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## HOLIDAY GIFTS AND PLANT AUCTION

This month SFOS will hold our first annual Holiday Orchid and Gift Auction. I am so excited about this auction! We have orchids from some of our local vendors, as well as vendors out of state, and also from our membership. But the auction will also have gift items, such as gift certificates for restaurants, spa treatments, art and more all at bargain prices to help you with your holiday shopping. Our Auction Committee has been working hard on this Auction and I hope you will plan to attend and even bring a friend. The more, the merrier!

**Wednesday, November 18, 2009**

**Fire Fighters Memorial Building**

**8000 NW 21st Street**

**Miami, FL 33122**

**Preview 7:30 PM**

**Auction begins at 8:00 PM**

**Visa & MasterCard accepted**

**For more information call (305-255-3656)**

**\*\*All members are requested to bring plants or orchid related items to donate to the Annual Auction. \*\***

## Orchids for FIU!

During the past months we visited the Wertheim Conservatory at FIU's main campus in west Miami-Dade, and reported on the SFOS-supported, educational "cling" project directed by Dr. Scott Zona. The Conservatory has a very interesting collection of tropical plants, but in our (admittedly biased) opinion, not anywhere near enough orchids!

Budgets and funding being what they are these days (very limited!), SFOS wants to help increase the orchid collection in this beautiful tropical showcase. So we're asking members to consider donating some species orchid plants -- extra divisions would be perfect! – to this project.

Dr. Zona's wish-list for the collection is modest. Because it's a teaching and research project as well as a display collection, he's looking for species only at this time. Growing conditions are warm and moist during the year, so orchids that need a strong dry season rest won't do well there, but small to medium-sized species from moist habitats will grow beautifully in the Conservatory beside the exotic palms, aroids and other tropicals. If you have an extra plant or two to contribute to this effort, please read on!

The kinds we're looking for: Phalaenopsis, Paphiopedilum and Phragmipedium species "Jewel" orchids: Ludisia, Macodes, Anoectochilus and related genera Dendrochilum and Bulbophyllum species Warm-growing Dendrobiums from moist habitats, such as species in the Latouria section Cadetia, Eria, Notylia, Oberonia, Ornithocephalus, Pycopsis, Robiquetia, Rodriguezia

And other small to medium species with similar requirements. Orchids with very high light requirements, and/or species that need a distinct dry season, won't do well in the Conservatory at this time. Plants must be viable, free of pests and disease, and labeled. Potted, mounted and bare-root are equally welcome. Be sure to include your name, so we know whom to thank!

If you have a plant or two to donate, you can bring it to me at an upcoming SFOS meeting or drop it off at R.F. Orchids next time you're in Homestead. We'll collect the plants and deliver them to Dr. Zona, and soon the Wertheim Conservatory can be an orchid showcase, too!

Julie Rosenberg

# HAPPY THANKSGIVING TO ALL OF OUR SFOS MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES



## 2009 SFOS Holiday Party



December is approaching which means we should take time to be thankful for our health, good friends and family, and of course, our beautiful orchids. Which bring up our next and favorite subjects – Christmas, Chanukah, and everything that goes with December, like our Holiday Party. There will not be a regular meeting/judging this month. Dress code will be semiformal.

The party will be on Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup> at Signature Gardens, 12725 S.W. 122 Ave. from 6:30 P.M. until 10:30 P.M. If you've never been there, this will be a real treat for you. Plenty of parking and large banquet rooms decorated beautifully for the holidays. The food is wonderful and there will be an open bar!

The meal will be a buffet and will include: Caesar Salad, Cold Pasta Salad Primavera, Whole Honey Glazed Ham, Roast Vermont Turkey with Old Fashioned Stuffing, Giblet Gravy and Cranberry Sauce, Tender Pork Slices, Sweet Potato Soufflé with Crushed Pineapple and Marshmallows, Steamed Long Grain White Rice, Black Beans with Chopped Onions, Assorted Cakes and Pies, Rolls, and Coffee. Happy Hour will begin at 6:30 P.M. and dinner will be ready at 7:00 P.M.

We will have a D.J. for the evening and they will play music for all generations. We will also have our gift exchange. There is a \$5.00 limit on the gifts and please put tags stating male or female. You don't have to participate; this optional, but fun! There will be a raffle during the evening. All members will, of course, receive a beautiful seedling upon presentation of their membership badge; if you have lost your badge, please notify the office (305-255-3656).

Remember the party is scheduled for Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup> and admission is by reservation only. We must know by Wednesday, December 9<sup>th</sup> if you plan to attend. The price for members and nonmembers is the same \$45.00. Tables of eight can be reserved. If you have any questions, please call the office (305-255-3656) or Marlene Clark (305-253-7627). We invite all of our members, especially our new members, to join us for a delightful evening.

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2009 SFOS Holiday Party

Please make \_\_\_\_\_ reservations for the SFOS Holiday Party.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Members @ \$45.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Guests @ \$45.00

Total Amount Due: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail your reservation form along with your check before December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009 to:  
South Florida Orchid Society, 10801 SW 124 St., Miami, FL 33176

## MEMBER NEWS

Lee Eliot has been in the hospital for a good part of the past 2 months. He has had 2 back surgeries and has been unable to walk. It is sad that his orchids and greenhouse have not been tended to as Lee would like. Lee would be very grateful if he could get some help from club member or their friends. The yard is very high with weeds also. If you would like to help Lee have one less thing to worry about, please contact Ethel Goldberg at 305-740-9646

Our sincere condolences go out to Rafael Romero and his family on the loss of his son.

## A LITTLE BIT OF THIS AND THAT

**Car Wax** - Use it to lubricate hinges of garden clippers or scissors. Coat a clean show door to prevent future mold. Use on a stainless fridge to keep fingerprint from showing.

**Hoses and nozzles** - The hose and nozzle was invented in 1672 by Jan van der Heiden to put out fires. Smear some petroleum jelly on threads of a hose coupling to prevent mineral deposit that make a nozzle hard to remove. **This Old House Magazine**. July/August, 2008

Charles Darwin wrote one of the first major works on orchids. ***On the Various Contrivances by Which Orchids are Fertilized by Insects***. It was written prior to ***The Origin of the Species*** and any of its theories remain valid today.

The smallest orchids are from one genus: *Platystele halbingeriana* from Mexico and *Platystele jungermannioides* from Central America. A flowering plant will fit on a thumbnail.

Members of the orchid family, the Orchidaceae, are found on every continent except Antarctica. Orchids are found in almost every color, except black.

There are more than 130,000 artificially created orchid hybrids, all officially recorded by the Royal Horticultural Society of England, the international registrar, and thousands more that have never been registered.

### Hints for Houseplants and other Exotics (orchids)

Starting this month, as the amount of daylight approaches its nadir, most houseplants and some orchids become dormant or grow slowly. Cut down the amount of watering by about half until active growth resumes in early spring. Indoor ferns will maintain a rich green color if you add 1 teaspoon of ammonia to 1 quart water when you water them.

### Five Quick Ways to Measure (When you don't have a ruler)

It is useful to know what your hand span is, from out stretched thumb to tip of little finger. Sometime when you do have a ruler, measure it and remember the number, usually anywhere from 8-10 inches. Also, measure your foot (which will be 12 inches long only by coincidence) and remember that number. Use your body as a yardstick. Your arm span, fingertip to fingertip, is close to your height in inches, a number you presumably know.

A standard size checkbook is 6 inches long.

A stick a chewing gum is 3 inches long.

A dollar bill is exactly 6 1/8 inches by 2 5/8 inches

## JUDGING

### Bring Your Orchids in for Judging!

You can win with your orchids by bringing them in at our next meeting January 19th. Dress your plants up and bring them in.

## RECIPES

### Old Fashioned Fudge *from Family Celebrations Cookbook*

*Candy has to be made with feeling or it just won't do*

3 cups sugar	1/2 stick butter	3 tablespoons cocoa
1/4 cup dark karo syrup	1 1/2 cups half-and-half	1/8 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon vanilla	1 cup pecan pieces	

Combine sugar, cocoa and syrup in a saucepan, and then add the half-and-half and stir. Place lid on saucepan and heat to boiling. Allow to boil 1 minute. Remove the lid and lower heat and cook to a medium-soft ball stage when dropped by a teaspoon into cold water.

Remove candy from heat. Add butter, salt, vanilla and nut pieces. Place saucepan in cold water and stir as it cools, **Do not beat the candy**. When mixture begins to be creamy, pour into butter pan.

## SPECIES

***Eurychone rothschildiana*** is a Ugandan species which looks like a Phalaenopsis, and can be grown like a one. They have beautiful large, oval, wavy, stiff olive green leaves with green flowers that have a broad curved lip that is blackish green inside with a white edge. Sepals and petals are white with lime green. This flower develops a wonderful fragrance of cinnamon in the morning, after having been opened for a few days. Flowers are about 1.5" across. This plant prefers to be grown in New Zealand sphagnum moss in clay pots, although it does equally well mounted, as long as you water daily. Repot before flowering in the spring, usually March through April. This plant is a warm grower, and should be treated like Phalaenopsis, so protect it from cold nights during the wintertime.





# AOS

## **THE AMERICAN ORCHID SOCIETY**

For \$60.00/year, you reap the following benefits:

- Monthly subscription to Orchids magazine
- Free and discounted admission to more than 200 botanical gardens and arboreta
- Receive the annual Orchid Source Directory detailing orchid suppliers worldwide
- Access to Members-Only section of the Web site, [www.aos.org](http://www.aos.org)
- 10% discount on purchases in the Orchid Emporium or on-line at [www.aos.org](http://www.aos.org)
- Discount on back issues of Orchids magazine and on American Orchid Society published books
- Reduced processing fees for American Orchid Society judged plant and flower awards
- Discounts on orchid class fees at the American Orchid Society Botanical Gardens
- Free admission to the American Orchid Society Botanical Gardens and 50% off admission for any guests. **JOIN TODAY!**

## **Lose Yourself In Our Enchanting Botanical Garden**

Explore and experience the diversity that our unique garden can offer. At this home of the American Orchid Society, you are invited to discover the beautiful, exotic, and complex tropical ecosystem of which orchids are a part. Become part of our garden and experience exotic orchids. Explore the lush tropics woven throughout 3 1/2 acres containing hundreds of species of plants from around the globe.

Enter our glass conservatory and see a stunning array of colors, shapes, sizes, and fragrances that make up a small fraction of the orchid world. Let your imagination run wild and capture a memory that will last forever. After touring our Botanical Garden, be sure to stop by and visit our orchid Gift Shop with an extensive selection of books and beautiful blooming orchids. We also invite you to enjoy the orchid art exhibits that are displayed in our atrium.

Our Orchid Doctors are on site to talk with you about orchid health:  
Wednesday, 10 am–11:30 am Saturday and Sunday, 1 pm–4 pm

Garden Tours: Saturday 10:30 am, 12:30 pm, or by appointment.  
Times are subject to change to change without notice

AOS Botanical Garden:  
Monday–Sunday, 10 am–4:30 pm  
Orchid Gift Shop: Monday–Sunday, 10 am–4:30 pm  
Closed Thanksgiving and Christmas

**Wear this beautiful Orchid Pin with pride ... and thank you for supporting the American Orchid Society with your purchase!**



In June, the AOS introduced a new pin to benefit the Society. "The reason the pin was developed is the Affiliated Society Committee wanted to come up with a fund-raiser to help the AOS. We asked Dawn Vertrees for her help and, working together with her husband, Don, and a jewelry manufacturer in Rhode Island, this is what we came up with," says Carol Holdren, chair of the Affiliated Societies Committee and an AOS trustee.

This unique pin makes a wonderful gift and can be worn and enjoyed by any orchid enthusiast. Offer it to club members, give the pin as awards, present them in recognition of service to your club officers or give them as gifts to those you love.

The 1 1/2-inch- (3.7-cm-) wide pin is pewter with a faux rhodium finish and comes with a converter so it can be worn as an attractive necklace. The text reads, "American Orchid Society Est. 1921."

(Thank you to Dawn Vertrees, award-winning orchid jewelry artist, for her original design and assistance in manufacturing. [www.dawnvertrees.com](http://www.dawnvertrees.com))

**Cost: \$25** (price includes the pin as well as a converter to also wear this pin as an attractive necklace, as well as shipping and handling.)

**[Order online today!](#)**

## **Amateur Potpourri - Brown Sheaths in the Fall**

Mary Noble, Jacksonville, FL  
American Orchid Society Bulletin, November, 1949

About this time of the year my mail brings many questions about brown sheaths. Why does a sheath turn brown?.... Is it serious? ... How can I make it green again? ...Will it injure the buds? ...

Dried sheaths on *Cattleya (Guarianthe) skinneri*. November 10, 2009.

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A look around the greenhouse in the fall shows brown sheaths on a number of species, and unless you are prepared for this development, it can be very startling. For instance, *Cattleya skinneri*<sup>1</sup> and the fall-blooming *C. skinneri* var. *autumnalis*<sup>2</sup> both have brown sheaths now. It hasn't been many years since I became frantic because the lovely fat sheath on my *C. skinneri* var. *autumnalis* was changing color just before it was scheduled to bloom. In an effort to be helpful, I

opened the brown sheath. Inside was a short little green sheath. The buds - 8 of them - emerged from the little green sheath in due time, but rotted before attaining even half their natural size. I learned the hard way that the sheaths of *C. skinneri* var. *autumnalis* are supposed to turn brown. It's the nature of the beast. Incidentally, this *C. skinneri* var. *autumnalis* is none other than the plant we've been calling *C. deckeri*<sup>3</sup> for the past 100 years. It has been reclassified as a variety recently, but it is a little hard to get accustomed to the new name.

The species *C. skinneri* has completed its growth already though it won't bloom until March, and the sheaths are brown. Likewise, *C. aurantiaca*<sup>4</sup>, the species with the petite bright orange flowers that come along in February, has finished growing and the sheaths have changed color. This plant loves the sun, and hangs on the fence next to *Vanda* Miss Joaquim where the light is the strongest.



*C. trianae*



*C. skinneri*

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*Cattleya trianae* buds showing in a sheath that will be completely dry by the time flowering occurs. November 10, 2009.

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*Cattleya mossiae* is another one. It has been growing all summer and will now rest - if you let it - until blooming time, and the sheaths are already dark. *Cattleya trianae* is more versatile. Sheaths on bulbs that were made up early in the spring generally turn brown before blooming, but if the plant makes additional bulbs in the fall, these sheaths usually remain green during the short period before they bloom.



This is not a complete list, but just a few examples of the orchids that naturally turn their sheaths brown. The hybrids that have these species for parents generally inherit the characteristic also.

However, a brown sheath may be cause for alarm, and the way to tell is to give it the finger test. If the sheath is dry and crisp, the buds will probably be ok. But, if the sheath feels damp and soggy, it is not good. The buds cannot develop inside of a sheath that feels "mushy" to the touch.

The best remedy for this condition is to open the sheath and let it dry out. There is the chance that the buds will be damaged without their natural protection, but there is sure disaster in a damp sheath.

The double sheath is characteristic of many modern hybrids. Sometimes inexperienced growers become excited about the poor little buds having to push their way through two sheaths. But as long as the sheaths are in good condition, the buds can do it. Buds grow slower and develop better within a sheath and this protective covering should not be removed unless absolutely necessary. It is a great temptation to help the flowers along, but patience pays in better blooms.

*republished November, 2009*

### ***Here are three helpful hints when purchasing orchids***

*The AOS thanks Ned Nash for this essay*



**The Plant** - Should be in proportion to the container, have roots in the media, be clean and unblemished, turgid and medium green, free of visible pests.



**The Flowers** - Should be lustrous and held well above the foliage on a strong, well-supported spike, be unblemished and free of fungal spotting, have some buds yet to open (never, ever accept a plant with flowers open to the tip of the spike, as it is impossible to judge flower life after all flowers have opened), and have a generally appealing aspect that fits with your decor.



**The Vendor** - Is the overall aspect one of cleanliness and order? Do the production plants look good? Is the staff attentive and interested in your welfare? Can they answer the most elementary of your questions? Selecting an orchid plant isn't really that different from any other flowering plant purchase, including the satisfaction that comes with the proper decision.

**SFOS**


Don't forget the South Florida Orchid Society when you are looking for a gift for a friend or as a stocking stuffer. Our memberships make great gifts: \$30.00 for individual memberships, \$40.00 for a family (2 persons), for each additional family member there is an additional \$10.00 charge. Please contact Ellen at the office if you are interested.

**REMINDER:** Renewals have been sent out so don't forget to send your payment.

**SAVE THE DATE:** The 64<sup>th</sup> Miami International Orchid Show will be held on February 27 – March 1, 2010 at the Doubletree Miami Mart Hotel & Convention Center. Pre-sale tickets for the Show will be mailed to our members to sell in advance of the Show. Please sell these tickets to your family and friends and remember they make great Holiday gifts! The pre-sale ticket price is \$10.00; a \$5.00 savings off the \$15.00 at the door price. Pre-sale tickets also have a \$5.00 off coupon to use on a sale of \$25.00 or more at participating vendors. Please mail the proceeds from your ticket sales back to the SFOS office (10801 SW 124 St, Miami, FL 33176) as soon as possible. If you need more pre-sale tickets please contact Ellen at the SFOS office (305-255-3656 or [sforchid@bellsouth.net](mailto:sforchid@bellsouth.net)).

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