

## CLUB NEWS



**Donnie Kim**

### October 7, 2008 Monthly Meeting

Lola Stark, seacuter@bellsouth.net

The meeting was called to order by President Mike Heinz promptly at 7:30 with 56 people present. The Welcome Table announced our guests Joy Slotsve and Eric Lucas and new members Patricia Chambers and Chuck & Elaine Steel.

Mike thanked our refreshment volunteers, Linda Ferrall, Flo Powers, Barbara Conrad and Jeanette Smith for the great Hospitality Table (yum!). Mike also pointed out Jack Higgins who has volunteered as the raffle ticket coordinator. The nominating committee for our 2009 Board of Directors was announced, the chairman Gail Marshall and Jack Higgins and Barbara Conrad.



Another packed house of Orchidteers at Watson Realty

New books in the library include "Dendrobium and its Relatives" donated by Lola Stark and the "New Encyclopedia of Orchids" purchased by the SAOS. Sue Bottom went over the website contents letting us know that there is a library page listing all the library resources with links for you to order the books from Betsy and Haley, our librarians, who will be glad to bring your selections to the next meeting. Photos of the plants on the show table are featured on the home page of the website each month and the home page has an article on preparing your plants for the upcoming display at the Gainesville Orchid Show.

Barbara Conrad has volunteered (!!!!) to be our Hospitality Coordinator for the coming year. Some members didn't want any food and others enjoyed the tidbits, so Barbara and Jeanette will be handling the treats and refreshments. There will be a donation jar for you to express your appreciation and everyone must enjoy both the food and the concept because over \$50 was donated for the food, drinks and plates, etc. Thank you everyone!



Dick Roth announced that in lieu of talking about our show table plants, we will encourage everyone to look over the plants on the show table and vote for the orchid they like the best. The orchid with the most votes will be named the Members Choice. This meeting, Harry McElroy's gorgeous yellow Cymbidium won the prize! We will continue this practice, so while you're walking around looking at the show table, choose the one you like best, write it on the slip that's provided and give it to Dick at the Welcome Table!

We've decided to add a beginners question and answer session before the main program at our monthly meeting, starting at 7 pm. Please don't be shy about asking any questions you may have.

On Sunday, October 12, at 1 pm, the planning committee for the Gainesville show will meet at the home of Mike and Harriet Wright in Jacksonville at 15190 Sawpit Road. Anyone wanting to help in Gainesville is welcome. The

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## Upcoming Events

### October 2008

- 12 Keiki Club/Exhibit Committee at the Wrights  
1-2 pm, Gainesville Show Exhibit Meeting  
2-4 pm, Reading an Orchid Label
- 18-19 Gainesville Orchid Society Show  
Kanapaha Botanical Gardens
- 18-19 Fort Pierce Orchid Society Show  
St Lucie Fairgrounds
- 23 Bonus St Augustine Orchid Society Mtg  
Mini and Midi Cattleya Breeding  
Presented by Fred Clarke, Sunset Valley Orchids
- 24-26 Orctoberfest at EFG/Powerplant  
Deland
- 25 11<sup>th</sup> International Slipper Symposium  
Holiday Inn at Altamonte Springs
- 31-2 Tampa Orchid Club Show  
USF Botanical Gardens
- 31-2 Delray Beach Orchid Society Show  
Old School Square Gymnasium

### November 2008

- 1-2 Brevard County Orchid Society Show  
Melbourne Auditorium
- 4 St Augustine Orchid Society Meeting  
Cattleyas – A Twentieth Century Tale  
Presented by Dr Courtney Hackney, SAOS
- 15 Keiki Club at the Starks  
1-3 pm, Getting Your Orchids Ready for Winter

### December 2008

- 6 Beginners Guide to Orchids  
Presented by St Augustine Orchid Society Members  
SE Branch of St Johns County Library, 1 to 3 pm
- 13 SAOS Christmas Auction  
Moultrie Trails Clubhouse, 7 pm

### January 2009

- 3-4 Sarasota Orchid Society Show
- 6 St Augustine Orchid Society Meeting  
Venezuelan Cattleya Species  
Presented by Michael Sinn, Canaima Orchids

### February 2009

- 3 St Augustine Orchid Society Meeting
- 7-8 Venice Orchid Society Show
- 27-1 63<sup>rd</sup> Miami International Orchid Show  
Sheraton Mart Hotel & Convention Ctr

### March 2009

- 3 St Augustine Orchid Society Meeting
- 21-22 Jacksonville Orchid Society Show

## October 12 Keiki Club

On Sunday, October 12, the Keiki Club will meet at Mike and Harriet Wright's in Jacksonville and touring their greenhouse. Harriet and Mike will give a presentation on 'How to Read an Orchid Label' so you will know whether you have a species or hybrid, a registered cross or an awarded clone just by looking at the orchid tag. The Keiki Club will meet from 2 to 4 pm following a final meeting planning the Gainesville Show Exhibit from 1 to 2 pm. Here's a map to [16190 Sawpit Road](http://www.google.com/maps?q=16190+Sawpit+Road+Jacksonville,+FL) in Jacksonville. Call Mike and Harriet at 904-696-7729 if you have any questions.



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



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### St Augustine Orchid Society Organization

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## October 23 Bonus Monthly SAOS Meeting

Fred Clarke of Sunset Valley Orchids located in Vista, California will speak about mini and midi Cattleyas at the bonus October 23 meeting of the St. Augustine Orchid Society. His program is a detailed look at the latest developments in the breeding and growing of these colorful flowers. There will be plants available for purchase on the raffle, auction and plant sales tables.



Fred, an AOS judge and orchid hybridizer, created Sunset Valley Orchids in 1995 as a natural outgrowth of a hobby that began twenty seven years earlier. Sunset Valley Orchids is a boutique style nursery dedicated to excellent customer service and unique offerings of award quality orchids.

The nursery is focused on developing cutting edge orchid breeding lines, providing new and unique Cattleya, Paphiopedilum, Catasetinae and Bulbophyllum hybrids and species. The plants are selected on strict criteria of robust growth and ease of flowering, accomplished by selecting only the most vigorous seedlings throughout the processes of flasking, community trays, and potting. Orchids from Sunset Valley Orchids have many AOS awards, including seven that have received the highest honor, the First Class Certificate.

## Photography Workshop at the Keiki Club



Our September Keiki Club Photography Workshop at the Bottoms was a huge success. About 30 people gathered to learn how to get more out of their digital cameras. Terry gave some introductory remarks and then the group split up where Paul and Terry worked with individuals and their cameras and Charlie gave a demonstration on manipulating images on his laptop. On top of that, an anonymous member donated lots of quality vandas for fund raising so most folks went home with an orchid. Thank you Mr. Anonymous!

## November 4 Monthly Meeting

Dr. Courtney Hackney will discuss Cattleyas, a Twentieth Century Tale, at the November 4 meeting of the St Augustine Orchid Society. In his presentation, Courtney will describe the different Cattleya species and hybrids that have been used over the past 100 years to produce the myriad of forms and colors that exist today, pulling illustrations from his collection of over 3,000 photos.



Courtney is the author of 'American Cattleyas' and a Professor of Biology and Director of Coastal Biology at the University of North Florida in Jacksonville where he teaches and conducts research in tidal wetlands. He has a lifelong love of orchids and has grown them for almost 40 years. He has written an article about Cattleya hybrids and hybridizers for the 'Orchid Digest' and in 2004 completed 'American Cattleyas' which describes Cattleya hybridizing in the United States. He writes a monthly 'Growing Tips' column that appears in orchid society newsletters around the Southeast and beyond, including the newsletter of the St. Augustine Orchid Society of which he is a member.



Charlie Wesley demonstrates computer image



Paul Jones helps with camera instructions



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Keiki club will meet at 2 pm at the Wrights. The club will tour their greenhouse and the program will be on "Reading your Orchid Label". You can tell whether you have a species or a hybrid, a registered cross or an awarded clone by being able to read the label.

On Saturday, December 6, the SAOS and the Southeast Library will have a Beginner's Orchid Workshop in the meeting room of the Library from 1-3 pm. Keep the date free if you'd like to attend! Our Christmas Auction will be at the Moultrie Trails Clubhouse on Saturday, December 13. More on that later!

Our speaker for the evening was Donnie Kim from Jaxma Orchid Greenhouses in Green Cove Springs, off Route 17. His subject was "Current Trends in Phalaenopsis Hybridizing." Donnie started off by explaining that in Mendel's Laws of Genetics, there are dominant and recessive genes. A dominant gene will make itself dominant in a direct cross with a recessive gene. Thus a purple flowered plant will be dominant over a white flowered one, and the first generation will be three quarters purple flowered, but one out of four will be white flowered. If two dominant traits are crossed, then all plants coming from it will be of the dominant gene. This is called a homozygous cross. The crossing of one dominant and one recessive is called a heterozygous cross. The sharing of genes from parents result in multiple combinations. Epistasis occurs when one gene blocks the expression of another gene. Heritability is when the trait is based on multiple gene expressions and the effect the environment might have. Thus a hybridizer chooses a Phal because its progeny usually have wide, long leaves and deep color and is crossed with another that has the same characteristic. The person hybridizing these will expect that about 90% of the plants coming from the cross will have those characteristics. They must also realize that 10% may be throwbacks to some genetic traits of and the plant may have short, narrow, deep color leaves. Plants have genes from both parents. If a plant has twice the number of chromosomes normally occurring in a germ cell, it is called a diploid plant. These are usually very fertile plants and easily hybridized. They have two homologous sets of genes. If there is only one homologous set, the plant is a haploid, if three, it is a triploid and is called an Aneuploid. These are usually sterile plants and not able to be used in hybridizing. However, if you can get a Tetraploid plant with four homologous sets, it is great for multiple expressions of color. If you'd like further explanation of heredity, please go to the web.

With the phals. the hybridizers have used *P. amboinensis*, *P. gigantea*, *P. fasciata* and *P. venosa* to improve the yellow

strain. They picked *P. Brother Lawrence* as their basis and worked with it to produce numerous improvements in yellow phals. Because the tetraploid plants tend to produce sunset colors of red and orange, the hybridizers have stayed with diploids. Where those of us from the west prefer white flowers, the people in the far east prefer yellow, as they use white as funeral flowers and the color makes them sad. *P. Liu Tien Shen* has led to new novelties with white blotches that many seem to prefer. The hybridizers started out with very small flowers, but have now worked on enlarging them and have many quite large yellow phals. The multiflorals use *P. equestris* which gives very good sequential flowering, color and substance. The second bloom year will usually produce branching. Peloric flowers sometimes occur where there are small horn type growths on the petals. In working with reds, the hybridizers are using *P. Brother Purple* and *P. Golden Pecker* which has intensified the reds, causing larger flowers and better flower count. These are very fertile flowers. The Taiwanese and French have developed the flowers with spots using *P. Mount Kaala* x *P. lueddemanniana* var. *pulchra*. The original cross was named *P. Paifang's Queen Brother* and it, too, is very fertile.

In growing your phals. Donnie said to find a place where, when you can hold your hand over the plant, you make a shadow. He recommends weekly fertilizing with Peters 20-20-20. Plant in sphagnum and repot once a year when the plant starts putting out new roots. When transplanting, never increase the size of the container more than 2 inches. Green algae in your sphagnum will not hurt the plant, but if you want to get rid of it, use Physan. Keikis should be taken off your plants only when they have plenty of root to sustain themselves.

Following the program we had our monthly raffle and auction. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.



October's Raffle Table





## Growing Tips for October

By

Courtney T. Hackney

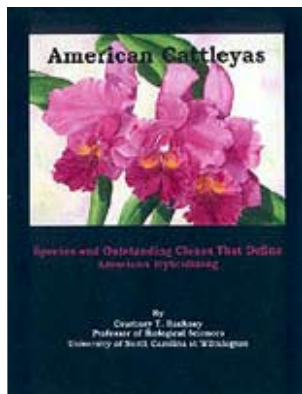
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Few orchid growers can explain why pH is important to orchid culture. If one looks up pH in the dictionary, the definition has to do with the number of hydrogen ions in water; a fact that has little meaning to most of us.

The pH of water used to grow orchids is important and so is the pH of the medium used. Most hobbyists use whatever medium is available and the water that comes from the tap. They do not need to understand pH because the combination of medium and water they are using is well within the ideal range for most orchids.

Many years ago, Ralph Wasdon, was known as one of the best orchid growers in Eastern North Carolina. He was noted for using only K-Mart generic fertilizer, one of the cheapest around. Other growers, noting his technique tried to duplicate his growth without success. Ralph knew nothing of pH, but by trial and error had found the right combination of growing medium, which when combined with his water source and fertilizer, provided an almost perfect pH balance for the absorption of nutrients. His very dilute fertilizer mix, resulted in water with a pH of 6.2, ideal for nutrient uptake.

There are a few of us who have extremely poor water or who decide to try a new type of fertilizer, growing medium, or pesticide/fungicide who do need to understand pH. Some



water sources are extremely basic or acidic and there are a few fertilizers that contain excess micronutrients. Micronutrients can be toxic under very low pH. Hobbyists that try to improve their growing by testing water for dissolved solids or pH may also fail to appreciate that it is the pH of the medium combined with water that is most important. While water source is one component, most water and nutrient uptake occurs where roots are in contact with the medium. Here, the pH may change dramatically from that of the applied water.

In peat based media, for example, the breakdown products of peat lead to acid conditions that may become extreme. If micronutrients are in the water source or applied as fertilizer they may become so soluble under acidic conditions that the orchids receive toxic levels. This can be exacerbated by using some of the high nitrogen Cal-Mag fertilizers especially blended for orchids. These



Schomburgkia tibicinis; The Flute-Players Orchid  
by Rose Ganucheau



Orchid Intoxication, Cattleya Nigrescent 'Troubadore'  
by Rose Ganucheau

fertilizers, when mixed with water, lower the pH. Typically, this is not a problem if the water source is full of minerals. If the source is rainwater or Deionized water, the acidity can be so extreme that orchid roots are killed. Adding a solution that raises pH can produce fantastic growth in orchids, but requires control of the pH.

Many pesticides are most effective at a specific pH, usually slightly acidic. One popular fungicide, Kocide, can be toxic under a very acidic pH, but very effective if the pH is over 7. Kocide contains copper that is soluble and taken up by plants at lower pH values.

So what does the average orchid hobbyist need to know about pH. If your orchids are growing well, the answer is nothing. If you begin experimenting with new fertilizers, media or pesticides, a simple pH meter may prevent you from damaging your orchids and make you a better grower.



## What's in Bloom in the SAOS

Paul Jones, trjones\_99@yahoo.com

We are showcasing the orchids grown by the many skilled orchid growers in our club. Email pictures of your beauties in bloom to me and be sure to include a brief description of how you grow them and any other interesting tidbit you wish to share. Here's what members are saying about their blooming orchids this month.

Bill Roth's stunning Vandas. I sort my plants in the shade house by sunlight needs. I have half of them in 30% shade and the other half in 60% shade. The sorting process is by literature first but with time and trial and error, I have found where each plant seems to thrive the best. Ouch because sometimes a little sunburn is a chance. I have also found direct early day sun is acceptable up to about 10:00 am and the bright light shade they balance of the day.



Vanda (Euanthe)  
sanderiana var alba

I water pretty much daily. If you miss a day a week it is no big deal. I actually like to miss a day a week so the plant dries out a little. It doesn't rain EVERY day of the year in the forest either. I start at one side of the shade house and walk around it watering, drenching, as I go. Vandaceous plants roots tend to be water repellent at first watering. When you make a second pass, the roots have had a chance to soften and are now able to absorb water better. You will notice the newer roots are whitish in color. After the second soak you will see the roots turn a light green color. That is when you know they have absorbed water properly. If they are still white, you are not done watering yet. That is the plant telling you "I want MORE!" If you have an irrigation system you can leave it on for about twenty minutes to get the same result.



Vasco. Baby Blue x Rhy coelestis

Vandaceous plants need good air movement. It helps the plants from over heating in the summer and it also minimizes fungal problems. One or two plants hanging out in a tree will most likely have good air around them. When

you have more and they get bunched up together, you need to put out a fan to move the air through them. Keeping them spaced out also allows air through and keeps those roots from growing into each other.

I fertilize weekly weakly. I use a hose end sprayer. I alternate with Naturize and Peter's 20-20-20. I use Inoculaid weekly with my fertilizer. Occasionally I add a little dissolved raw sugar to the mix to keep root growth stimulated, usually only a couple teaspoons once a month.



Ascocenda Suksamran Sunlight

I alternate protective sprays with fungicides every month, though I stepped it up to weekly this summer with all the afternoon and night rains. I use Captan, RD 20, Phyton 27, and now Cleary's 3336 WP. I was only using the first three but still had a breakout. Sue told me about the Cleary's 3336 WP and it put a fast stop to the problem. I also use a variety of pesticides. I like the Ortho Orthenex as it is systemic and kills the bugs sometimes before you see them. I will also use Malathion and Sevin alternating monthly. I believe prevention helps the plants to not only stay healthy but grow better also. When the plants do not have to spend time fending off diseases they are able to put their energy into growing.



Vanda Pongpimol x  
Ascocenda Peggy Foo

The most important thing I do though is I take time almost every day to enjoy and inspect my plants. I enjoy seeing the growth and the rewards of the blooms and their fragrances. But I feel the daily inspections allow you to catch a problem early and give you a chance to stop the problem before you have to sing the blues. It isn't my whole life but it is a hobby I love. You give, you get and you share. It is a rewarding and win win activity.

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Bob Martin's lovely Potinara hybrid: You may be interested in seeing my first rebloom since joining SAOS. These are pics of the Potinara I questioned you about with the yellow sheathing. She was bought from Hausermann's last April in bud. She had 7 blooms then. I have a three and a two bud sheath and one unopened. Should have 7 blooms soon....about 3.5" across.



Pot Melinda Rose Funke 'Erine'

Gail Marshall's Blc. Blazing Saddles: I got it at the World Orchid Conference last January. It had two spikes with 3 blooms each. I'm growing it in a basket, so the drainage is great. It's not been repotted yet, and I can't really tell you what the medium is because I can't see it through all the roots. There is some spaghnum and one piece of lava rock I can see. My guess is that it's pretty much just roots in that basket, which is probably why it has done so well - all that wonderful air getting to it. I have it hanging from an arbor in the back yard where it gets tons of light. It got watered every couple days and was fertilized about once a week initially with Naturize and Inoculaid for about 6 months, then I switched to AlgoFlash and Inoculaid. AlgoFlash is my new favorite fertilizer. This time around (though I don't know why it's blooming so much earlier) it will have 6 spikes with 3 blooms each. They last for weeks and don't all come out at the same time. When I brought it to the Keiki Club it had 12 blooms. Since then, two more sheaths have started to open so, in all, it will have 18 blooms. I LOVE this plant!



Blc Blazing Saddles

Beth Strate's Dendrobium: Den. Bardo Rose has been a boarder here for about 2 years. She was purchased at Jacksonville Orchid Society Show. She is a regular bloomer and will remain a "trophy" plant unless I decapitate her like I did 2 other. She is an Australian Cane Hybrid.



Den Bardo Rose

Paul Jone's Miltassia: This is my Miltassia Royal Robe 'Jerry's Pick' AM/AOS that is currently blooming her head out in the oleander 'orchid tree'. I got this stunning plant in back in January at the WOC in Miami from Hawaiian Island Orchids. I wasn't the only SAOSer who got this plant at the WOC, because Gail Marshall also got one at the same time I did. We each paid a mere ten dollars for our plants and it may rank as one of the wisest purchases I have ever made!



Mtssa Royal Robe 'Jerry's Pick' AM/AOS



Greg Allikas

Phrag Noirmont 'A-doribil' FCC/AOS

**October**  
25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>

**11<sup>th</sup> International  
Slipper Symposium  
In Altamonte Springs, Florida**

Sponsored by



## Orchid Questions & Answers

### Where Members Share Experiences

Sue Bottom, sbottom15@bellsouth.net



**Q.** Some growers say that orchids need to be somewhat pot bound. Others says that they grow better with no medium at all - just plunk them in a basket and let them do their thing. Provided



that they are both watered and fertilized appropriately, why do these two methodologists swear by their personal routines - and they both have wonderful plants?

**A.** Great question. Orchid growers always say that in order to have great flowers you have to have healthy plants and in order to have healthy plants you have to have vibrant roots. So the happy pot bound orchid and happy medium-less orchid must share one thing in common, healthy roots. The pot bound plant is an established plant that has a root system filling the pot, so when it is watered the water is quickly absorbed and air refills the void spaces. The orchid in a medium-less basket can be watered heavily without rotting the roots because the basket dries rapidly and the roots are reexposed to air. The difference between the two growing strategies would be the amount of water required to keep each plant happy and healthy, more water for the medium-less basket, maybe wetting daily, while the pot bound orchid would be watered every 4 or 5 days during the summer growing season. The bottom line, you can grow and bloom orchids under a wide variety of conditions if you adjust the three most critical elements, water, light and air, to match your growing environment. Look closely at your plant each time you water, if the exposed roots are growing actively with a long green tip and look healthy, rest assured, you are doing everything right and will be rewarded with beautiful blooms.

**Q.** After the extended rains from the tropical storm, I am seeing damage on my vandas. What do you think it is?



**A.** It looks like either a bacteria or a fungus. The black necrotic spots look like damage from the bacteria *Pseudomonas*. You will have to sanitize the plant by cutting

out the infected tissue with a single edged razor blade and then reduce leaf wetness. Spray with Consan or Kocide, you don't have to worry about phytotoxicity because the plants are not in bloom. If you can't find Consan, try 10% pool algicide applied at the rate of 2 tsp/gal. The Kocide is a copper compound and will leave a blue residue, don't apply it to dendrobiums and don't apply if the temperature is above 90.

**Q.** I have small yellow spots starting to appear in the leaves of several plants. It spreads very slowly. Eventually a black spot develops in the center.



**A.** The yellow leaf spotting you describe sounds like the fungus *Cercospora*. The description in Home Orchid Growing is "these usually appear as yellow spots that become sunken and turn dark, or small brown spots that become darker and sunken, or as brown streaks. In all cases, the spots enlarge and the affected issue dies, sometimes with the death of the whole leaf." To treat for *Cercospora*, sanitize plant by cutting away seriously infected tissue with a single edged razor blade and reduce leaf wetness. Then alternate applications of a systemic fungicide like thiophanate methyl (like Cleary's 3336) and a protectant fungicide like mancozeb or dithane (labeled as Daconil in the store). The leaf will never lose the spotting but you will stop the spread of the disease.



Purple Vanda By Charlie Wesley





# SHOW TABLE



Terry Bottom

Grower Bill Gourley  
Blc Dennis Kane



Terry Bottom

Grower Harry & Celia McElroy  
Paph schlimii



Terry Bottom

Grower Mike & Kaycee Heinz  
Coel fimbriata



Terry Bottom

Grower Sue Bottom  
Ascda Tubtim Velvet x V Charles Goodfellow



Terry Bottom

Grower Dick Roth  
C Netrasiri Starlight



Terry Bottom

Grower Mike & Kacyee Heinz  
Cirr Doris Dukes



Terry Bottom

Grower Dick Roth  
Vasco Moonlight Gold 'Prasong'



# SHOW TABLE



Terry Bottom

Grower Marv & Jan Ragan  
Blc Always Dream 'Volcano Queen'



Terry Bottom

Grower Harry & Celia McElroy  
Cym Yellow Candy



Terry Bottom

Grower Steve Serkin  
C Little Suzie 'Donna Sitton' HCC/AOS



Terry Bottom

Grower Marv & Jan Ragan  
C Bowringiana var alba 'Hamlyn'



Terry Bottom

Grower Dick Roth  
Lc Longriver Compton 'Golden Star' FCC/AOS



Terry Bottom

Grower Gil & Ellen Roehrig  
Oncidioda Chaculatura

