



## CLUB NEWS



Keith Davis

### May 7 Monthly SAOS Meeting

by Lola Stark, seacuter@bellsouth.net

**Welcome and Thanks.** President Jeannette Pacetti opened the meeting at 7:15 with 21 visitors and 72 people present. Quite a turnout! Special welcome to John Odom and his wife Louise of Odom's Orchids in Fort Pierce and new member Ruth Streeter. Jeannette thanked Jeanette

Smith, Barbara Conrad, Shirley Browning and Dianne Batchelder for our refreshments and asked those taking refreshments to please put a dollar in the jar to help pay for coffee, drinks etc. Gail Marshall reminded those with a May birthday to be sure to get their extra raffle ticket from Christie. Jeannette reminded everyone to vote for their favorite on the show table, which gets better every month! Dick Roth announces the winner at the break after the program.

**Club Business.** Gail announced that Linda Stewart will be taking over as Sunshine Coordinator for those who have sickness or a major event in their lives. Mary Colee has volunteered as the Keiki Club Coordinator, the advocate for new orchid growers. If you have a question, she will find the answer! Dianne Batchelder will be helping Yvonne Schimmel with publicity and Christie with raffle ticket sales. **Membership** - The Society is updating the membership and email distribution lists this week. If you wonder whether you have renewed your membership for 2013, please contact Bill Gourley.

**Keiki Club** - The next meeting of the Keiki Club will be on 26 May at the Bottom's home. The subject will be watering and fertilizing your orchids. If you have a plant you have questions about, bring it along. If you've never been to the Bottoms, you're in for a treat! Just follow the signs from State Road 206.



**Supplies** - We've gotten in our orchid supplies for the year. Samples were for sale at the side table. Everything costs \$5 except the soilless mix which is \$3 for the first bag and \$2 for the second. We have coarse planting mix, coco planting mix, sphagnum mix, time release fertilizer and soluble fertilizer. These products are all stored at the Bottoms, for which we thank them profusely!

**Ace Repotting** - The next repotting clinic will be on June 1 at Hagan Ace Hardware on US 1 South from 9 to 1 pm. We have lots of customers at these clinics and Ace is very cooperative with our folks.

**Orchid Events.** Fred Keefer had his May get together at his nursery in Flagler Estates on 5 May. He was sorry more folks from St. Augustine were not able to come, but thanked those that did and said lots of folks from surrounding communities came and all had a grand time eating and buying new orchids. His next get together will be the first Sunday in November and the price of admission will be toys for the children of Hastings. Other events will be listed in the Events section of our Website, [www.staugorchidsociety.org](http://www.staugorchidsociety.org). There will be shows this month in Volusia County on the Mother's Day weekend and the Redlands International Orchid Festival in Homestead May 17 through 19. It is certainly worth the trip!

**Program.** Our program, Tips for Healthier and Happier Orchids, was given by Keith Davis of Reidsville, North Carolina where he has a 72 ft by 100 ft greenhouse with a catwalk so that when he waters, he walks along the catwalk and covers everything below. Wow!!! He grows mostly cattleyas and has about 10,000 plants. He gave us a handout that will be uploaded to the website once we receive an electronic version. There is a lot of information available in his handout that contains priceless tips and

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## Upcoming Orchid Events

### May

- 11-12 Volusia County Society Show  
Volusia County Fairgrounds
- 17-19 Redlands International Orchid Festival  
Fruit and Spice Park, Homestead
- 26 Keiki Club for Orchid Beginners, 1 pm  
Watering and Fertilizing Your Orchids  
Sue and Terry Bottom's Home  
6916 Cypress Lake Ct. St. Aug 32086

### June

- 1 SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm  
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine  
Repotting and Plant Clinic
- 4 SAOS Meeting, 7 pm  
Phillip Hamilton, Bredren Orchids  
Broughtonias and Cattleytonias
- 11 JOS Meeting, 7 pm, Topic TBA  
Rafael Romero, Plantio L'Orquidea
- 23 Keiki Club for Orchid Beginners, 1 pm  
Repotting Phalaenopsis  
Sue and Terry Bottom's Home  
6916 Cypress Lake Ct. St. Aug 32086

### July

- 2 SAOS Meeting, 7 pm  
Summer Orchid Auction
- 6 SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm  
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine  
Repotting and Plant Clinic
- 9 JOS Meeting, 7 pm, Topic TBA  
Francisco Miranda, Miranda Orchids
- 19-20 Third Annual Cattleya Symposium  
Indian River Research & Education Center,  
Fort Pierce

### August

- 3 SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm  
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine  
Repotting and Plant Clinic
- 6 SAOS Meeting, 7 pm  
Roy Tokunaga, H & R Nurseries  
Dendrobiums – Their Variety and Culture
- 13 JOS Meeting, 7 pm, Topic TBA  
Roy Tokunaga, H & R Nurseries

## St. Augustine Orchid Society Organization

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suggestions on growing orchids. These minutes will address his additional comments.

First, he went over the basics, light, water, air, food, pests and mixes. He suggested that any orchid that doesn't bloom consistently probably isn't getting enough light.

Keith is an advocate of getting your water tested so you can know what you are dealing with. The pH that orchids like best is on the acidic side of neutral, not too alkaline and not containing too many dissolved solids (salts). Our water is very alkaline and has a high total dissolved solids content, mostly calcium carbonate. Roots that get too much calcium will eventually get covered with the calcium.

We need to drench the plants periodically to wash it away. Check the drain hole of the plants to see if you have a calcium deposit.

He is an advocate of trying different fertilizers until you find the one your plants like the best. He recommends Peters 20-10-20 (Peat Lite Special) as one of his favorites. He uses 1/4 tsp. per gallon and fertilizes every time he waters. Use a fertilizer that has nitrate in abundance, not urea nitrogen.

Keith suggested getting a portable generator, two fans and two heaters for your greenhouse to cover yourself if the electricity goes out or one of the fans or heaters quits working when you need it the most.

He uses the Bayer pesticide labeled with the trade name "Merit" (which contains the active ingredient imidacloprid) for pests. He drenches the plants when it is cool, in the evening. He also mentioned Acephate 97UP, a systemic pesticide known under the trade name Orthene.

Keith told us not to leave the covering on cattleya pseudobulbs when the plant starts to grow. This will give the plant the equivalent of another leaf to help growth.

When you are working with plants, you need a torch to sterilize your instruments. He uses a Benzomatic torch TS 8000 which will heat your implements to 1200 degrees in about 10 seconds. He uses a rattail file to keep his clippers sharp. Cleanliness is a necessity with orchids so you don't transmit diseases and virus between plants.

He's found some labels that can still be written on with pencil, called virgin vinyl. If you have one of the slick labels that you can't write on with a pencil, the Sharpie peel-off china marker works well. The Sharpie laundry marker Rub a Dub is a good black marker that is usually found near the fabrics. He demonstrated how to attach the labels to make sure you labels aren't lost or misplaced.

He talked a bit about cattleya propagation. If you have an orchid crawling out of the pot, you can place a new pot filled with media next to the mother pot and let the roots grow into potting mix until there are at least three bulbs in the new plant. The new plant is then established and can



be cut away from the mother plant. If you have an orchid growing out of the pot with aerial roots, you can cut away the new growth if there are at least 3 pseudobulbs and place it in a pot, but don't bury the aerial roots in potting mix because the aerial roots will suffocate. You can acclimate them slowly to mix by adding an inch or so of lava rock and watering every day or two and once the aerial roots begin to branch you can slowly add additional media until the pot is filled. If you have some rootless backbulbs, you can place them in a plastic bag with some sphagnum moss in the bottom, add some water, punch two holes in the bottom and one at the top for air movement, tie the bag at the top and hang it in a shady spot. It may take a year or two, but once new growths and roots emerge the plant can be removed from the bag and potted up.

His talk was so full of helpful tips that it was impossible to catch them all. He told us about scissors that come apart, Clothespin etiquette (that was fun!) and forcing new growth by altering the day night cycle. Those above are what I made notes on and I hope you'll take advantage of the website to get his handout.

**Meeting Conclusion.** Following a brief intermission, we had our raffle and Dick Roth announced that he had won the Best of the Show Table with Epi. Mabel Kanda x E. randii. Congratulations! We then had our weekly raffle run by Fred Keefer, Gail Marshall, Christie Peppard and the sister tag team of Coral and Ocean Godwin, who really got their exercise!

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



# CLUB NEWS

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## April 14 Keiki Club Spring Repotting

About two dozen new and familiar faces came to the April Keiki Club meeting where we discussed growing orchids outside the pot. Bob Schimmel brought the classic potless orchid, a vanda, to demonstrate Courtney Hackney's way of getting a leggy vanda to grow roots along the leafless stem. He soaked the vanda stem, wrapped good quality sphagnum moss around it and tied it off with nylon pantyhose. By the end of the summer, the roots will develop in the sphagnum so the plant can be cut topped and rebasketed.



We grow an orchid in a pot to contain the plant and the roots as well as allow the plant to retain more water in the potting mix. In nature, orchids are often epiphytic growing in trees with the roots searching out sources of water and attaching the plant to a fixed surface. Orchids can be grown outside the pot as long as you diligently provide enough water to the plant, which may require daily watering.

There are many ways to grow outside the pot. Baskets are an excellent choice, whether you use slotted wood baskets, wire baskets or plastic baskets, either with potting media or bare root. If you use potting media, a piece of screen or plastic fencing can be used to line the bottom to retain the potting mix. Orchids grown in baskets are halfway between growing in a pot and growing on a mount because they may not have to be watered daily if there is potting mix yet the additional air movement in the basket is great for the orchid roots.

Orchids can be grown on mounts with many choices of shape and material, all of which will help determine how frequently you will have to water your plant. Linda Stewart discussed her experience with growing mounted orchids. Tree fern slabs will hold more water than a cedar slab and thus require less frequent watering. Most other mounted orchids will probably require daily watering, at least during the summer growth season.

Then we had a free for all where dendrobium and cattleya cuttings. Everyone had fun selecting and mounting/basketing their new orchid and we'll see who'll be the first to bloom their orchid and bring it to the Show Table!

## May 26 Keiki Club Watering and Fertilizing Your Orchid

We'll be talking about watering and fertilizing your orchids at the May 26 Keiki Club meeting. Our orchids have ramped up their growth rate and it is up to us to give them enough water and nutrition so they will reward us with an abundance of blooms. We'll talk about how to water, when to water and how much to water along with what fertilizer is right for you and your orchids. We'll meet at Sue and Terry Bottom's home at 6916 Cypress Lake Court in St. Aug from 1 to 3 pm. Bring a folding chair and any plants you have questions about. Guests and visitors are always welcome. Call Sue at 797-4360 if you have any questions.



## May 7 Monthly SAOS Meeting Broughtonias and Cattleytonias Phillip Hamilton, Bredren Orchids

Phillip Hamilton of Bredren Orchids will talk about the Caribbean Broughtonias and their hybrids with cattleyas. Phillip currently manages a 2.5 acre orchid production facility for Sun Bulb Co. in Apopka as well as operating Bredren Orchids, a small, mail-order business that focuses primarily on producing Broughtonia species and hybrids, novelty Phalaenopsis and Paphiopedilums. Phillip will be bringing plants for sale, a sample of which can be seen from his [EBay listings](#). If you wish to pre-order any specific plants shown, [email bredren@cfl.rr.com](mailto:bredren@cfl.rr.com)



Phillip was born and raised in Kingston, Jamaica and grew up in the orchid business, collecting orchids as a young boy. His parents own Hamlyn Orchid Ltd, a major orchid business on the island. After attending his first major Orchid Show, the 11th World Conference in Miami at the age of 8, he became inspired to become more involved in orchid breeding, growing and exhibiting. He left Jamaica at the age of 18 to pursue a college education and received both his Undergraduate and Masters Degrees from the University of Florida, Gainesville in Environmental Horticulture. He began the American Orchid Society Judging Training Program at age 18 and is now an AOS Certified Judge.



# INSPIRATION

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*Paph. Jeweled Cicada 'Pine Ridge'*

© Terry Bolton '13



# CULTIVATION



## Growing Tips for May

Dr. Courtney Hackney,  
[hackneau@comcast.net](mailto:hackneau@comcast.net)  
Dept. Biology, Univ. North  
Florida

May is one of the busiest months for orchid hobbyists. There is still time to repot, fertilize and attend to orchid pests.

“Should I repot this orchid?”, is a common question. Repotting is most critical and often hard for

new hobbyists because it takes a while to learn how to do it properly and it's hard to determine if the orchid should be repotted. The tendency is to want to repot, especially when there are roots going everywhere and a growth is at the edge of the pot.

Orchids hate to be repotted, so repotting should only be done when absolutely necessary. Just

because an orchid is coming out of the pot is not a reason to repot. Some

types of orchids, e.g. dendrobiums prefer to be pot bound and go downhill for a year or two when given plenty of space in a new pot.



If you try to push a finger down into your orchid in a bark mix, is it difficult or does the medium yield easily? If it is relatively easy, the medium has degraded and you need to repot. If it is somewhere in between there may be a solution beyond repotting or not repotting. Hold the pot upside down being careful to hold the orchid itself in case the roots are not firmly attached to the pot. Use a jet of water and direct it at the top of the medium. Sometimes most of the degraded medium will flow from the pot leaving a mass of roots with just a few pieces of hard medium. If the roots are white and hard there is no need to remove the orchid. You can add medium, but do not damage roots as you work the new medium into the pot. I like to use puffed clay pebbles, which are round and easily flow into space between the roots without much effort.

If you do this and find mushy roots the orchid needs to be repotted. Remember that the longer the time between repotting, the more strength your orchid gets and the better the flowers will be next time. Roots are the key to good

flowers and repotting removes the majority of them.

There are many orchids sold now in sphagnum. This is a soft medium that tends to stay moist. Typically, phalaenopsis are sold in this medium, but I have seen just about every orchid group sold in it. It is rare for sphagnum to last more than a year. If you can easily pull small pieces of medium from the pot when you purchase it, you likely need to repot the orchid as soon as it finishes flowering.

If you have a small collection, apply Nutricote now if you have not already done so. If you use a soluble fertilizer this is the time to be sure you water weakly, weekly. For cattleyas and other orchids with pseudobulbs, once new growths are mature, fertilizing is not as important, but right now, they are in the growth mode. Other genera, such as members of the vandaceous group, phalaenopsis, paphs, phrags and jewel orchids can be fertilized as long as it is warm. My preference is to use a balanced fertilizer with extra calcium and magnesium. Be careful not to use exotic fertilizers unless you know how it will affect the water pH. That is one of the reasons to recommend simple, slow release type fertilizers such as Nutricote.

Insects also respond to warmer conditions and need to be watched carefully. If scale or thrips are discovered treat quickly before they spread. If just a few are found on one plant remove the orchid and use a fine jet of water to remove the problem, being sure the underside of leaves and rhizomes are washed. If possible, isolate the plant for a month or so and watch it carefully. In my greenhouse, the orchid is sprayed thoroughly and the bench where it was found is also drenched in an appropriate pesticide and the entire area watched through the summer. Over time, most of my insect problems have disappeared, so it is rare for the entire collection to be treated.

This is also the time of year when snails and slugs seem to come from nowhere. Actually, they have been there all along, but the cool temperatures limited their activity. Now, instead of just grazing the algae near the bottom of a pot they emerge and munch on new roots and growths. There are many treatments that work well for these pests depending on your growing area and conditions. Some of these are toxic to pets so read labels carefully.



# CULTIVATION

## Your Orchids in May

based on Robert Scully articles,  
courtesy of the AOS



**General Growing Tips.** Summer is right around the corner. Now is the time to maximize growth and develop the plant strength and food reserves needed for good flower production. Larger plants typically produce bigger and better flowers than smaller ones so resist the urge to divide your plants just for the sake of having more plants. Recycle your clay or plastic pots but be sure to sterilize them first along with any wire products. Do not reuse potting mix or drainage material.

**Cattleyas.** Get a head start on dividing cattleyas by severing the rhizome in whole or in part (at a point where you will have 3 to 5 pseudobulbs per division) with a sterile tool while the plant is still in the original pot.



The new growths will emerge weeks later at which point you can finish repotting using a rhizome clip to secure the divisions. Continue feeding cattleyas with a dilute fertilizer solution with each watering and flush with fresh water monthly.

**Cymbidiums.** Finish repotting these elegant orchids if they are bursting out of the pot. If the medium is in good condition, you may be able to move the plant from one container to another with the addition of a small amount of medium and not disturb the roots. Keep the pots moist and syringe



the foliage frequently, particularly if you have moved the plant into brighter light.

**Paphiopedilums.** This is the ideal month to complete repotting of your lady's slippers. Prepare a fresh terrestrial mix (say 85% bark, 10% peat and 5% charcoal). Remove dead roots and keep as many growths together as practical. The single flowered types should be in shade though the multiflorals like more light. Keep root zone moisture levels high (though *Brachypetalum* types generally like drier conditions).



**Phalaenopsis.** Repotting plants that have finished flowering is a priority. When you repot, remove the old inflorescence and eliminate all rotten or completely dehydrated roots and cut the roots back to about 2/3 the depth of the new pot. Remove also the dried bottom section of the old crown until you reach fresh tissue. Resume fertilizing when new roots become visible. Consider a spraying program with a recommended fungicide.



**Vandas.** Some plants may need more room for root development. If your plant is in a wooden basket, simply drop it into a larger size basket. If your plant has become top heavy and unsightly, cut away the top part of the plant as long as this section has three roots to sustain it and rebasket it being careful to secure it so roots will not be damaged in the wind. Keep the bottom section of the plant in the old basket as it will usually sprout keikis at the base and be well established by the end of the summer.



# CULTIVATION

## Orchid Questions & Answers

by Sue Bottom, sbottom15@bellsouth.net



**Q1.** The leaves on my B. digbyana are turning white. What did I do wrong?



Q 1

**A1.** B. digbyana grows and blooms best in the brightest of cattleya light. The white powdery substance on the leaves is a protective wax coating that protects the plant from sunburn. The white powder is a sign of a healthy plant.

**Q2.** My Ctsm. Penang never went dormant this winter. The prior year's foliage is shading the new growth which has two bloom spikes forming. Is this normal?



Q 2



**A2.** Many of the catasetinae enter their winter rest period in the late fall when their leaves yellow and fall off, during which time you water sparingly, if at all, and do not fertilize. Sometimes our plants don't do what the books tell us they will do and you have to trust your instincts. As long as the mix is still fresh, leave the plant in the same pot and continue watering and fertilizing. It is possible it will rest briefly after flowering, like the species *discolor* and *atratum*, at which time you would limit watering and could repot. But if it insists on continuing to grow, I think it is telling you that it really likes your growing conditions!

**Q3.** From Spain, Stephen writes: I have acquired a couple of miniature phals that are in sphagnum moss. They seem to have filled their pots with roots, should they have bigger pots after flowering?



**A3.** I love the multifloral phalaenopsis for their branching floriferous flower spikes. You can see the roots on the white phal are fat and happy. The purple phal looks like it has rebloomed in last year's pot and the sphagnum looks degraded so the roots are probably damaged and somewhat rotted. When they're done flowering, you can knock them out of the pot and assess the roots. You'll choose your pot based on the root mass. Most likely they will go into 4 in pots but you'll probably have to add more Styrofoam peanuts into the pot for the purple phal because of all the root loss.





# CULTIVATION

## Selecting a Pot for Your Orchid

Sue Bottom, [sbottom15@bellsouth.net](mailto:sbottom15@bellsouth.net)

Many questions pass through the orchid grower's mind when selecting pots.

*Plastic or Clay Pots?* Plastic pots are cheap, clay pots breathe. Most orchid growers prefer clay pots but I often pot divisions in both plastic and clay pots and oftentimes those in plastic pots end up having more blooms (from which I infer that I'm not watering the orchids in clay pots enough during the growing season). I think it's a matter of choice, clay pots are more stable in the wind and perhaps more aesthetically appealing, but plastic pots work in a pinch.



*Clear or Opaque Plastic Pots?* There must be a reason that so many phalaenopsis are sold in clear plastic pots. One of the functions of orchid roots is to photosynthesize, perhaps the roots are responsible for as much as 10% of the plant's photosynthesis. Clear pots also allow you to assess the health of your plant's roots and perhaps allow the plant to ramp up its growth rate earlier in spring. One negative is the algae, weeds and ferns that are encouraged to grow in clear pots. Remember that plastic deteriorates in the sun due to exposure to the ultraviolet light (UV). Clear and light colored pots deteriorate at a higher rate than dark colors. The dark pigment may not be particularly attractive but it does block UV light and dark pots last longer than light ones without UV inhibitors in the plastic. Many light pots will fall apart in a few years without the proper inhibitors.



*Do Clay Pots Have to be Orchid Pots?* Clay orchid pots used to have three large slats on the side to improve drainage and allow more aeration around the roots. The

pots you find today have three additional small holes for drainage. Are they worth twice the price of the non-orchid pots? The orchid pots are preferable, particularly if you can find the old fashioned kind with the wide slats. If you can't, you'll find that you can simulate the conditions in non-orchid pots by adding Styrofoam peanuts at the bottom of your pots to increase aeration around the roots.



*Standard, Azalea or Bulb Pot?* The shape of the pot is one of the most important considerations. The three basic pot shapes are the standard pot, the azalea pot and the bulb pot. The standard pot is taller than it is wide, the azalea pot is about as tall as it is wide and the bulb pot is much wider than it is tall. For most orchids, the azalea or bulb pot is preferable, although a standard pot can be packed with Styrofoam peanuts to simulate the conditions found in shallower pots. Some orchids like paphiopedilums and cymbidiums prefer an ultra tall pot, perhaps one that is two or three times taller than it is wide.

*Decorative and Glazed Pots?* Decorative glazed pots, with and without holes, can be used for your orchids though consider potting your orchids in a utilitarian pot and then dropping this pot inside the decorative pot for presentation.

There are two basic rules to use when you are selecting a pot for an orchid:

*Root Mass.* Root mass is much more important than the amount of foliage in determining which pot to choose. Don't have preconceived notions of what pot is to be used for a given orchid based on how it looks sitting in the old pot. Take the orchid out of its old pot, clean off the old potting medium and dead or decaying roots, and consider whether you're going to give the roots a general haircut. Then select a pot that will accommodate the roots without them being overly cramped and twisted and without there being an excess ratio of potting mix to roots.

*Allow for Two Years Growth.* The general rule of thumb when repotting orchids is to use a pot that will accommodate at least 2 years of growth before the orchid needs to be transferred into another container. For a sympodial orchid,

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this means you'll have to consider how closely the canes or pseudobulbs grow together. In general, this means that if you put the oldest part of the plant against the edge of the pot, the youngest part of the plant should be in about the middle of the pot with another half of the pot to grow into.

We can apply these general rules to the specific potting issues for common genera you may grow.

**Phalaenopsis.** About 95% of all phalaenopsis will be repotted into either a 4 or 6 inch azalea pot, you will almost never use a pot larger than 6 inches for a phalaenopsis. The choice of clay vs. plastic, or clear vs. opaque plastic is one of personal preference. More important is assessing the root mass of the phalaenopsis and choosing your pot to comfortably accommodate the trimmed roots. Don't be afraid to move a phal that was in a 6 inch pot down to a 4 inch pot if the root mass is small. If the root mass is too large for a 4 inch pot but too small for a 6 inch pot, use the 6 inch pot and compensate with another inch or so of Styrofoam peanuts.

**Cattleyas.** Cattleya pots will vary all over the board in both the type, size and shape of pots. Cattleyas with closely spaced pseudobulbs like those with *nodosa* or *bowringiana* in the genetic background will enjoy being more tightly packed in the pot. Cattleyas with more sprawling rhizomes like those with *walkeriana* or *digbyana* in the genetic background will require larger pots. You'll decide whether to use a bulb pot, azalea pot or standard pot based on the root mass left once you have cut off the old growths and trimmed the roots. With cattleyas, the most important things to remember are:

- A cattleya will only bloom on new growth so you retain old growths for only two reasons, either for the food and water reserves retained in the old pseudobulbs or for the hope that a new lead will develop from a blind eye on an older pseudobulb,
- You need a minimum of 3 and preferably 5 pseudobulbs for a cattleya to have sufficient reserves to undergo repotting without a long period of transplant shock,
- Be brutal in removing the older, damaged, sometimes ugly growths because the new growths will be more attractive, healthier and be able to grow longer in the pot than if you have wasted that space on the older, damaged and sometimes ugly growths that will never bloom.

**Dendrobiums.** Always use a pot that appears to be a little too small for a dendrobium. If you look at how closely the canes grow together and assume your plant will stay in that same pot for 2 or 3 years, you can appreciate how it will thrive in that almost too small pot. You will generally use

azalea or bulb pots and a fairly inorganic mix because their roots don't like to be disturbed.

**Oncidium Alliance.** Oncidiums are not too particular about their potting mix or type pot. After you have trimmed up the plant and given its roots a haircut, select a pot size suitable for the remaining root mass.

**Paphiopedilums.** Paphiopedilums tend to like tall and slender pots. They grow fine in plastic pots and they seem to thrive in clay pots as well. You'll select your pot size based on root mass once you've cleaned up your plant. Don't be afraid to go down in pot size if the roots were not vigorously growing in the old pot.

**Cymbidiums.** Cymbidiums tend to like any pot that is well drained and has more depth than width. The roots tend to go straight down in a lot of the species and shallow pots slow down growth. When selecting a pot for a cymbidiums with more than one bulb, choose one which will allow for two years growth which is about two inches clearance



around the plant. One pot that works very well for cymbidiums is the Rootmaker Gallon. See [www.rootmaker.com](http://www.rootmaker.com). This pot was designed for tree seedlings but is an ideal container for cymbidiums. A lot of other species do well in it as well. It only comes in 1, 3 and 5 gallon sizes. Rootmaker pots can be put inside white containers made for food, with holes drilled in the food container for drainage, The white shields the sun and evaporation from the drain holes helps cool the plant. Adding the extra cooling helps cymbidiums bloom. Clay pots are excellent and do help keep plants cool due to evaporation but pots large enough for cymbidiums are very expensive. Five gallon buckets make good containers for larger cymbidiums. (courtesy of Harry McElroy, [cymbidiuman@msn.com](mailto:cymbidiuman@msn.com)).

Selecting the proper pot to house your orchid for the next two or three years is just as important as the potting mix you use. Once you've got your plant cleaned up and ready to repot, choose a pot based on the plant's root mass and ability to fill up the pot over the next two years. Your orchids will always bloom best when they're a bulb or two out of the pot, which tells you something if you are listening!



# CULTIVATION

## Catasetums in Spring

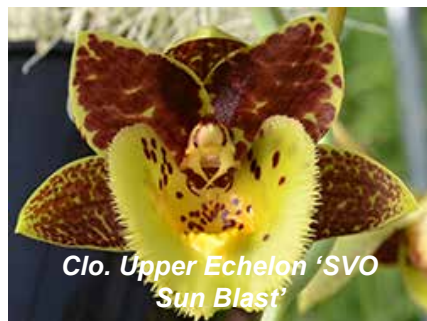
by Fred Clarke, Sunset Valley Orchids

Spring is officially here and your Catasetinae should have started or are getting ready to start new growth. Here are a few reminders to help with a successful spring:

Catasetinae begin their new growth in early spring. However, watering should wait until the new growth has well developed new roots. This means you should let the new roots grow to an approximate length of 3" to 6" before you begin watering. Let me emphasize this point, wait to water until the new roots are 3" to 6" long. Generally the new growth will be 5" to 8" tall before the roots are equally long.



*Ctsm. Sheriff Frank Drew*



*Clo. Upper Echelon 'SVO Sun Blast'*

The waiting to water is not easy, my natural instinct is to begin watering when I see new growth, but I have learned through trial and error that it is better to wait to water than start watering too soon. This waiting to water was also

confirmed a few years back when visiting the habitat of Catasetums in the spring. All the plants I saw in nature had new roots growing but the rains were not expected to arrive for another month. So lesson learned, wait to water until the new roots are 3" to 6" long.

Catasetinae roots deteriorate during dormancy, the new roots will be taking over the job of growing the new pseudobulb so this makes the new roots vital in the plants health. Again reinforcing the message

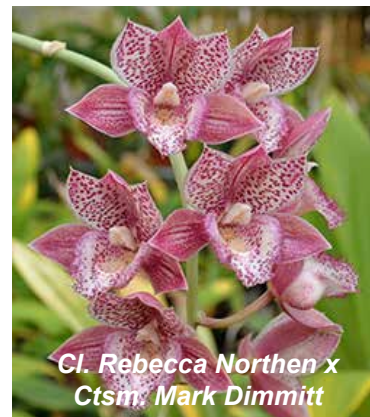


*Cyc. warszewiczii 'SVO Swan'*

about not watering too early.

For those of you in warmer climates the new roots may be sufficiently developed by now. This is the period where the plants are going to start rapidly developing their new pseudobulbs.

There is a surprising amount of growth that occurs in the next 3 to 4 months; often the plants will double their size. Due to this, the plants require constant moisture and regular fertilization. In most cases, irrigation will be needed 2 or 3 times a week. A balanced fertilizer at full strength (1 tsp per gallon) is suitable for this rapid growth.



*Cl. Rebecca Northen x Ctsm. Mark Dimmitt*



*Ctsm. Fong Cing*

Light levels at or above those suggested for Cattleya will help insure strong good growth and flowering.

Soon the time when the fruits of your labor will begin to pay off as the flowering season will be underway in a month or two. Grow them good! Here are some first blooms of my new

hybrids.



*Cycd. Spotted Hornet 'SVO II' AM*



# MY FAVORITE ORCHID

## My Favorite Orchid

By Penny Halyburton, [phalyburton@comcast.net](mailto:phalyburton@comcast.net)



Penny's prize Stanhopea

A simple request: "Would you write the "My Favorite Orchid" article for the newsletter?" After much thought, I conclude that one either has a favorite orchid or one does not. I obviously fit into the "does not" category. For a normally decisive person this is a choice I just can't make.

Why would anyone in their right mind choose a single orchid as their favorite? Why does anyone need to have a favorite? After way too many hours pondering this and sitting at the computer attempting to write about my favorite orchid, the only thing I've accomplished is a major pain in my back - literally. I still don't have a favorite to write about, the loss of sleep has put my retired brain into a tailspin and I am totally irrational. I'm a mess!

I am the first to say that this should not be difficult! It's a flower! And, it's not like I'm under oath, am I? It would be so simple to just fabricate a favorite for this article. I could say that Cattleyas, Cymbidiums or Stanhopeas are my favorite. That would be easy and, if I changed my mind tomorrow or next week, no one would remember, nor would they care. So, why do I? Perhaps I am just troubled because I don't have a favorite orchid and feel like I should. Does everyone have a favorite? Maybe I'm worried by the fact that I'm unable to choose a favorite from so many beautiful orchids or by choosing just one my choices will be limited. WORSE YET my other orchids would find out they weren't chosen and OMG become sick! That would be devastating. I need psychological counseling! Do they even have counseling



Penny's Likes Vandas Too



Penny's Loves her big Cattleyas

for "FODD" (favorite orchid decision disorder)? I'm not sure what my issue is; I just know I need help. I am so stressed about what should be a simple question.

Am I the only person who doesn't have a favorite orchid? My husband, Michael, has a favorite. He likes Oncidiums, and doesn't particularly care for Phalaenopsis-type Dendrobiums. They get too "leggy" for him to easily hang in the garage on cold nights. My goodness, our cats, Myka, Targa and Symba, even have favorites! They also love Oncidiums. Not because their human dad does, but they like any orchid with long thin leaves that they can chew, eat and completely devour in mere minutes. "Plant rye grass for them and they won't bother your orchids", I was told. They're indoor cats. Can you imagine the mess in the house when they eat rye grass? Not pretty! But being the good kitty mom I try to be, and wanting to save my orchids, we have two flower pots of rye grass constantly available to them. Now they have the best of both worlds: rye grass and orchids. Boy do they love me now! Perhaps "normal" cats would prefer rye grass over orchids, but not my precious little well-house rescues. And, the potting media...well, that makes a really fun toy! At least they're decisive.

Suffice it to say I am the indecisive mess in our family. I just love all orchids including... Bulbophyllums. Perhaps my next orchid acquisition will be my favorite?



Penny really likes her growing areas that her husband Michael built.



# SHOW TABLE



**Grower Linda Stewart**  
**Zygo. Advance Australia**



**Grower Debbie & Bob Sandy**  
**Multifloral Paph.**



**Grower Dick Roth**  
**Epi. Rioclarense**



**Grower Bill Gourley**  
**Lyc. aromatica**



**Grower Sue Bottom**  
**C. Orglades Palette**



**Grower Sue Bottom**  
**Lc. G. S. Ball**



**Grower Bill Gourley**  
**C. intermedia var. orlata 'Rio'**



# SHOW TABLE



**Grower Linda Stewart**  
*Ren. imschootiana*



**Grower Dick Roth**  
*Epi. Mable Kanda x E. radii*



**Grower Bill Gourley**  
*Bc. Sunny Delight*



**Grower Sue Bottom**  
*C. maxima*



**Grower Dick Roth**  
*Eplc. Jackie Bright 'Hilo Stars' HCC/AOS*



**Grower Sue Bottom**  
*C. mossiae 'Alayon'*

