse that are now getting this treatment. By next year it will be obvious if this is a product worth recommending. Carter & Holmes sells small amounts of this if you want to try some. Use it on plants that are not your favorites first. Many of my experimental plants never recover from the new, improved whatever.

Several companies make liquid fertilizers that add methanol to the mix, which causes the fertilizer to pass into tissues more quickly. There are many reports of improved growth with these fertilizers. In my experiments, they were no better than Peters Excel Cal Mag and actually seemed to damage seedlings that got too warm before their surfaces dried. Liquid fertilizers also tend to be more concentrated and so a mistake in dilution can have serious consequences. Remember, you are always better adding too little than too much.

Keep your eyes open for insects, snails, and slugs as they also grow quickly in summer's heat. They will slip into plants placed outside and get into the greenhouse without being seen. Keep a close eye on your plants and look for signs of damage. Slime trails on the sides of pots in the morning will tell you they are there. I was surprised at the number of slugs found among the crock in the bottoms of pots when I repotted this year. Plants that have not been repotted for a few years are the best place to find both slugs and other pests. Systemic pesticides work well when plants are growing. They are much less effective during times of the year when plants are not growing. In an ideal world, you would not use any pesticides, but be ready to recognize these pests early so you have to use them only occasionally.

At the beginning of this month's column, I noted that most Orchids are now in a growth mode. If you have any that are not, it may be time to take action before the growing season is over. Paphs are the ideal candidate to check because they suffer when they lose roots. Every Paph I checked this spring that was not growing well had lost most of their roots. I also repotted several that were doing well and they all had excellent root systems. Poorly growing Paphs and other Orchids repotted now will have a much better chance of surviving if repotted during the growing season rather than waiting until next spring.

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 July 2001.



Andy Easton Answers Orchid Questions

by Andy Easton, courtesy of the American Orchid Society



STEM and Water

Q. A recent speaker at our society had some interesting comments about water and fertilizing. He said we should add STEM (soluble trace element mix) to our water. He recommended that people using deionized water (or reverse-osmosis water) needed to use more fertilizer since the water is deficient of all native minerals. He also suggested that the hard water of our area would be fine for beginners or smaller collections. I use deionized water and have the following questions: Do you need to add trace elements to your water beyond normal fertilizer? Should you fertilize with every watering? Why does everyone tell you to use half the strength listed on the label? If they wanted you to use half, wouldn't they recommend half-strength on the label? Do people with reverse-osmosis or deionized water need more fertilizer? How much? Do you need to worry about adjusting the pH of your water and fertilizer mix or is that just for professional growers? Does anybody really know?

A. Yes, you should add trace elements to your fertilizer in recommended quantities, especially if you use reverse-osmosis water. STEM is a reliable product for this purpose. I certainly believe you should fertilize at every watering in the Las Vegas area as you have adequate light year round. If you were in Toronto I might caution you to pay more attention to the winter weather and fine-tune your fertilizing when the days were short and dark, but, even at high latitudes, you should fertilize nearly year round - especially if you are maintaining optimum temperatures.

I become more cynical with age and answer your next question by saying that fertilizer manufacturers are selling fertilizer. They will suggest the highest possible levels of feeding short of root damaging fertilizer concentrations on their product label. Some growers I know will fertilize at full strength for a month or so in mid-spring then at half strength for the rest of the year unless it is very dark in December and January, when they revert to one-quarter strength.

I would not say that people with reverse-osmosis water need more fertilizer, but rather that they must pay close attention to the completeness of their fertilizing program. For that reason, some people blend back some of their primary water with the R.O. water unless the primary source is really of poor quality and carrying harmful salts. Just remember that everything is removed, good and bad, so you must be sure that everything essential for plant growth goes back in. Additionally, it is generally unwise to water with reverse-osmosis water that has no fertilizer added as it can be highly corrosive to metal components of irrigation systems and will tend to leach nutrients out of your plants.

Generally, with city water that has fertilizer added to it, you will find pH in an acceptable range for plant growth. With reverse-osmosis water you may need to check and adjust pH when the fertilizer is added. The same applies with water from a well or other variable source. The axiom is that you must know what you have before you can make plant-friendly changes.

Each year we learn more about orchid nutrition, which is more complex than the nutrition of chrysanthemums or poinsettias because we are finding that the nutritional needs of Phalaenopsis will differ markedly from those of Cattleya or Cymbidium. Generally, growers who are attentive to fertilizing will get the best results and most will say they enjoy the mental challenge of reading their plants. (from April 2003, 72:04, p. 257)



Controlling Pests

Q. What would you recommend for a good general all-purpose insecticide and fungicide? I feel the need to spray my 97 plants with something as I think they might all be infected with something I have not yet been able to identify. What do you think of Orthenex Insect and Disease Control? How often should this, or something else, be used prophylactically? What do you know and feel about Copperside Homeowners fungicide by Sunniland? The majority of my orchids are enclosed in a screened-in patio where my spa is located. I feel there should be many more flowers and many more frequent bloomers. Without seeing the area, I realize it's difficult for you to say what might be wrong, but can you be somewhat clairvoyant and let me know your feelings.

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A. I am not a great believer in chemical prophylactic spraying. One of the downsides is that you can often build up resistant strains of pests with this approach and also, if the chemical does not adhere to the plant for a sufficient length of time, or if it is quickly broken down by sunlight, you may be very much on a futile mission. I have become enamored of paraffinic oil sprays like Ultra-Fine, which do a wonderful job of controlling mites, scale and mealybugs plus a few other critters you would be happier without. They can be bought at chain stores for about \$10 a quart and can be sprayed through a Gilmour hose attachment sprayer with no protective clothing needed.

You do need to get complete coverage for a high level of pest control and it is always wise to spray any oil in the cool of the day. I prefer before 8:30 am in summer. Never use anything other than the ultra-fine paraffinic oils on orchids (sometimes called summer oils) as other heavier oils can kill your plants - and be careful with sensitive thin-leaved genera like *Lycaste*. Maybe test-spray one leaf first.

Before you use a fungicide, ask yourself why the fungal problem exists. If you wish to coat the leaves going into winter that may be a wise step. But, you must be careful with any copper-based fungicide not to use it on too regular a basis, as copper buildup can cause you serious problems. With any fungicide, you should practice a rotation between a copper-based and another type. But if you feel the need to spray with fungicide on a regular basis, maybe you have cultural conditions that need to be remedied first. I do not know the fungicide that was recommended to you but it is probably satisfactory as part of a rotational program. Be sure to read the directions closely, as many fungicides will need additives like stickers or spreaders for maximum effect.

I wish I were more clairvoyant, especially at the racetrack. However, it has been my experience that many orchids perform disappointingly in proximity to a spa. I never know whether it is inadequate light or maybe too little diurnal temperature fluctuation. (from May 2003, 72:05, p. 336)



Sphagnum Moss

Q. A few months ago, I visited a nursery and noted that about half of their *Phalaenopsis* are now planted in sphagnum moss - a departure from a year ago when only a small amount of sphagnum was wrapped around the

central roots and bark was used to fill the pot. I asked about this and was told that they now felt that the *Phalaenopsis* grow better in moss but they continued to raise some in bark because most of their customers did not know how to care for their plants in moss. At the time, I was happy with the way my plants were growing but a few weeks later I noted that one plant was shriveling up and really failed to thrive. On removing the plant from the container, I noted there were no roots in the pot and only a single aerial root still remained. I assumed that I had been overwatering and the roots had rotted so I decreased the watering schedule from every three to every five days. Since then, I have seen many of my plants show withering of the lower leaves and two of them were severely distressed. I repotted these two in sphagnum and within a month, the lower leaves had filled out and were now appearing healthy. On the basis of this response I am seriously considering repotting them all in moss and have ordered some clear plastic pots and more sphagnum. My question, however, is how do you determine the watering schedule? Does one keep the moss constantly damp or do you let the surface dry, or am I making a mistake in switching potting media?

A. These are some of the considerations I would evaluate before potting all my plants in sphagnum moss. It has long been known that an ailing plant can be resuscitated by cleaning off the rotted roots and repotting in sphagnum moss in a small pot. Culture on an ongoing basis in moss is a little different. It appears to me that there are three ways of potting in sphagnum moss; very tightly so that the moss is damp but never waterlogged; medium pack where watering must be spaced to allow the moss to dry to a state of dampness; and loose potting where the open nature of the medium means it is almost impossible to overwater. Whenever potting in sphagnum moss, there must be an understanding that repotting needs to be carried out on a shorter cycle than with most other media. Two factors that will come into play are the quality of the water in your area and the strength and nature of your fertilizer of choice. I prefer to use the best Chilean or New Zealand moss, as cheap moss is a poor foundation on which to build a strong plant. The unique water-holding and water-releasing qualities of the special cells in sphagnum moss mean that plants grown in it will thrive so long as there is not a rapid salt buildup accompanying the breakdown of the moss. Plants in decomposing moss will go backward even faster than they improve in the fresh product, so you must be observant for best results. (from October 2003, 72:10, p. 738)

Note: Andy is the former Director of Education for the American Orchid Society. During his tenure with AOS, he wrote the answers in the Q and A for Orchids magazine. These are some of his insightful responses.



CULTIVATION

July in St. Augustine

by Sue Bottom

It's July in St. Augustine. The spring chores have been completed, the plants have been moved to their summer homes and all the repotting has been completed, except for those bifoliate cattleyas that haven't yet initiated root growth. You learn a lot during the repotting process. If you inspect the roots carefully you will be able to tell what worked well and what did not work so well.



1. Fill the bottom third or half of the pot with Styrofoam chunks, then a little potting mix. Roots won't get soggy in the bottom of the pot, even if you are a serial overwaterer.

The cattleyas benefited from all the Styrofoam in the bottom third to half of the pot. Although this did not leave much room for potting mix, the roots thrived. There was plenty of air in the bottom of the pot and they got the moisture from the mix above it. The bottom center of the pot is always the last to dry out, and in prior years the roots from this area have been a rotten, sodden mess. Styrofoam peanuts work, but even better are coarse chunks of the soft Styrofoam from packing materials. You can break these into whatever size works in the size pot you are using.

On the negative side, the phalaenopsis really suffered this year based on the almost nonexistent root mass found while repotting. In retrospect, they were potted too late last year, it was well into July when they were all potted up and the stress of the repotting plus the heat made them slow to reestablish. They



2. Your spring blooming phalaenopsis should all be repotted before Independence Day, even if it means cutting off the blooms. The phals are actively growing in June and will reestablish quickly.

were also overdosed with Purely Organic fertilizer that was added directly to the ProMix while repotting. This year all the phals were repotted by mid-June with only a little timed release fertilizer added on top. We'll save the Purely Organic for top dressing in the fall when the root system is reestablished and healthy.

Now it is summer. If you are growing in a greenhouse or other enclosed structure, heat is your enemy. Many orchids do not like temperatures above 85F, and even the tough ones struggle with temperatures above 95F. You will have to find ways to increase ventilation and fresh air movement, with removable panels, retractable curtains, top vents, exhaust fans, etc. Underbench misting or spraying the walkways and outside of pots can also help cool temperatures. Overhead misting during midday can be problematic, causing rots and fungal problems.

Growing outside under trees or other shade is great for the plants. They love the fresh air and day/night temperature change. Being watered by Mother Nature is wonderful, up to a point. The pure rainwater is a refreshing break from our well water containing so many soluble salts. Even many of the public water supplies have an excessively high soluble salt level, particularly those using water supplied by JEA or by the main plant of the St. Johns County

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3. Scale infestation can be treated with a Q-tip and isopropyl alcohol and a Q-tip or spray with the home remedy 1 part alcohol, 1 part Formula 409 and 2 parts water.

Water Department. Daily thunderstorms can result in excessive leaf wetness conducive to roots and fungal infection so good air movement is critical. Too much moisture, or more accurately too little air, can also be a problem for roots. If you cannot control the water your plants receive, baskets with no or very little media may be a good choice.

This time of year, you must be vigilant about pests and diseases. If you grow cattleyas, scale is Public Enemy #1, hiding under papery sheaths, in leaf axils and on rhizomes. Mealybugs seem to gravitate to tender new growths on all types of orchids. Thrips can damage flower buds before they even open. Mites are attracted to thin leaved orchids, and catasetums, grammatophyllums and many dendrobiums are often targeted. You must be able to recognize these pests and the damage that they cause. Be prepared to respond quickly when an invader is detected. There are home remedies and various chemicals that can be used. Check the [SAOS website](#) for help in learning how to detect and eliminate pests from your growing area.



4. Black rot, hot humid weather and moisture favor this cattleya killer. You must quickly cut away infected tissue in order to save the plant.

Precautionary sprays are typically not recommended for pests, but may be highly desirable during periods when disease pressure is high. Fungicides and bactericides typically do not cure a problem, but provide a protective coat of armor on the plant to prevent the disease from gaining entry. Hot humid weather, excessive leaf wetness and gray gloomy days are all danger periods during which you should be on the lookout for blackened or softened leaf tissue. The [SAOS website](#) has lots of images to help you identify diseases and help prevent their recurrence. Tropical storms and hurricanes are always a concern for our plants. The article [Hot Humid Summers and the Tropical Storm Season](#) has some additional suggestions you may find helpful.

Summer challenges aside, there are many orchids blooming through the summer. Vandas love the heat, humidity and fresh air of summer. This is the blooming season for many of the bifoliate cattleyas, that torment us by blooming at the same time as initiating root growth making repotting a challenge. Brassavola nodosa and its hybrids seem to bloom several times throughout the summer. There are also those summer blooming phalaenopsis that enchant us with their fragrant blooms. Enjoy your plants, that is why we grow them!



CULTIVATION



Annual Keiki Club Repotting

We have a repotting party at the Keiki Club every year. There are always plenty of cattleya divisions to share and repotting mentors to help everyone get their plants situated, either in their new pot or on a mount. It is great fun and an opportunity to talk orchids with other addicts, not to mention get a new plant to bring home.

If you missed the potting party, we will be at Ace on Saturday, July 6th, from 9 til noon. Except for your bifoliate cattleyas and emergencies, all your repotting should be complete by early this month.



SHOW TABLE



Grower M. Chalut
Dtps. Tying Shin Bluejay



Grower Sabrina Jacobson
Eulophia andamanensis



Grower Marv Regan
Enc. steinbachii



Grower M. Chalut
Ryn. gigantea



Grower Tom & Dottie Sullivan
Lc. Eximia var. coerulea 'Sea God'



Grower Larry McNally
C. Pearl Harbor 'Orchidglade' AM/AOS



Grower Glo MacDonald
V. Kulwadee Fragrance



SHOW TABLE



Grower Suzane Susko
Miltoniopsis Kelly 'Bull's Eye'



Grower Penny Halyburton & Michael Rourke
Gram. scriptum var. scriptum 'Grasshopper II'



Grower Courtney Hackney
Enc. tampensis x Lc. Emily Clarkson



Grower Sue Bottom
C. schofieldiana



Grower Sue Bottom
Blc. Serengeti Sands



Grower Glo MacDonald
Catasetum No Name

Link to all Pictures. <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmEL8sED>

