



# Florida West Coast Orchid Society

## *Orchid News & Views*

*March 2009 Volume 7, No 3*

### *Meeting Information*

*March 12, 2009*

*7:00 pm Educational Class*

*Roy Finley Making Baskets*

*7:30 pm Featured Speaker*

*Dr Tom Nasser on Bulbophyllums*

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- Remember food

[www.fwcoss.org](http://www.fwcoss.org)

"As we all know, our Educational Speaker, Roy Finley, grows many exotics - even by our standards. Learn one of his "secrets" - home-made baskets!"

See Page 2 to learn about our Featured Speaker, Dr Tom Nasser. He will be bringing orchids to sell and furnishing more for our raffle.

**FWCOS**  
**Orchid News & Views**

Brenda Miller—Editor, Content and Advertising: brenfm@tampabay.rr.com

14444 Neptune Rd, Seminole, FL 33776  
Content must be received by one week past the monthly meeting for inclusion in the following months newsletter. Ads must be in high resolution (at print size) Picture format: .TIF, .GIF, .JPG or .PDF . Submitted via email or CD.

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Diane Jones—Membership, Email or mailing address changes:

14541 Iroquois Ave., Largo, FL 33774

The Florida West Coast Orchid Society (FWCOS) Meets every 2nd Thursday of the month at Pinellas County Extension.

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**Operating Procedures  
for Membership**

Membership—the term of membership shall be for the calendar year. Annual dues for the first annual member in a household shall be \$18.00, each additional annual member in a household and not receiving a newsletter shall be \$12.00.

Members renewing before December 31st may receive a 10% discount for the early renewal. For new members joining from July to December these months will be prorated at \$1.50/month in addition to the next year's membership of \$18.00. In the case of a household with life or honorary members, they shall be considered the first annual member of a household. Lifetime membership is \$180.00.

**FWCOS**  
**Board of Directors 2008**

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bfinke90@tampabay.rr.com

**Trustees:** Roy Finley 727-866-2435  
us029817@mindspring.com

Mr and Mrs Elliott Flynn Trophy

**Can the Lost be Found?**

Florida West Coast Orchid Society would like to locate The Flynn Trophy. This trophy is a 12-inch Revere silver bowl which was awarded annually to the Best Cattleya in our Fall Show exhibited by a FWCOS member. If you were exhibiting cattleyas in the 1990 to 1999 period, please check your homes so we can return this engraved trophy to our collection of trophies.

Contact Donna Sitton 727-784-1985

SittonPhals@gmail.com

## *From Our 1st Vice President*

I know its a little early to start talking about our Show and sale on Oct 2, 3 and 4 at Minnreg Hall but as much as we can have it in front of all our members and those that also receive our newsletter the better it will reach those interested in our hobby and benefit our vendors and our FWCOS. It is going to take a monumental effort in this economy to make to reach the success of our society's past results. Brent Finke and I are co-chairs once again and we will make be setting volunteer lists so contact us if there is something you would like to do for the show and sale. We will be able to begin setting up between 1 and 2 pm on Thursday and the vendors will be able to begin their booths and display setups between 4 and 5 pm. This is much earlier and will hopefully make it easier for everyone.



The last board meeting included much discussion on our bus trips and how much the society should subsidize the event. It was noted that some help should be available but the overall costs should be supported by the people using the bus. Deadlines for payments and cancellations will be instituted, if not enough members decide to avail themselves of the opportunity to go on the trip it will be canceled and all deposits returned. Corrine Arnold is putting together a one day trip to the Redlands Show and Sale in May in Homestead, FL. This affair has 60 vendors from all over the US and some international. This is one of the largest show and sale in the country. Call Corrine at 727-447-2898 for more details. This promises to be the trip of the year for our members. The date will be Friday the 15 of May, the opening day, so you can get the early pick of the many quality and different orchids. Dr Tom Nasser, from Carolina Orchids will be our speaker for the March meeting, don't miss it. Tom and his wife Shann want to go fishing one day while they are here so if any member who has a boat and can put them on some fish wishes to take the Nassers for a half to a full day fishing let me know. The flats would be great as grouper will still be out season. They will be staying with Dr. Roy Finley during their stay. They will also be at the Redlands show and sale May 15-17 in Homestead.

Great growing to all,

Bob Barrett, 1st VP

## *About Our Guest Speaker*

Dr Tom Nasser and Shan, his wife, got their first greenhouse in 1979. Their business began in 1980 as Clemson Orchids. Tom taught and Shan worked in the chemical industry in Clemson [the field of which he has a Ph.D. in Textile Chemistry]. They live in Fort Mill, SC where Carolina Orchids [previously known as Clemson Orchids] is located. Tom is Adjunct Professor at University of North Carolina at Charlotte and is involved to help with their orchid collection.



Tom has given talks on bulbophyllums and angraecums to many societies for many years. At Carolina Orchids, they do not mass-produce orchids. The greenhouses contain their collection, i.e. several different clones of a particular orchid rather than hundreds of plants of limited species or clones.

## *From Our Membership Chairman*

I hope that this newsletter finds everyone doing well. We would like to welcome our two newest members: Barbara Feeley of Clearwater and Dianne Ray of Madeira Beach.

We hope that all our members take advantage of all the activities that FWCOS has to offer and that you find time to help us in our volunteer areas. This is a great way to meet the wonderful people that make FWCOS work so effortlessly.

Don't forget to pickup your new Membership Directory at our March meeting. See you there.

Diane Jones

Membership Chairman



Diane Jones

## Meetings and Events

### March 2009

**Mar 7, 8 am til Noon Work Day at the Extension Center. We need your help. 25 people for 4 hours would be great.**

**March 7, 8: Palmer's Orchid Sale:** 22700 Taylor Rd, Bradenton, FL [941-322-1644

**March 12, FWCOS: 7 pm Education Class; 7:30 pm Featured Speaker Dr Tom Nasser on Bulbophyllums;** Pinellas County Extension Center, 12520 Ulmerton Rd, Largo; Contact Cheryl Finke [cfinke@tampabay.rr.com]

**Mar 13 – 16: 10 a m TBOS 27th Annual Show (Orchid Holidays) & Sale:** Bayanihan Arts & Events Center, 14301 Nine Eagles Dr, Tampa; Fifteen vendors.[Dory Gallagher at rgallagher1@tampabay.rr.com 813-907-1025

**Mar 14: 10 am Tampa Orchid Club Auction @ USF Botanical Gardens; Workshop 9AM** [In place of regular General Meeting] Corner Pine/Alumni Contact Laurie Nissen 654-2049

**Mar 14, 1:30 pm AOS Judging:** Orlando, Harry P Leu Gardens, Palm Room, 1920 N Forest Ave, Orlando. Contact Marv Ragan 904-213-4560

**Mar 19, 7:30 pm Tampa Bay Orchid Society:** Seminole Heights United Methodist Church at 6111 Central Avenue, Tampa.; Contact Sue Barnum 281-2186.

**Mar 21: 9 til Noon: Orchid Friends' Sale** at 343 39th Ave N, St Petersburg; Call 536-7717

**Mar 22, 10 am-4:30 pm: Sunken Gardens Orchid Festival,** 1825 4th St N, St Petersburg. Contact Bill O-Brady 551-3148

**Mar 25, 7:30 pm AOS Judging,** Tampa Garden Center, 2629 Bayshore Blvd, Tampa, Contact Ken Roberts 813-752-8719

### April 2009

**Apr 9, FWCOS: 7 pm Education Class; 7:30 pm Featured Speaker;** Pinellas County Extension Center, 12520 Ulmerton Rd, Largo; Contact Cheryl Finke [cfinke@tampabay.rr.com]

**Sat., Apr 18: FWCOS Annual Orchid Auction, 8:30 a m Preview; 9 am Auction** Largo Cultural Center; Historic Feed Store, 105 Central Park Dr, Largo. 8 am: Preview 9 am: Auction begins. Contact Cheryl Finke, 420-7230

**Apr 28: TOC 'Potting & Picnicing'** USF Botanical Garden Contact Sue Barnum 813-281-2126

### May 2009

**May 15 - 17, 9 am - 5 pm: Redlands International Orchid Festival,** Redland Fruit and Spice Park, 24801 SW 187th Ave, Homestead, FL 610-388- 1000; [www.longwoodgardens.org](http://www.longwoodgardens.org)

#### From a New Member

I see you at the meetings, but you never say "Hello"  
You're busy all the time with folks that you already know.  
I sit among the members, but I'm still a lonely guy,  
The new ones sit there with me, but you simply pass us by.  
Remember, please, you asked me in, you spoke of fellowship.  
You're just a step across the room, but you never make the trip.  
Why can't you nod and say "Hello" - - or stop and shake my hand  
And then go on and join your friends, now that I'd understand.  
I'll be at future meetings, too, on that you can depend,  
So won't you introduce yourself— I want to be your friend!

# The Florida West Coast Orchid Society Annual

# Orchid Auction

at the

## Largo Cultural Center's Historic Largo Feed Store

105 Central Park Dr. • Largo

## Saturday, April 18th

Auction begins at 9:00 am

*Auction Items Include*

- Hybrids & Species • Prized Divisions
- Blooming & Budding Orchids

*Free  
Admission!*

*For Information Call Cheryl: 727-420-7230*

FA51316



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Bob Hague veniceorchids@gmail.com  
Bill & Susan Fender office 941-412-1355  
Bill's cell 941-323-1593; Susan's cell 941-323-1587

Flexible hours so please call or email before visiting our greenhouses.

[www.FendersFlora.com](http://www.FendersFlora.com)    [orchids@FendersFlora.com](mailto:orchids@FendersFlora.com)

Directions: From Interstate 75, exit 191 (River Rd.) 1/2 mi., then Right on Venice Ave, Right on Keystone Rd. We are second to last driveway on right.

**These are some of the current vendors donating plants for our auction. Be sure to thank them.**

**Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting  
Florida West Coast Orchid Society  
January 27, 2009**



**In Attendance:** Bob Barrett, Cheryl Finke, Leslie Belew, Chad Whetstone, Donna Sitton, Brent Finke, Corinne Arnold, Jack Majewski, and Bill Nunez

**By Speaker Phone:** Pam Heath

**Absent:** Chris Smith, Michael Palandro, Roy Finley, and Tina Kendall

The meeting was held at the offices of Harper, Van Scoik, 2111 Drew St., Clearwater. Having declared a quorum, Pam called the meeting to order at 7:16 p.m.

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**Old Business:**

The minutes of the September 30, 2008 meeting of the Board of Trustees were reviewed. Chad moved the minutes be accepted and Bob seconded. The motion passed. The minutes of the October 9, 2008 Special Board of Trustees meeting were reviewed. Cheryl moved the minutes be accepted and Bill seconded. The motion passed.

Pam reported that we need approx. 160 hours of volunteer service at the Gardens to fulfill our agreement for 2010. She requests each Board member volunteer a minimum of 30 minutes to 4 hours of time. She will try and arrange a Saturday in February.

**Treasurer's Report:**

Chad provided the Board with a Balance Statement for 2008. He will have to file a tax return for the first time since the gross receipts exceeded \$25,000.

Several years ago the club made a corporate contribution to the Friends of the Garden Foundation of \$1000. There was discussion on budgeting another contribution. It was decided that since the club donates hours we would not make a cash donation at this time.

Pam has been asked by the TBOS for FWCOS to put in a display at their show. There was discussion regarding the potential costs and who might be interested in doing such a display. She asked that there be a budget line item of \$250 to cover the cost should a member decide to do it.

There was much discussion on field trips) for the 2009 budget regarding expenses and subsidies. Jack moved that we budget up to 2 field trips at a stop loss of \$300 per trip. Donna seconded, but the vote failed with 3 for and 6 against. There was further discussion regarding the subsidy amount. Cheryl moved that we budget up to 2 field trips at a stop loss of \$400 per trip. Leslie seconded and the motion passed with two against.

There was discussion on sponsoring some type of conservation effort or research. Cheryl moved that FWCOS provide a \$1000 grant to a person to be chosen later. Chad seconded and the motion passed. Pam, Bill and possibly Roy will propose a recipient of the grant.

Bill asked for approx. \$100 in supplies for the Sunken Gardens project. This was included in the budget under volunteer costs for both the Botanical Gardens and Sunken Gardens. There was discussion on getting a story written on the society with the volunteer work at both Gardens and the grant.

Leslie moved the 2009 Budget be accepted and Pam seconded. The motion passed. Chad will provide the budget to Brenda for printing in the News & Views. There was discussion on printing the Balance Statement in the newsletter. Chad agreed to prepare a condensed version on a quarterly basis.

Jack and Bob agreed to be on the Reconciliation Committee with Chad.

**Fall Show:**

Bob reported that he would pay the Minnreg deposit this week and the show dates (October 2-4, 2009) have been approved by the AOS. Brent has again agreed to co-chair the Show Committee with Bob, and Bill offered his help also. Michael Polen was a valuable liaison between the show committee and the vendors and has agreed to act in that role again. A couple of the vendors may not return. Chad discussed a biodegradable plastic bag, and will give the company information to Brent to research further. Brent would like to offer lectures on basic culture etc. during the show, and it was agreed that this was a terrific idea.

**Annual Auction:**

Cheryl reported that the Largo Cultural Center's Historic Feed Store had increased the rent by \$250 for the auction. It was agreed to hold the auction in the same location regardless.

**Library Books:**

Cheryl has been keeping the library books at her house and now needs the space. There was discussion on possible librarians, selling and /or donating the collection. It was decided that we would ask the membership if anyone was interested in housing the library. Bill was going to see if USF was interested, possibly at their remote Clam Bayou location. Donna agreed to ask Tom Sheehan if UF might be interested in the collection.

**Redlands Field Trip:**

Corinne would like to plan a trip to Redlands in May. She needs to reserve the bus immediately. She is considering a trip to Oktoberfest (Deland) in October and possibly the Ft. Lauderdale show next January.

**Committee Chairs:**

There was discussion on the standing committees under Article XV of our Bylaws. The chairs are as follows: 1. Membership – Diane Jones; 2. Show – Bob and Brent; 3. Bylaws – Jack; 4. Plant Table – Mark Jones and Jim and Emily Clarkson; 5. Library - ?; 6. Programs – Bob; 7. Publications: Newsletter – Brenda Miller, Directory – Diane Jones; 8. Publicity – Barbara Pekan; 9. Member Visitation – Corinne; 10. Refreshments - ?. It was decided that we would announce at the upcoming meeting a need for a refreshments chairman.

**Speakers:**

The February speaker has a conflict, so if another cannot be found, Cheryl agreed to speak. March - Dr. Tom Nasser of Carolina Orchids will speak on bulbophyllums.

April – Jim Roberts

May – Wes Higgins of Selby Gardens

June – Rafael of Plantio La Orquidea

July – Featherstone Orchids

October – possibly join TBOS in bringing Fred Clarke

November – Chapman Orchids

January 2010 – Francisco Miranda

Other possible speakers are Martin Motes, Paul Storm and Bill Thoms.

**Other Business:**

Donna presented a write-up she would like to have printed in the News & Views and the Tampa society newsletters looking for the Flynn Trophy.

There was discussion regarding the member's plant sale to be open to the public. This will be at Chad's greenhouse on February 21 from 9 am until 1 pm.

Bob moved that we adjourn at 9:40, and Pam seconded. The next meeting was scheduled for April 28, 2009.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Belew

Secretary, FWCOS

## "Slipper Orchids" in Florida - Paphiopedilums

News & Views March 1969; Vol X No III

Growing paphiopedilums in Florida was once thought to be a foolhardy venture since the information on their culture was from England and it was believed that they could only be grown in cool climates.

For many years Paphs were grown mainly in our northern states which had somewhat the same climate as England. The earlier hybrids thrived under these conditions and the cooler species used produced more spectacular bloom. Over the years not only were these hybrids intercrossed, but intermediate and warm-blooded species were introduced, so that today a great majority of our modern hybrids can be flowered in Florida if a few basic rules are followed as to air, light, water and potting material.

Paphs like conditions that are fairly shady with good air circulation. They do not have pseudobulbs to store moisture or food and depend on their roots to support them. If the roots are dry for any length of time they die and the plant has to generate new ones. They need to be moist at all times, and the potting material dictates the amount of water required. A compost of bark, tree fern, peat or sphagnum, and bone meal, such as the "Off" mix, which will be porous enough for drainage, will have good water retention. Plants may be set on gravel in a pan or shallow bowl and water kept just under the surface of the gravel to assure constant moisture. Overhead watering must be done very carefully lest water settle in the crown and cause bud rot. If this should happen there will be no flower until the next year.

Fertilizers such as Nutri-Leaf 60, LlyGro, Atlas Fish Emulsion and others used according to directions given, will be beneficial twice a month from late Spring through Summer and Fall.

beneficial twice a month from late Spring through Summer and Fall.

Paphs are rarely attacked by insects, but for occasional red mite, a spraying, or dipping in Di-mite, or other miticide, is usually sufficient. The grower is well rewarded by the beautiful long lasting flowers of this genus.

Certain species of the Asian Lady Slippers generally do not flower in this area as they come from higher elevations and need a more extreme day and night temperature range than we can supply. Paph. Insigne of this type will not flower here although the yellow form, Sanderae, has been flowered in Florida. There is a group of four somewhat related tropical species: bellatulum, niveum, niveum v Ang Thong (syn Psyche) and godefroyae. These are easy to bloom, being warm species, but easy, also, to lose, probably from overwatering or the lack of some form of lime in the potting mix. This group is found on or near limestone rock in native haunts.

The native North American slipper, the only true *Cypripedium*, will not grow or flower here since we lack the right conditions. Even the Northern growers have a difficult time cultivating them.

The Lady Slippers commonly seen in bloom today in Florida are derived from the hybridization of Asian species. Almost any modern Slipper may be flowered in Florida, if grown in about 70% shade and given plenty of water, and air circulation in well-drained media with some lime therein.



A Lesson in Orchid Arranging with Michael Collin  
At our February meeting



**Selling  
Orchids  
At  
Chet's**



# *Orchid Biology From One Hobbyist's Perspective*

## **Making Baby Orchids By Jeffrey Dromm**

### **Part Four: Orchid Flower Pollination by Hand**



Jeff Dromm

It is ironic that orchid seeds in the wild are dependent on fungi to grow and survive while in laboratory or home culture fungi, mold and bacteria are responsible for the demise of more orchid seeds and seedlings than any other cause. In order to be successful in culturing orchid seeds, sterile cleaning and harvesting techniques are a must.

When selecting orchid capsules to obtain seeds you have two choices. Seeds can be removed from immature seed capsules called the “Green pod/Greencapping” method or from mature capsules just prior to dehiscence or immediately thereafter. Both methods require diligence to prevent contamination. Green seed capsules must be mature enough to yield seeds that can be utilized for culture. This viability is variable and dependent on the genera and species of orchid. The capsule may be green, but the seed embryos must be mature enough to have the ability to germinate. Fortunately, there is information available on many orchid maturation times which can be used as a rough guideline. In the case of ripe capsules many, but not all capsules will turn color as they mature going from green to light green to yellow or brown. This is particularly noticeable at the distal end of the capsule. In some species, the grooves in the pod become deeper and the pod becomes softer. **See figures 1 and 2.**



Figure 1. Courtesy of Troy Meyers Conservatory



Figure 2 Courtesy of Lotte and Thomas Orchids

The seeds in green seed capsules are usually sterile until the capsule is opened and the contents exposed. In dehiscent capsules the seeds have been contaminated by exposure to the environment. Harvesting seeds from a green capsule is inherently easier because you are starting with a usually sterile product. In dehiscent seeds the seeds themselves must be decontaminated prior to sowing them in a culture media. Seeds that must be decontaminated very often germinate at a lower rate and or more slowly.

Given the previous information, it should be noted that there is by no means a consensus on either harvest approach. Many orchid seed growers believe that intact green capsules can and do get contaminated by bacteria and fungi that penetrate the plant tissue. There is also the supposition that seeds from green capsules can pass on viruses to the seedlings while dried mature seeds do not. Being immature, green capsules must be harvested right away or properly stored to prevent spoilage. It is a necessity that all the seeds from a green capsule be sown at once. Some studies of dehiscent seeds indicate that they do not pass along viruses. After decontamination they can be sown all at once or stored for future use.

If you don't decontaminate the green capsules or in dehiscent capsules the seeds you will almost certainly contaminate your growth media. This will result in culturing bacteria and fungi along with orchid seeds. The seeds cannot compete or survive in this environment.

There are numerous methodologies that can be utilized in harvesting green and ripened pods. The following procedure is a representative sample. The first step in obtaining seed is to remove the capsule from the mother plant by cutting it free with a sterile sharp knife or razor blade.

A sterile cutting instrument is important to ensure against the transmission of pathogens to the mother plant or the capsule. The razor blade or knife can be sterilized using a flame, soaking in a 10% Sodium Hypochlorite/Bleach solution, or you can soak it in 70 % Isopropyl alcohol /rubbing alcohol. Once the capsule has been removed from the orchid it should be placed on filter paper or a paper towel. If the seed is not going to be used immediately the capsule should be placed in a **Desiccator**. A desiccator is any sealable container that is used to preserve moisture sensitive materials. It is filled with compounds that are **Hygroscopic** in nature and thus have the ability to draw moisture out of the air. Examples are Silica Gel and Calcium Chloride/Drierite. The desiccator can be purchased commercially or can be easily made. **See figure 3**. After 48 hours the sealed container should be placed in the refrigerator which will afford some extended viability to the seeds. Waiting 48 hours allows sufficient time for the capsule to dry at room temperature while placing the capsule immediately in the refrigerator would retard the drying process.

When you are ready to harvest the seeds, place the capsule in a glass or ceramic dish, hold it with tweezers and scrub with a soft toothbrush that is dipped in a 10% Clorox solution and some liquid dishwashing detergent. The solution is made by adding household bleach at the ratio of 10 milliliters to 90 milliliters distilled or de-ionized water making up a 100 ml. To this add a drop two of the detergent. The addition of the soap acts as a wetting agent and helps the bleach clean the capsule more effectively. It should be noted, that bleach strengths vary from a little as a 1% to as much as 10%, depending on the individual procedure used. The percentage can be adjusted accordingly.

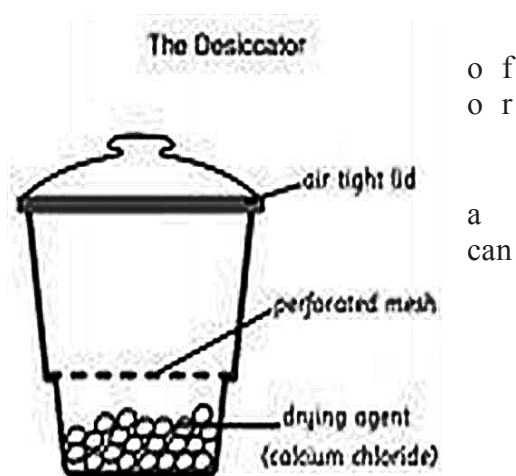


**Figure 4**

Courtesy of Ceiba Foundation for Tropical Conservation

After you have thoroughly scrubbed the outside of the capsule rinse it with distilled water. Then using tweezers place the capsule in a 1% solution of bleach for 10 minutes. Prior to moving the capsule from the solution you must prepare and sterilize your work area. This work area includes your transfer chamber which could be a laminar flow hood, a glove box, fish tank, cardboard box or some other appropriate cabinet (this will be discussed in more detail in next month's article). You must also sterilize your tools including knives, tweezers/tongs, a small spatula, rubber gloves, and a cutting surface. Use either 10% bleach or 70% alcohol. You can do this by using a spray bottle or cotton swabs. Washing your hands with an antibacterial soap prior to donning gloves should also be part of the sterilization routine.

After the allotted time remove the capsule with tweezers and swab or rinse it with the 70% Isopropyl alcohol. The capsule should be placed on a sterile surface and cut into two or three pieces lengthwise. **See figure 4**. You are then ready to transfer your seeds to a flask containing a growth media. In the case of green pods seeds, it may be necessary to scrape the seeds from the capsule segment into the flask. In mature seeds, you may have to do no more than tap the cut capsule segment over the flask to release the seeds.



**Figure 3**

The procedure for dehisced capsules is different and more involved than green pod or un-dehisced

capsules. Because the seed capsule is dehisced or broken open, the seeds are no longer sterile and there is a significant possibility that they are contaminated with bacteria and fungi.

The seeds themselves must be sterilized prior to being placed in the flask of culture media.

Start the contaminated seed sterilization process by shaking or otherwise removing the seed from the split capsule onto a piece of filter paper. White coffee filters work fine. Once the seeds have been deposited you have the option of folding the paper into a packet (you can staple it if desired) and placing it in a container with 5 to 10% bleach solution or funneling the seeds directly into the solution. The packet or the funneled seeds should remain in the solution for 5 to 10 minutes. After the soak time is over remove the packet with tweezers rinse the paper packet with sterile water and open it inside your sterilized transfer cabinet. Place the filter paper in a glass or plastic funnel and rinse at least three times with sterile water. You can then transfer/scrape the seeds into the flask with culture media. In the case of the seeds put directly into bleach without the paper packet, you pour the solution with seeds through a piece of filter paper dampened with 70% alcohol in a glass or plastic funnel in your sterile transfer cabinet. Once the solution has drained you rinse the seeds at least three times with sterile water. After the rinses you can transfer the seeds to the culture media flask.

The science of orchid seed culture is a relatively new discipline with numerous procedures and methodologies to select from. The techniques I have provided are only one or two approaches that work. The right procedures are what work for the individual orchid seed grower. The ones I have provided are just a starting point. The successful key to all methodologies is maintaining a sterile environment.

Use the sterilizing agents with common sense. Isopropyl alcohol is flammable and you should avoid prolong exposure to its fumes. Bleach is corrosive and should also be treated with due caution. I encourage anyone using these chemicals to wear safety goggles or at a minimum safety glasses and rubber gloves.

Next month I will address sterile transfer cabinets and we will look at types, preparation and sterilization of orchid seed culture media for flasks or culture media containers.

## **Fenders Flora, Inc & Venice Orchids**

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**April 3 and 4 (Fri & Sat) 9 a m - 3 p m**

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**Bob Hague [veniceorchids@gmail.com](mailto:veniceorchids@gmail.com)**

**Directions: From I-75, exit 191 (River Rd), ½ mile, then right on to Venice Ave., ½ mile, then right on Keystone Rd. We are second to last driveway on right**

# ORCHID FRIENDS' SALE

9 a.m.-noon—March 21

343 39th Ave North, St. Petersburg

A variety of orchids will on sale at '**Budget Prices**',

Many in bloom.

Tropical plants also available for purchase;

Advice on orchid care / culture.

THIS IS A REALLY GREAT SALE. DON'T MISS IT.

Sunday March 22, , 10 a m – 4 p m

**Sunken Gardens**

**Orchid Festival**

1825 4<sup>th</sup> St N, St Petersburg

**Commercial Orchid Growers**

**From Around the State**

**Orchid Culture Lectures all Day**

Orchid Festival & Lectures

FREE with Regular Paid Admission

Sunken Gardens Admission

\$8 Adults, Seniors \$6, Children 2-11 yrs \$4

727-551-3100 [www.stpete.org/sunken.htm](http://www.stpete.org/sunken.htm)

*Tampa Orchid Club*

*3rd Annual Auction*

*March 14, 2009 USF Botanical Gardens (corner Pine/Alumni)*

*9 a m Workshop, 'Orchid Basics' by Jim Clarkson*

*250 Orchids & related items for bid*

*Preview 10 am;*

*Bidding 10:30 til 4*

*Refreshments available for purchase*

*As well as orchid supplies and books*

*Workshop \$5 for USFBG members*

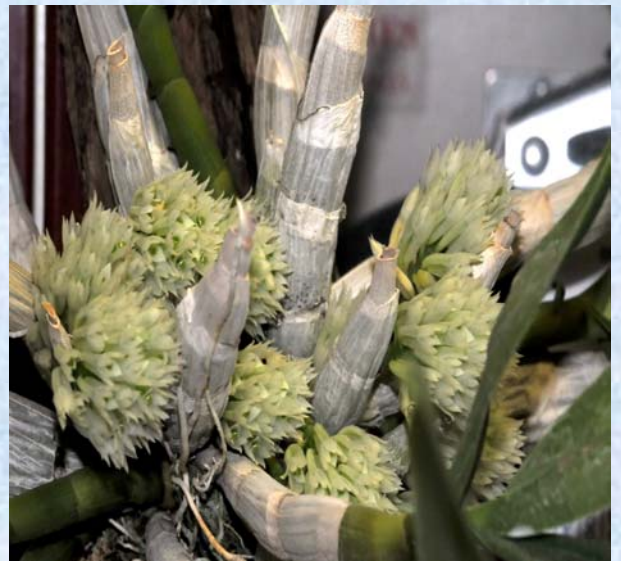
*\$7 for non-members.*

## *January Bloom Table*



LC Tropical Pointer x LC Jungle Elf  
Displayed by Corinne Arnold

Dendrobium Capituliflorum  
Displayed by Cheryl Finke



Angraecum sesquipedale  
Displayed by Roy Finley

## Monthly Checklist for March and April

### **Cattleya**

Although March is, in many parts of the country, still a cold and blustery month, the lengthening days and warmer temperatures allowed by increased light are long-awaited harbingers of the coming change of season. Some of the best standard cattleyas of the year will be in bloom, or will be blooming soon. The last of the winter-flowering hybrids will join the earliest of the spring hybrids in a wonderful display. Be on the alert for senescing sheaths that need removal. If these yellowing sheaths are not removed, the moisture they trap can lead to bud rot. Careful removal of the sheath will allow the buds to develop, although they will need additional support. Changing light conditions can also be a problem in March and April. An exceptionally bright day, especially immediately following a rain, can lead to sunburn of the foliage if shading is not attended to properly. There can still be periods of dull days where spikes can be weakened owing to the lower light. Lengthening days will mean increased metabolic rates necessitating increased water and fertilizer. The plants will indicate needs by drying more rapidly, which means more frequent watering and fertilizing.

With the passing of the season for winter bloomers, and the beginning of the season for spring bloom, it is also the time to be on the lookout for plants that will need potting after they bloom. Immediately after blooming has proven to be the best time to repot winter- and spring-flowering cattleyas. In most cases, they will be ready to grow roots, so if potted at this time, they will root right into fresh mix with little or no setback.

### **Cymbidium**

Plants should be putting on a spectacular show this time of year. Adjust all staking and twist-ties and be on the lookout for aphids, slugs and snails. Give adequate water because flowering strains the plants. As new growths appear later, increase the nitrogen level in the fertilizer. Should a plant look healthy but not be blooming, try increasing the light during the next growing season. The number-one reason for no flowers is lack of light.

### **Dendrobium (Australian)**

These hard-cane dendrobiums will be at their flowering peak now. It is not unusual to see a specimen of this type in an orchid show boasting 1,000 flowers. The secret with this group -- bred primarily from *Dendrobium kingianum* and *Dendrobium speciosum* -- is to provide ample water, fertilizer and light during the growing season.

### **Lycaste**

This genus of superb orchids will be coming to the end of its flowering season. Soon you will see the beginning of new root growth, which is an excellent time to repot into fresh media. As new growth emerges, provide ample fertilizer and water. A sign of good culture is an increase in the size of pseudobulbs with each successive year.

### **Miltoniopsis**

This marks the beginning of the flowering season. Amazing displays of color will dazzle the grower over the next few months. Prepare your plants for optimum display by staking spikes (if needed) and cleaning off the older yellow foliage. Do not miss the wonderful fragrance as the flowers unfold.

## **Paphiopedilum**

March is the beginning of the season of heaviest potting for lady's-slipper orchids. However, it is a month where the volume of plants needing attention is still small. It is an excellent month to take the time to work with your paphiopedilums before the pressure of other potting prevents your doing the thorough job you should. Look at each plant: Is it clean of dead and dying foliage? Is it weed free? Does it need potting? Is it in spike? Does it have an insect problem? Cleaning and restaging your paphs is one of the most satisfying tasks of the orchid year. Cleaned and potted paphiopedilums look happy.

The summer-blooming types will be showing the first of their buds in March and April. Be on the lookout for the buds, as well as any insect pests that may have found their way into the crowns of your plants. It is especially difficult to clean mealybugs, in particular, once they have become established in the plant. Better to get to them before they get a good toehold.

Increasing light levels should give emerging spikes the strength they need to grow straight and strong. Do not be too anxious to stake the spikes, because if they are staked too soon, the flowers may develop a "nodding" stance, where the dorsal will not stand upright. If the spikes seem to develop at an angle, let them, and stake after the flower has hardened for best carriage, especially on the hybrids with fairieanum background.

## **Phalaenopsis**

In most of the country, March is the peak blooming month for phalaenopsis. Staking needs to be carefully attended to, so that the flowers will be displayed at their best for orchid shows and judging -- even those intended for your home will look best if properly staked. One of the most decorative aspects of phalaenopsis spikes is the way they gracefully arch. If not staked properly, the spike will lack this grace and will not be as pleasing. Most growers like to have the final support just below the first flower, allowing maximum support, without sacrificing the beauty of the arching spike.

Rapid-growing spikes and open flowers place extra demands on the plant. Careful monitoring of watering and feeding will give the plants the energy they require to give their best floral display. Remember, too, that the lengthening days will also increase the frequency at which plants need water.

Beware of the invasion of sucking pests that accompany the flowering season. Flowers and spikes are favorite targets of mealybugs and scales. Be on the look out for their presence, often indicated by the appearance of sooty mold resulting from the exudate of the bugs, and treat before flowers or buds are too advanced. If flowers and buds are too far along, the chemical treatment may damage or abort them.

## **Pleurothallids**

Members in this large and increasingly popular group will be looking their best now. If plants are not in flower, the next few months provide an excellent time to divide if needed or repot into fresh mix. Taking care of these tasks now will allow enough time for your plants to become established before the hot weather arrives.

The AOS thanks Ned Nash and James Rose for this essay .



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