



St. Augustine Orchid Society

www.staugorchidsociety.org

Seasonal Tips for Cymbidiums

Browning Leaves a Sign of Cultural Problems

March and April

by Harry McElroy, cymbidiuman@msn.com

You should be having a good daily look at your cymbidiums. The good news is that spikes are coming that need to be staked and tied for best display. The bad news is best identified by brown and falling leaves. An occasional brown leaf is normal but leaves that are turning brown in large quantities are a sign of trouble with your culture.

The first thing to look for is bad potting media. Roots usually rot when media fails or goes acid. In that case the leaves will be turning brown for lack of nourishment from the roots. Plants with failing roots will feel loose in the pot – the plants that don't need repotting will feel firm. This is the time of year to correct this problem.

The second reason for large numbers of brown leaves is lack of fertilizer. Cymbidiums that need fertilizer will take what they can transport from older growths and use it for new growth. Plants can not transport all nutrients (such as calcium) so the new growth will seem smaller than the old growths and the pot will tend to have many back bulbs as the leaves fall. Well fertilized plants will have pots full of bulbs with leaves – not bare backbulbs.

It is time to visit your cymbidiums and evaluate. If it need to be repotted it is time to do it. If the potting is alright but leaves are falling – fertilize the plant more.

