

An Affiliate of the American Orchid Society

FORT LAUDERDALE ORCHID SOCIETY

N • E • W • S • L • E • T • T • E • R

June 2010

June 14th Program:

Wendy Griffin to Help Us Grow *Vandas* and *Cattleyas* Better

Wendy last spoke to us in August 2007 and we are lucky that Wayne Musgrave convinced her to drive down from Vero Beach for our program. The Griffins and their Indian River Orchids have been an important vendor at our shows since 2004. Several years ago they bought the stock from Stewart Orchids which resulted in Indian River's being able to offer wonderful *Cattleyas* at affordable prices even for today's bargain seeking hobbyists.

Of course Wendy will be supplying the plant raffle table and will have plants for sale from her abundant and tempting stock.

Besides coming to this meeting to buy and win orchids, you will want to hear Wendy's talk. Those of you who heard her in 2007 probably still remember how she showed us the way to make a reluctant to bloom *Vanda* pop into bloom. She gave the stem a hard squeeze and the good old plant gene kicked in when it got the message: "I've got to bloom, I'm going to die!" Don't miss this meeting!

Wayne Musgrave's Thoughts

I would like to congratulate Joan Connors on her election as our next President, and I want everyone to know that a little thing like an election will not cool my enthusiasm for the Society. I plan to continue to work to keep the Society moving forward, and am grateful for the fun I have in the society, for the orchid friends who share my goals, and for what I continue to learn about orchids.

Wayne

Thank You, Joan Connors

At least here is a bit of space to thank Joan for her work as President this year. Please see page 3 for her out-going, in-coming President's Message.

FLOS Birthday Month It's Fine, We're 59

It was just 59 years ago in June when that little band met at the Smiths' and brought us into being. Since then we have grown into one of the largest, most active, most friendly society in the nation. That's wonderful!

What is not as wonderful is that 'times they are a changing' and you have to *think younger than 59* not to panic a bit about that. Our membership is down a bit, too many of our most active members have moved or are planning to move away from South Florida. They leave a work gap that somebody needs to fill. Some of our senior and long-time members did not rejoin this year, they don't have orchids now and not spending unnecessary money has become a way of life.

On the same economic plane, our show was less well attended last year than in the past. Should we crawl in a hole and give up? NO WAY.

Active members are important. Have you got a friend or neighbor who would be an asset to the society? Why not invite that person to join us? Why not become more active yourself? There are little ways to help and one way is to look now at your duplicate healthy orchids and set them aside for the fall auction. Vendors are likely to give us less, so we need to provide more of the plants.

Can you plan to help one of our show vendors? Groom your plants so they can use your plants in their display. Shipping plants and props in is expensive, help them come up with big and beautiful displays which will sell tickets to our show. How about planning now to do a 10' x 10' hobby display? Find a friend or two to go in with you, make a plan, start growing filler greens now. You'll have fun doing this.

Lastly be positive. Advertising is down, last year the little Membership Roster cost \$3.78 per member. I changed the format used for the last 30 years and this year the cost will be about 70 cents per member.

Lets make our birthday month a time to plan to work together to keep going forward. Too much hard work has gone on in the last 59 years to do less. D.H.

Jeff Adkins: Always Just Amazing

Nobody is quite like Jeff. He is just the best, most down to earth, funny speaker out there. Following his tips does not require three university degrees in plant biochemistry. Jeff understands that most of us are busy hobbyists with many other interests. That covered, these are his good tips:

* Phals are easy to grow, but must be grown under cover in a pot or on a tree. They need to be protected from falling debris and too much water.

* If you want to grow them on a tree, attach them to the underside of a branch where algae is growing. They are protected by the limb and the algae indicates that water gets to that part of the branch.

* All life processes create heat and a living tree generates a bit of heat which allows a Phal to live through a cold spell when it would not have survived in a pot.

* Phals need light, but should have at least 50% shade.

* Time release fertilizer breaks down fast in our summer rain and humidity. If the directions say that it will work for 6 months and to use a teaspoon full on a 5" pot, use ½ a teaspoon full and replace it every 3 months. The fertilizer is encased in a shell and the empty shell will fool you into thinking the plants are getting fertilizer when they are not. Mark a calendar to know when your 3 months are up, the shells won't tell you.

* Remove spent flower spikes at the base of the spike. You won't need to apply fungicide to the cut off spike, you do need a clean blade to remove a damaged or infected leaf. It may be well to remove the whole leaf. Kitchen cinnamon can be dusted on the removed or partially removed leaf.

* Phals need to be repotted every year, and the repotting should be done before the end of May. They will need the next 3+ months to grow new roots and leaves before they enter the lengthy cycle of forming a spike and holding flowers.

Gather your potting supplies:

* If you are using moss, it should look like shredded wheat cereal, and needs to be handled with gloves and sterilized. Jeff uses Dithane M-45 to sterilize moss. Moss may contain a microbe that can cause a very serious lung infection. Pro-Mix is an easier potting mix than moss for the hobbyist. (*Pro-Mix contains no soil and is used in hydroponics. You can get it at OFE, Universal, and probably Broward Orchid and Green Barn. It is not sold at Home Depot or Lowes.*)

* Plan to put the old tag in the bottom of your pot and write a new tag in pencil.

Jeff's Program continued:

* Use clean plastic pots. **Remember that Phals like small pots.** To clean old pots, pour 1/2gallon of bleach in a 5 gallon bucket and fill with water. Let the pots soak in this 1/10 solution about 10 minutes. Keep the bucket lid on. If you are trying to clean clay pots this way they need to soak over-night. Jeff does not use clay pots for Phals.

* Gather styrofoam peanuts for the very bottom of the pot and sterilized lava, charcoal, or other rock for the next layer up in your pot. The rock keeps the plant from toppling over when it is carrying a bloom spike.

* Of course use a clean blade with each plant.

Repotting steps:

* Remove the plant from its old pot, all those new fleshy roots that were out of the old medium will get tucked down in new medium. If the bottom of the main stem is crisp and brown and has no roots attached to it, break it off.

* Put the plant down into the empty pot. Snuggle it down so that the bottom leaves are at the very top of the pot. Feed in a few peanuts, then some rock. Fill to the top with your choice of potting mix. Jeff lifted his plant in moss up by the leaf to show that it was snugly potted. Put in your tag, apply some time release fertilizer to the top, put the plant on the shelf and water it.

* Don't worry that you have damaged roots or cut off bad leaves, these "injuries" act as a stimulus for the plant to put out new growth.

Jeff, thank you for that blooming plant raffle table and for giving us such a happy program. D.H.

Member News

Welcome newer members:

Patricia Attaway
Phil and Alex Connell
Linda Haring
Steve Miller
Eileen Toler
Rick Bellas
Victoria Peterson

Special thoughts:

* Several of our members are undergoing chemo, and they should know that the good prognosis that they've gotten is good news for us. Our wish for them is strength and rapid healing.

* It's too bad that Bob Fuchs is dealing with a broken leg. The good news is that he will in the future know when bad weather is coming



Jack Dodds captured these scenes as lucky people were winning Jeff's plants, and as members were looking at the handsome ribbon winning plants.

President's Message

At our last meeting we came together to elect a President, and I thank you for choosing me for one more term. As we begin the Society's 60th year I would like to thank the outgoing board members.

Chris Carney is leaving due to budget cuts creating a more demanding press on his time as school principal. Chris has been in charge of Host and Hostess at our show for 2 years and has brought in the children's art competition to the show. Also leaving is Wayne Musgrave past Show Co-Chair, Program Chair, House Committee, and our own house carpenter.

I would also like to thank those who held jobs for our monthly meetings and who have asked to be replaced. Gigi Granger and Ginny Salus have done a wonderful job in the kitchen, and Michael Schaberl has been the House Committee, of one, moving chairs for set up and close of our meeting room.

In closing I would like to thank those who are holding on to their special jobs and to thank the members for their support of our varied activities.

Joan



May Ribbon Judging Results

Bonnie Bonneau /red/ Eplc. Hsingying Orange 'Ching Hua'

Michael Bryant /CULTURE/ Iwangara Apple Blossom,
/blue/ V. Fuchs Delight

Chris Crepage /blue/ *Max. tenuifolia*

Jack Dodds /CULTURE/ V. Judy Russ x V. Manude

Tom Kuligowski /blues/ *Angem didieri*, *Den aggregatum*

Johnny Ma /blue/ *Epi. floribundum* x *Epi cordigerum*

Eugenia Nezvabovitz /blue/ *Gram. speciosum*

Gary Pierce /CULTURE/ *Den. aggregatum*

Robb Rinn /blues/ Miltonidium Issaku Nagata 'Volcano
Queen', Lc. Stonehouse

Shari Weidenbaum / Paph. Moustache

Thank you all for bringing in such huge and wonderfully grown plants. Three culture awards in one night is unusual.

Thank You for Tasty Refreshments

Nora Dyke, Bonnie Bonneau, Paul Gartner, Chris Crepage, Wayne Musgrave, Ginny Salus, Leah Ostrander, Joan Connors, Carrie Ackerman, Vicki Trank, Linda Orsetti, Joyce Skelly and Danielle Bejar.

Knowing our members

Here
Comes
The Judge



When Broward Circuit Judge **Eileen O'Connor** attend our May meeting she was wearing a green t-shirt that announced that she is seeking re-election. The election is August 24th when all parties can vote.

Judge O'Connor has served as a Broward Circuit Judge for 7 years. Prior to that she served 22 years as an Assistant U.S. Attorney and 2 years as an Assistant District Attorney.

She is a past President of the Broward Federal Bar Association and the Broward Woman's Alliance. She has been on the boards of Leadership Broward, Junior League of Greater Fort Lauderdale, the Federal Bar Association of Broward and Lighthouse of Broward which serves the blind and visually impaired.

Besides all that she finds time to share her life and appreciate plants with Master Gardner, George Henderson.

Some orchids show..

Pseudoantagonism!

Some *Oncidium* species challenge the territorial instincts (fixed action patterns) of bees by dangling their flowers on long slender stalks. When the flowers move in the breeze the insects feel threatened and 'attack' them. As the bees bump the flowers they collect pollenia on their heads which they transfer to other flowers resulting in pollination.

From page 50 of Ortho's All about Orchids.

Ludisias- Jewel Orchids

By the time you own 20 orchids you probably have a *Ludisias discolor*. The spikes of tiny white flowers are not impressive, but the velvety dark green leaves with red markings say "buy me". These little beauties grow best in low light, high humidity, warm temperatures and they need to remain moist.

If you break off a piece you can boil it and eat it as some do in its native habitats in Asia, or you can stick it back into soil and it will root.

**Preparing Orchids for Summer
Heat, Rain and High Light**

* Think triangle, when the heat is high and the light is high your plants will need more water. Conversely in the winter when heat and light are lower, your orchids need less water. IF we aren't having too much rain, or if you are growing under cover, you need to water more often.

* If we've had consecutive days of rain, you may need to think square, air movement being the 4th point. Fans will help and if you are experiencing rot, you may need to use a fungicide. It's probably wise to bring baby plants into a covered area since they are more vulnerable to rot.

* Continuing with too much rain, you can expect that fungal infections will thrive in the extra water, so you need to keep a sharp eye out for the dreaded black that tends to infect crowns and new leaves. Be brave, get a clean blade and cut away tissue about 3 inches for the black. Probably the rot has invaded not yet black tissue a couple of inches away from the black so you need to cut beyond the evident rot. Sprinkle some cinnamon on the cut and isolate the plant from all your others.

* If you've been fertilizing every 2 weeks in winter, fertilize every week in summer to support faster summer growth rates.

* Watch for sunburned leaves in the lightest part of your growing area. Of course move the plant or add more shade cloth.

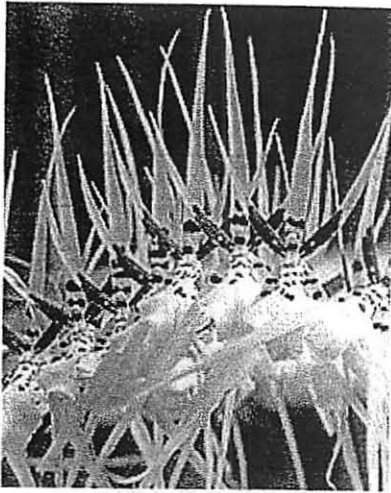
* Keep an eye out for scale, mealy bugs, and aphids. The cold-blooded pests reproduce more often when the weather is warm.

* Pull weeds from orchid media when they are small, they also grow faster in summer.

* IF you can do it consistently cool your orchids' leaves with a misting for about 3-5 minutes in the middle of the day.

* Don't be depressed that many of your orchids don't bloom in mid-summer. It is mid-winter where they originated.

* Assemble your after-hurricane fungicide and extra shade cloth. Clean out the garage so you can bring more plants inside. If you prepare, it may not happen.



Eric Fang, (orchids.com) took this photo of Brs. Rex 'Lynn' AM/AOS

The *Brassias* of Summer

If your orchid collection includes 2-3 *Brassias* then you've had something in flower almost every day of this muggy summer. There are about 30 *Brassia* species. They do well for us because they originate from climates similar to ours from Northern South America, Central America, and the Caribbean.

Intergeneric breeding has occurred since the 1930 es, and 4 species have been the most important for breeding. They are:

Brassia gireoudian /jee-ree-ood-ee-ah-na/ passes on pale coloring, but also spotted or barred markings.

Brassia longissima /lon-gis-i-mi/ has passed on genes for well spaced flowers on long spikes.

Brassia verrucosa /ver-yoo-koe-sa / is a good parent because it has genes for open flowers that are larger than most.

Brassia maculata /mak-yoo-lah-at/ has been used for breeding for its vigor and floriferousness.

You probably own one or more of these species as well as primary hybrids, Brs. Edvah Loo and Brs. Rex. You hopefully own some of the many intergenerics. *Brassias* have been crossed in many ways with *Aspasias*, *Odontoglossum*, *Oncidiums*, *Miltassias*, and cool growing *Mitonias*, *Adas*, and combinations of all, or most all, of the genera mentioned.

(Grow your *Brassias* in baskets with *Cattleya* medium and in *Cattleya* light or for more blooms, in *Vanda* light. You won't be surprised that I once added phonetic pronunciations to AOS slide programs, and that this is the first of several 'easy research' articles for the newsletter. D.H.)

AOS Slide Program # 301 by Gary Baker and Mary Dunnell

About Allelopathy

Some plants can make chemicals that keep other plants from growing in their space and this defense is called allelopathy. Often these chemicals are held in leaves and when the leaves drop, the ground is 'poisoned'. Other plants secrete these toxins from living tissues. If you've lived up north you have seen that nothing grows under a rhododendron and I suspect Australian Pines and Malalucca trees have these chemicals, since I don't see other species growing under their canopies. Ok, the biology lesson is over and one more time most, or all, **ferns** make allelopathic chemicals and if ferns are allowed to grow in your orchid pots, the orchids will fail and die in time. Many **mosses** also make allelopathic chemicals and even if they did not, moss growing on top of orchid medium is sending a 'repot me, the medium has broken down' message.

Sphagnum moss contains an antibiotic and often is a good medium for young orchid seedlings which are more vulnerable to bacterial infections. Be aware that almost any plant growing in sphagnum that is subjected to shade house growing during our rainy season, will probably not live.

Antibiotics work on some bacteria, fungicides work on some fungi, and you don't treat athlete's foot with penicillin!

Worthless information:

Fun Facts About Orchids With Snake Names

Thoreau wrote that *Pogonia ophioglossoides*, commonly called the 'Snake's Mouth Orchid' produced flowers that smelled like a snake. Those who had never lived on Walden Pond likened the odor to red raspberries.

Orchids in the genus *Goodyera* are terrestrial orchids found world wide and 4 species live in the United States. *Goodyeras* are commonly called 'Rattlesnake Plantin'. According to legend the way to recover from a rattlesnake bite is to catch the snake and make him bite himself. Then let him go, he will find a Rattlesnake Plantin and start to eat it to save himself. Take the Plantin away from the snake and eat its leaves and you will recover!

Glicenstein, Leon. AOS Slide Program 213. Orchids of the lower 48

The Amazing Cucumber

Don't Shake Your Head--Yet

(Member John Ward sent me this filler for which I am grateful. This was printed in the New York Times and is abbreviated here.)

* If grubs or slugs are ruining your plants, place a few slices of cucumber on an aluminum pie tin. The chemicals in the cucumber will react with the aluminum to give off a scent. The scent is undetectable to humans but will make garden pests flee the area.

* Cucumbers contain Vitamins B1, B2, B3, B5, B6, Folic Acid, Vitamin C, Calcium, Iron, Magnesium, Phosphorus, Potassium, and zinc. These are most of the vitamins you need every day.

* Based on the nutrients above a cucumber can be a great pick-me-up snack in the afternoon.

* A few slices of cucumber can: 1. Defog a bathroom mirror- 2. Prevent a hangover if you eat them before going to bed- 3. A slice moved along a squeaky hinge will stop the squeak- 4. Rub a slice or two on your shoes for a quick shine and more ability to repel water- 5. Hold a slice on the roof of your mouth to stop bad breath- 6. Slices clean faucets, sinks, and stainless steel.

* Use a whole cucumber for an eraser. The skin will erase ball point ink or crayons marks.

* Put a whole sliced cucumber in boiling water. The aroma from the steam will reduce your stress.

Orchids of Guatemala

Guatemala has 600 species of orchids and I think that those that grow at lower altitudes match some of the toughest plants we've grown here. Here is my Guatemalan tough list: (D.H.)

Brassavola cucullata and *nodosa*

Brassia varicosa

Cattleya (Guarianthe) skinneri and *aurantiaca*

Encyclia cordigera, *radiata*, *ciliare* and *cochleata*
(Yes, *cochleata* is also a species found in Florida.)

Epidendrum radicans

Gongora maculata

Laelia rubescens (Their 'flor de Jesus') and *anceps*

Oncidium sphacelatum

Rhyncholalia (Brassovola) digbyana and *glauca*

Stanhopia wardii

Light summer reading?

It's Tid-bit Time!

* Five species of *schomburgkia* are ant-loving and have natural openings in their large pseudobulbs to welcome the ants to a new home. These *schomburgkias* produce the opening even when grown in an ant-free environment.

* Expect retarded growth and weakness in development in orchids with **aneuploidy**. Aneuploid plants would have 3 or 5 sets of chromosomes.

* *B. digbyana* (or *Rhyncholaelia digbyana* now) needs higher light than *cattleyas* to bloom well.

* **When bud stems curl** before emerging from a sheath, or buds stick to the sheath and never open properly due to failure of the sheath to open when it should, add humidity to your growing area if you can. The too dry atmosphere is the cause.

* **Bud drop** is often caused by air pollution, but sometimes the plant is 'self-pruning' which will sustain the rest of the buds.

* All the *Cattleya intermedia* var. *aquinii* in collections today are said to be divisions or selfings from one original perloic plant.

* If a *cattleya* seems to have one lead and you want **multiples leads for making divisions**, cut the rhizome in places, just part way through, hopefully the partly cut sections will send out roots and new leads. Use a sterile blade for the cut!

Hamilton, R. 1988. *The Orchid Doctor*. author publisher. Canada. Pp. 3, 12, 13, 17, and 21.

This and That

* When you get your new Membership Roster, please see that your information is correct. IF it is not, please call or email me so that I can print the correction.

* The overnight ramble had to be canceled. Every time we go west, we have enough members to pay for the bus. The trip north to the Orlando area has failed to materialize for 3 times now. Higher costs for that trip may explain so next June we'll go west.

* Brian has not proofed this newsletter and yes, I recycled some old articles. Thank you for the gift of time.
D.H.

Sin Cake, Chocolate and No Flour

10 oz. semisweet chocolate broken into small pieces
½ cup butter, lightly salted, cut into 8 pieces
6 large eggs, separated, room temperature
1 cup granulated sugar
2 tsp. crème de cacao, kalua, or dark rum
½ tsp. vanilla
1 ½ cups well chilled whipping cream
2 ½ -3 TBS. powdered sugar

1. Place oven rack in lower 1/3 of oven, preheat oven at 375 F., butter and flour bottom and sides of 8" spring-form pan.

2. Melt chocolate with ½ cup butter on low heat, keep melted over pan of very warm water.

3. Beat egg yolks in large mixing bowl at high speed, gradually add sugar, beat 4-6 minutes until pale yellow and thick. Add chocolate mixture and beat until smooth. Add vanilla and alcohol. Beat until blended.

4. Beat egg whites at high speed until soft peaks form, add last ¼ cup of sugar, continue to beat until dry peaks form. Fold whites GENTLY but thoroughly into chocolate mixture. Pour batter into pan and smooth top.

5. Bake 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 350 F and bake another 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 250 F and bake for 30 minutes. Turn oven off, open door and let cake stay in oven for 30 minutes. Remove cake from oven and cover top with damp paper towel. Let stand 5 minutes.

6. Remove towel and cool cake completely. Dome of cake will crack and collapse, this is normal. Press top of cake down lightly to smooth top. Remove spring-form and transfer to serving platter.

7. Whip cream in chilled mixing bowl at high speed until soft peaks form. Continue beating adding 1 ½ TBS of the powdered sugar. Dust top of cake with remaining powdered sugar just before serving. Serve at room temperature with whipped cream.

Note: When I read this, I thought it is a sin that something takes SO many steps, but the cake is beyond special. Chuck Nicholls served it on the home ramble and Mark Turner made the cake. It will be a sin not to make this for a special occasion.

The Chatterbox Orchid

Epipactis gigantea got its name because it has a very motile lip. Since the lip was always moving it gained the common name Chatterbox Orchid. The moving lip is not as remarkable as its heat tolerance. It thrives in Death Valley temperatures of 140 degrees and this ground orchid seems to thrive near hot springs also found in the American West.

Glicenstein, L. AOS Slide Program 213. Orchids of the lower 48

Nitrogen

Nitrogen makes up 78% of our atmosphere which dilutes the oxygen and other gases to the right level. Atmospheric nitrogen is inert and 'useless' for protein synthesis unless certain microbes convert it to nitrates or other compounds. Except for some bacteria and sub-cellular microbes, living things need nitrogen compounds for protein synthesis. Now that you've had that review, it's time to tell you that humans are creating 400 billion tons of reactive nitrogen each year, which is double all the land's natural processes: The production of synthetic nitrogen has risen 80% since 1960.

You may know the drill, excess nitrogen from our fertilizing crops runs off into rivers and then the oceans causing algae bloom. When the algae dies its decomposition results in oxygen depletion and dead zones.

On land this nitrogen abundance has caused plant species that can adapt to overcome those that can not, and recently scientists have stated that nitrogen pollution ranks as one of the three top threats to biodiversity.

The high nitrate content in common fertilizers may well be entering our drinking water to such an extent that it is a factor in Alzheimer's and diabetes. Land plants produce more pollen which becomes air-borne allergens. Malaria, cholera, West Nile and other tropical diseases infect more people when nitrogen is abundant.

Excess Nitrogen is also blamed for climate change in that in a complex chemical process it promotes the production of more ozone.

Solutions which would reduce both carbon and nitrogen pollution include changing farming practices and reducing fertilizer use*, supporting wind power, choosing grass-fed beef and eating less meat, (excess nitrogen from food crops is expelled in animal waste) and buying locally grown produce. (*As orchidists we can probably get good growth with half strength fertilizer, and we can also reduce the amounts of fertilizer used on our lawns.)

Townsent, A and R.W. Howarth 'Nitrogen's Dark Side; Scientific American, Feb. 2010. Pp. 66-70

So YOU, a non-insect, Want To Be a Pollinator and Make a Seed Pod?

Point A. You can try, but many orchids will not self-pollinate. Now you know, orchids avoid self-incest, but many will cross with a sibling or parent.

Point B. The flower should be fully open, the stigma should be sticky and probably the flower should have been open for 2 days. Older flowers may have contaminated stigmatic surfaces.

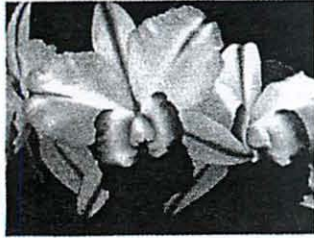


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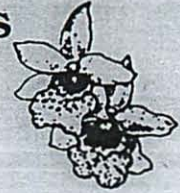
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Directions: Use Oakland Park Blvd. from I-95.
Go East for 2.4 miles, go to the rear of the church
which is on the North side of Oakland Park Blvd.
Or take US-1 (Federal Hwy.) to Oakland Park
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ORCHID SOCIETY**

