



The Orchidist

August 2008 - Volume 5 - Number 7

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AUGUST PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

July in the Arctic is delightful! Weather was in the 30's and 40's up in Svalbard, which is 600 miles south of the North Pole. As we sailed through the pack ice on the National Geographic Ship Endeavour, we spotted polar bears, seals, walrus, and lots of sea birds. We also made several landings where we saw reindeer and Arctic foxes. Our wonderful naturalists/guides introduced us to the Arctic flora, which grows almost flat on the ground but has some magical tiny flowers. The ship stopped at Bear Island, which has the highest concentration of sea birds in the northern hemisphere, estimated at over one million birds. We made our way south to the spectacular Norwegian fjords, and visited the Tromso Arctic-Alpine Botanic Garden, which is the most northerly botanical garden in the world. In addition to the arctic and alpine plants situated in lovely rock gardens, there are plants from many other countries. My favorites were the Himalayan blue poppy and the Calceolaria polyrhiza from Chile, which looked like clumps of small yellow gold slipper orchids. And since this garden is situated in the land of the midnight sun, for two months in the summer you can study plants there 24 hours a day!

But back to reality and South Florida in the summer... there are phals that beg to be repotted... and gardens that need weeding.... and fertilizing. And the ever-present threat of hurricanes... if you don't have a hurricane plan, you might think of creating one now. An action plan, including a list of supplies to have on hand, is very helpful as a storm approaches, and is imperative if you travel in the summer and have a friend or neighbor watching your house and orchid collection. Remember, hurricanes are the trade-off for living where we can grow orchids all year long.
Keep cool,
Sandy

AUGUST PROGRAM

Those Wonderful Fragrant Vandaceous Orchids

by Bob Hatos

Bob and his wife Sandy have been growing and hybridizing orchids here in Miami-Dade County for about 14 years. They work mainly in the Vandaceous group, but also like pendant type Dendrobiums.

They have registered 31 crosses with the (RHS), most of these have their favorite species 'Vanda tessellata' in the family tree, for this reason many of their hybrids have the following attributes. Easily grown, vigorous, love the South Florida climate and are often fragrant.

During their picture presentation, Bob will talk about the various plants, their virtues and perhaps give a brief history of some of them. Bob and his wife are members of 'SFOS and EEOS'.

See you all on August 20th.

Carol

MEETING NOTICE

SFOS Meeting Schedule

Wednesday, August 20, 2008
Fire Fighters Memorial Building
8000 N.W. 21st Street
Miami, FL 33122

- 7:30 pm - Registration & Judging of Plants
- 7:45 pm - Announcements
- 8:00 pm - Program
- 8:45 pm - Refreshments
- 9:00 pm - Awarded Plants Discussed
- 9:15 pm - Raffle

SFOS SPEAKERS DAY 2008

SFOS will host its annual Speakers Day on Sunday, October 5, 2008 at Signature Gardens, 12725 S.W. 122 Avenue, Miami, FL. We have a wonderful panel of highly respected speakers presenting an enjoyable and educational program. Speakers Day also includes AOS Judging and SFOS Medal Judging. Plants for judging must be registered by 10:00 A.M. and can be picked up at 12:00 P.M. Speakers' Day has AOS approval for judging seminar credits as well. Several of our speakers will have plants to sell and sales will be open only to registered seminar participants. This year's speakers are:

Roberto Agnes started growing orchids while living in South Africa at the age of 11. In 1984 he moved to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil where he continued to expand his collection and soon after participated in founding of the Rio Orchid Society - OrquidaRio. Roberto was involved in running the judging school and was the editor of the orchid magazine for several years. Roberto also helped tender the bid for the WOC which was held in Rio de Janeiro in 1996 where he was Chairman of Judges. Roberto is a partner of Aranda Orquídeas. They are actively involved in the preservation of species in their laboratory. They have produced several improved strains of their various *Cattleya* and *Laelia* species. The title of Roberto's program is "Brazilian *Cattleya* and *Laelia* Species and Their Hybrids". Roberto will be bringing plants to sell.

Ron McHatton, Ph.D. is a chemist by training and is currently the AOS Director of Education and Regional Operations. Prior to that position he was Apopka production manager for Kerry's Bromeliad Nursery, possibly the largest wholesale orchid nursery in the United States. In addition to his professional position, Ron is an accredited American Orchid Society Judge and he has also been a long-time supporter of the *Orchid Digest*. The title of Ron's talk is "The Orchid World in Microcosm – *Masdevallia* and *Pleurothallis*". This lecture will examine a slice of this diversity along with a discussion of some of the newest taxonomic changes and cultural information for those preferring warmer conditions.

Glen Decker began growing orchids at the age of 15 and holds the degree of Associate in Applied Science in Ornamental Horticulture. Glen is the owner of

Piping Rock Orchids in Galway, New York. He was the previous chair of the American Orchid Society's Publications Committee and is presently a Director of the *Orchid Digest* Corporation. He has appeared in *Martha Stewart's Better Living Magazine* and on the PBS TV special "Orchid Delirium". He recently rewrote the Slipper section of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden's "The Best Orchids for Indoors" and was the technical editor for the "Orchids for Dummies" book. The title of Glen's program is "PHRAGMIPEDIUMS - Past to the Present". This is a complete look at hybridization, past to the present and what we could expect in the future. Glen will be bringing plants to sell.

Ruben P. Sauleda, Ph.D. has been growing orchids since the age of 12. He started the family business in 1962, Ruben In Orchids. His main interest is hybridizing the unusual, specializing in *Encyclia* and *Schomburgkia* hybrids. In addition he propagates many species from seed, especially Florida Natives. Dr. Sauleda with his wife, Claudia, moved three years ago to the Redlands after 45 years in the Kendall area. Dr. Sauleda has a Masters Degree in Orchid Ecology and Taxonomy from Florida Atlantic University and a Ph.D. in Orchid Taxonomy from the University of South Florida. He has written several books and has published dozens of papers in scientific journals. He was Chairman of Education for the 19th World Orchid Conference as well as a speaker. The title of Ruben's program is "The Genus *Psychilis*, A Little Known Caribbean Group." Ruben will have plants for sale.

Howard Ginsberg is an accredited AOS judge and head of the Montreal Judging Centre. He began growing orchids in 1977. He has spoken to orchid societies across North America, throughout New Zealand, Australia and has been a featured speaker in AOS judges training at several centers. Howard has also been a featured speaker at AOS Trustees meetings and was a featured speaker at the 18th WOC in Dijon, France. He is the most recent winner of the Ernest Hetherington Award for an article on *Sc. Beaufort*. The title of Howard's talk is "Golden Peoker, Golden Parent". Howard will be bringing plants to sell.

JUDGING REMINDER

This month we will be holding our usual monthly judging. Please remember to bring your wonderful plants for our panel of judges to award.

SPEAKERS DAY SCHEDULE:

- 8:00 - 9:00 Breakfast, plant registration (for judging), plant sales open
- 9:00 - 10:00 Roberto Agnes
- 10:00 - 11:00 Ron McHatton
- 11:00 - 12:00 AOS Judging and panel discussion, plant sales open
- 12:00 - 1:00 Lunch
- 1:00 - 2:00 Glen Decker
- 2:00 - 3:00 Ruben Sauleda
- 3:00 - 4:00 Howard Ginsberg
- 4:00 - 5:00 Plant sales open

* Plant sales area will also be open during breaks and between speakers

HOMEMADE FUNGICIDE

Gardening by the Yard : Episode GBY-102
More Projects »

If leaf surfaces remain wet overnight, they invite invasion by all kinds of fungi, and sooner or later something you grow is going to develop a disease. Professors at Cornell University developed the following recipe for homemade fungicide, and master gardener Paul James slightly modified it so that ordinary household products could be used:

- 1 tbsp. baking soda
- 1 tbsp. vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp. dish washing liquid

Add these ingredients to a gallon of water and mix well. When you're applying the mixture, make sure you continue to agitate the mixture as you spray so that all these ingredients remain mixed.

This homemade fungicide works beautifully as both a preventive and a control. Even though this mixture has been tested on all kinds of plants--ornamental, vegetables and just about everything--you will still want to take the time to test it on a small leaf surface on the plant that you are trying to control the fungus on.



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MINIATURE ORCHIDS MASDEVALLIA

by Susan Taylor

For the home grower, Masdevallias offer one of the best choices for indoor growing. They are uniformly small growing, normally flower year round, and are fairly easy to grow. They belong to a genus of approximately 350-500 species, depending upon which expert you cite, which have been widely hybridized for their small highly-colored flowers. Most are from the higher reaches of the Andes Mountains where they grow as epiphytes (growing on trees), lithophytes (growing on rocks), or rarely as terrestrials (growing in humus on the ground). Their natural environment is the cloud forest which indicates that they need a quite humid and cool environment to grow well.

They do not resemble most other orchids but are truly unusual and extremely colorful. They are one of the best plants for terrariums since they stay small and generally bloom for long periods of time.

Most species and hybrids need cool to intermediate temperatures and will do best if night time temperatures are reduced to 60 degrees Fahrenheit or 15.5 degrees Celsius; daytime temperatures should be no higher than 75 degrees Fahrenheit or 24 degrees Celsius. They will grow and flower well under the same light conditions as Phalaenopsis and Paphiopedilums which makes them perfect for growing on windowsills or under lights. As noted above, they require good humidity at all times since their leaves are somewhat sensitive and thin – 60 to 70 percent is perfect.

Water is another important factor for these plants. They are particularly sensitive to salts in water, so the best thing to do is to use rainwater or distilled water. They should be kept uniformly moist and repotted yearly in good quality bark or sphagnum. What you use of course depends upon your culture conditions. When purchased, most come in a medium or fine bark mix which allows for very good drainage while still providing good moisture. Sphagnum is best used in a terrarium environment.

These little orchids are rarely seen for sale in the big stores where you can find Dendrobiums, Phals and Oncidiums. Your best bet is to purchase them

from a reliable vendor at an orchid show or over the web. Be sure to plan on having these plants sent during the cooler months of the year so that they do not become overheated in transit. This is very hard on them and will keep them from growing well until they recover.

OTHER ORCHID TIPS

An orchid pot eventually becomes congested with roots and repotting is advisable. Transparent pots readily enable the development of roots to be monitored. Roots should be clean, moderately white and undamaged.

When flowering is over, with many orchids it is advisable to cut down the stem which displayed flowers. Make a clean cut near to the base of the flowered stem. Use sharp scissors or secateurs, cutting near the stem's base.

Most orchids are borne on stems that are self-supporting. Others have pendulous stems, while some develop main stems that need to be secured with soft string to a thin cane, perhaps every few inches along its length. In addition, other orchids (such as cattleyas) have large flowers that need individual support; secure the main flowering stem to a split bamboo cane and, in a "maypole" arrangement, individually support the flower stems.

Water stains and dust on leaves are unsightly, but can be easily removed. While a leaf is being cleaned, hold its base to prevent it being pulled out. Young leaves on Odontoglossums and Cymbidiums are especially vulnerable to being tugged off. While holding the leaf's base, draw a damp sponge upward along it. Additionally, at this time, take the opportunity to wipe the pot clean. Dirty leaves are a symptom of neglect. Regularly clean the leaves, but take care not to pull them off.



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HELPING YOUR ORCHIDS THROUGH THE SUMMER

by Susan Taylor

Here in the south we have very hot summers and my greenhouse faces west so that it receives full afternoon sun. My main concern at this time of year is keeping my orchids cool enough. Another problem is that the smaller orchids in less than four-inch pots dry out much faster than the larger ones. In order to be consistent, I only water twice a week, but will mist and wet down the media on the smaller ones as necessary. I've experimented with several different options and the best one I've found is to put a clay saucer under the smaller pots of Cattleyas. I use a five-inch saucer for a four-inch pot.

What this accomplishes is to provide a longer period for the media in the pot to absorb water, rather than only as the water is run through. The clay saucer will respire and evaporate water, especially on dry days, so that the plant is cooler while it gets more water. The clay saucers will not hold water as long as a plastic one so that there is less chance of the roots staying too wet for too long. If you notice one saucer that has water in it when all the others are dry, then either water a little less or dispose of the water to allow the plant to dry. I've had good luck with this method for most hybrid Cattleyas except for the Nodosas and their primary hybrids. It is just too wet for them. Oncidiums seem to adapt well to this culture, also. Dendrobiums do not like this, so don't try with them.

For larger plants, add some sphagnum moss to the top of the media and wet that down between waterings to provide extra moisture. It will dry out fairly quickly, but allow the top roots to absorb more moisture as they need it without getting too waterlogged. This will also provide some extra humidity to the plant as the moss releases its water to the air.

Mounted orchids and Vandaceous orchids should be watered morning and evening during the hottest part of the summer. Putting them under the misting system will provide enough extra water if you are unable to water by hand this often.

Extra air circulation in the form of an exhaust fan or a circulating fan will cause extra evaporation

from your pots and saucers also reducing the air temperature. A misting system, either hooked up to your garden hose, or a self-contained system, is almost a necessity during the summer to provide humidity and help cool your orchids.

VANILLA MAGIC

by Patricia Rain, *The Vanilla Chef*

Much more than just an ingredient in baked goods, vanilla is a magical flavoring and can do wonders for most foods and beverages. It is also very useful in calming our minds and bodies and helping us to feel good. Here are some thoughts and suggestions for making use of vanilla's magic. For instance did you know that vanilla is...

A stomach sedative? Add pure vanilla extract to mineral water or apple juice to settle a nervous stomach. To soothe and please cranky, teething, or sick children add a few drops of vanilla to their milk or juice.

Burn your tongue on pizza or other hot food? Put a few drops of vanilla on your tongue to ease the pain and soothe the burn.

House paint smell too strong? Add a tablespoon of vanilla extract to a gallon of paint to help cut the smell.

Want to disguise your scent when fishing? Rub vanilla on your hands before handling your fishing line. Lots of seasoned fishermen and women use this trick.



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THE BIRTH OF AN ORCHIDOLOGIST

by Josephine Bonome

Reprinted by permission A.O.S Bulletin, Vol. 22,
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He said for me not to worry. He just wanted four orchid plants. And that's how I became a left woman. One quiet Monday evening we were browsing in a book shop. We had thought of growing a family orchard and leisurely collected research material. He picked up a book on citrus trees, rifled the pages, and handed it to me. As I read, I heard a voice from across the moors intoning, "I've always wanted to know about orchids."

I looked up. His eyes were on a slender book. "First things first," I said. "Let's don't dream."

Just looking at a book doesn't mean I'm going to grow orchids," he retorted. We proceeded with our fruit tree reading and selected two books. When we got to the clerk's counter there were three. I picked up the intruder. It was "American Orchid Culture", by White. In answer to my questioning look he wore a broad smile.

During the reading of White he was incommunicado. He didn't see me or hear me. I even toyed with the idea of sending up smoke signals--not that he would see the signals, but he might smell the smoke. When he finally came from his retreat he

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

If you move and have a change of address, phone number or email, please let Ellen know at the SFOS office (305-255-3656).

Coming to a meeting! Bring friends and family, get them to join and receive a free orchid seedling.

Don't forget The South Florida Orchid Society Culture book written for growing orchids in this part of the country. The member price is \$15.00

See you all at the next meeting, August 20th.

said, "Do you realize I've never given you an orchid corsage? I feel guilt about it...And there's no time like the present to make it up to you." Before I could argue he added, "How would you like to have an orchid, raised under your own eyes, cut with your own hands...?"

"I don't think that would enhance it, dear. That's where you're wrong. Once you wear a home-grown orchid you'll never forget it. I'll surprise you. This had gone far enough. They require a fancy place to grow in and we have no such provision, I warned. Hearsay! he snorted. They even grow in bathrooms. Our little one would get along fine in the garage window. Nothing to it. I'll rig up that old sink lying behind the incinerator, fill the bottom with coal, put in a little water, and place a rack over the whole business. It'll have enough humidity and light there. And the time it will take will be negligible--less than your oleanders or geraniums."

I was skeptical but gave in. After all he did read White's book. I asked. "When do I get surprised?" After some thought and study on it. You just don't go out and buy an orchid as you would a flat of pansies. We'll take our time. Early the next morning I trudged the corridors of a commercial greenhouse in the wake of two unintelligibly speaking technicians. Finally, after hours we came to the grower's office. Friend husband solicitously suggested I go sit in the car and wait. Presently, he emerged gingerly carrying a large box, dashed to the trunk of the car and came around to the steering wheel in a happy condition. Rather a large box, isn't it? I said, suspicious. Orchid plants are very precious, he said, adding that they have to be amply provided with packing material for cushioning any shock in transit, etc cetera.

As we drove in the driveway he asked would I be good enough to prepare a snack. He disappeared while I fixed it. Returning, he suggested we eat first. Then he would show me his handiwork! He was so sweet he helped me with the dishes and on the way to the garage hugged me and told me what a wonderful wife I was. Soft soap! He had a cage built around the window. For a back wall he had draped a piece of black velvet I had been saving. Proudly, he drew the curtain aside. I gasped. There were four huge plants. He said, Don't get excited.

I barely saw him for four months. One day he sadly

announced that we weren't being fair to the orchids. We should at least give them a fighting chance. What, I asked, is a fighting chance? The next scene is a tiny greenhouse of a friend's friend of a friend. This indicated to what extent friendships can be stretched in the pursuit of collecting orchids. After being duly impressed with our host's orchidaceous darlings, I hesitatingly asked my spouse, How much would our fighting chance cost? Practically nothing, he said. I can build my own house, install the electricity and the plumbing. We'll only be out the materials. And that's a small item for a little old ten by sixteen.

Being endowed with the limited monetary knowledge common with my sex, I thought it sound economy to spend a dollar to save a dime. So I said, all right. Had I not been blind to the handwriting on the wall I would have seen a montage of: greenhouse; more orchids, big ones, little ones; more greenhouse; more ground; seeds; flasks; autoclave; incubator; more greenhouses; more plants, ad infinitum. I am so confused at this writing I'm reminded of the genetical questions -- which came first the hen or the egg -- the oak or the acorn This was the beginning of a hobby with no end -- but certainly the end of an attentive husband. -- *Encino, California*

CAROLINA SPICED TEA

Ingredients:

8 cups water
8 cloves
1 cinnamon stick
1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise
3-inch piece lemon peel
5-inch piece orange peel
4 tea bags
1 6-ounce can frozen orange juice concentrate
1/2 cup sugar
2 lemons

Instructions:

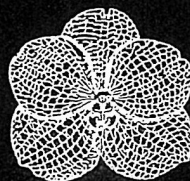
Combine first 6 ingredients and bring to a boil. Add 4 tea bags and steep 20 minutes. Remove peels and spices and add juice of lemons, orange juice concentrate and sugar (to taste). Serve hot or cold. Add rum or bourbon if desired.

Add a vanilla bean or vanilla extract to iced tea, iced coffee, or lemonade for a brighter flavor.

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SPEAKERS DAY REGISTRATION FORM

Tickets for Speakers Day are \$40.00 per person. The price includes a continental breakfast and cold buffet lunch. This is one of the major orchid events held annually in South Florida! Be sure to register early since tickets are limited and sold on a first-come, first-served basis. Tickets are not available at the door. To register, please send your check and this order form to the SFOS office: 10801 S.W. 124 St., Miami, FL 33176. For more information call (305) 255-3656.

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Name _____ AOS Judging Center & Status _____

Please reserve _____ seats @ \$40.00 Total amount enclosed: _____

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