VOL. 42 ISSUE 8 August 2021

### http://www.centrallouisianaorchidsociety.org

#### **From the President**

I contacted the pastor at St. James Episcopal Church about our meeting place. He requested I check back with him in early September about the availability of the Student/Youth Building for our monthly meeting. Therefore, for now, it seems like our 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday monthly meeting could take place in September.

Please consider volunteering at Louisiana Judging Center as a clerk on August 28<sup>th</sup> at Westside Library, Alexandria starting at 11 am.

Stay tuned.

**Wilton Guillory** 



CLOS meetings canceled until meeting room becomes available.

# August meeting canceled

Central Louisiana Orchid Society Officers

President –Wilton Guillory Vice President – Al Taylor Secretary –Andrea Mattison Treasurer – Jim Barnett Director –Eron B SWROGA Director#1 Linda R SWROGA Director#2 Eron B AOS Representative –Wilton ODC Representative – Wilton ODC Representative – Andrea Mattison Conservation Rep-Jim Barnett Newsletter Editor – Connie Guillory Show& Tell –Rick Allardyce

#### LJC-July Awards

We had six entries and gave three awards to two plants.



Chiloschista parishii 'Benin' CCM/AOS 81 points. Plant Presented by Dr. Mary Mancini



Chiloschista parishii 'Benin' AM/AOS 82 points.

Plant presented by Dr. Mary Mancini



Vanda Siriporn Pink 'Julia Katherine' AM/AOS 80 points.

Plant presented by Eron Borne

# Mites on Cultivated Orchids

Paul J. Johnson, Ph.D. Insect Research Collection Box 2207A, South Dakota State University Brookings, SD 57007 Last update: 22 November 2008 taken from <u>https://www.aos.org/orchids/orchid-pests-</u> <u>diseases/mites-on-cultivated-orchids.aspx</u>

Yellow speckles or browning of leaves on your orchids? Webbing of silk on various plant parts and no spiders to be seen? Consider mites as possible culprits. Mites are tiny creatures related to spiders and ticks, and are not insects. Plant-feeding mites can be thought of as plant parasites and are often amongst the most serious pests of cultivated orchids. Common orchid cultural conditions in homes and hobby greenhouses can favor mites, and the use of pesticides removes natural predators and allows development of resistant populations.

## Sources and Identification



Mite species that are pests on cultivated orchids generally fall into two main categories, spider mites, and flat mites. The latter are also called false spider mites, but the name flat mite is preferred as it is accurately descriptive and avoids confusion with spider mites. There are other pest species of mites, but they are generally of less importance.

The most common spider mite recognized as a persistent pest of orchids is the common two-spotted spider mite (Tetranychus urticae), but the carmine spider mite (Tetranychus cinnabarinus) may be an unrecognized pest species in North America. The spider mites are a yellowish-green and usually with two large dark areas on either side of the body at about midlength. They are active species that is easily seen wandering the plants. Spider mites received their name because of the silk webbing that

they produce, not because they may appear like small spiders. The two-spotted is also known by other common names, including the "red spider mite" because of an orange-red over-wintering form. However, it is possible that in some cases the red form of the two-spotted may actually be the carmine spider mite. Both species are global, feed on many kinds of plants (polyphagous), and are easily transported on many kinds of plants.



**Two-Spotted Spider Mites** Flat mites recognized as pests on orchids are the orchid mite (Tenuipalpus orchidarum), the phalaenopsis mite (Tenuipalpus pacificus) and the oncidium mite (Brevipalpus oncidii). Tenuipalpus orchidofilo was described recently and was reported as a pest of Arundina graminifolia in Brazil, but there are apparently no reports of this species elsewhere. Three other species are recorded from orchids, Brevipalpus phoenicis (red and black mite), B. californicus (omnivorous mite), and B. russulus, but these reports are not verified and may represent misidentifications. Flat mites are native to tropical and subtropical habitats and hosts, and are moved globally by the plant trade. There are probably more species on orchids, but the taxonomy of tenuipalpid mites is poor as is accurate information about their occurrence on orchids. Flat mites are smaller than two-spotted spider mites, difficult to see without magnification, and move very slowly.



Other mites frequently found associated with orchid culture include predatory mites that feed upon pest mites. There are many innocuous mite species that feed on fungi, bacteria, and decaying organic materials. There are also a number of beneficial mites that are predators on plant-feeding mites, insect pests, and other critters. Oribatid mites that look like tiny round, dark-colored beetles feed on fungi on plant parts and decaying organic materials. A large diversity of yellowish to light brown mites are frequent in potting media and may occasionally be found on plants. These are usually large, >1.0 mm in length and easily seen.

The two-spotted spider mite is probably the most important mite pest of cultivated orchids in all areas, but flat mites are very common and are often not diagnosed properly. Both two-spotted and flat mites can become problems in greenhouses and homes. Because of the small size of these mites, and great similarity among related species, their accurate identification is difficult and often requires the help of an experienced entomologist with a high quality microscope. In general, two-spotted's and flat's are small sized, with two-spotted's reaching a grand 0.5 mm in length and flat's reaching a mere 0.3 mm in length. All of these mites are pale yellowish-green to orange-red color and often with two or more black areas visible through their integument. All bear conspicuous pale hairs. Two-spotted spider mites spin networks of silk webbing that protects their colonies from predators and helps maintain high humidity near the leaf surface. This webbing is also protective against pesticide sprays. Flat mites do not spin this webbing.

Typically, mites are always present in low numbers. This makes managing cultural conditions important for mite control. Mites will readily move between plants, float on air currents, be introduced on new plants or those brought indoors from the garden, and the eggs or resting stages may be in potting media. Colonization of your plants by mites can be done at any time, but severe problems may not show themselves until favorable environmental conditions are present. In the home and hobby greenhouse spider mites will readily move to orchids from other plants.

## Damage



All of these mites may be found on a wide variety of orchids. In addition, the two-spotted spider mite is known to feed on hundreds of different plant species. The larvae, nymphs, and the adults all feed by puncturing cell walls and sucking cell contents, particularly chloroplasts. The killing of individual cells or groups of cells produces the transparent, yellow, or tan patchwork of damage that indicates mite infestation. Feeding may be done on many plant tissues,

but mostly on leaves and buds and can cause these to drop prematurely. Heavy feeding produces a patchy chlorotic appearance to leaves, and portions of or the entire leaf may turn dry and brown. This damage generally reduces the vigor of plants and may kill plants. Mites may also transmit certain viruses.

Flat mites often feed on the upper surfaces of leaves and this will create a pock-marked appearance from empty and collapsed leaf cells. This type of damage is particularly easy to see on infested Phalaenopsis leaves. Flat mite feeding on thin leaves, especially the underside, is similar to the stippling caused by spider mites, but there is no webbing. Mite damage is permanent, so it is best to manage mites at low populations than to experience heavy infestations. Thin or soft-leaved orchids are more susceptible to mite damage than those with thicker leaves, but no species or variety is immune.

## Life Cycle

Both two-spotted spider mites and flat mites have five life stages: egg, larva, protonymph and deutonymph (or nymphs), and adult. The larva has only six legs, but the nymphs and adults have eight legs. Eggs are laid by females on the surface of plant structures and are often hidden in crevices. Eggs and larvae are very tiny and are nearly impossible to discern without magnification. A good handlens is useful for seeing even the adults.

Developmental rates of mites are dependent upon temperature. In general, the higher the temperature the shorter the life cycle. The egg may take upwards of three weeks to hatch for flat mites, but only 1-2 days for two-spotted spider mites, at standard indoor temperatures. While larval and nymphal stages usually take 5-6 weeks to reach adulthood for flat mites, it may take only 1-3 weeks for two-spotted spider mites. Optimum temperatures for development are 30-32°C (86-90°F). Both kinds of mites will have many generations per year under favorable conditions. While flat mites may take 6-9 weeks to complete a generation, the two-spotted spider mite can complete a generation in as little as 5 days in optimum conditions. Like other orchid pests the overlapping of generations creates a significant mite management problem.

## Management and Control

Pesty mites tend to increase in numbers during "rain-less" periods due to the lack of rain, fog-drip or other sources of free water on plants. It is the physical presence and force of impact of water that help keep plant-feeding mite populations low. Spider and flat mites require high relative humidity and occupy a thin static air layer next to plant integument. Under `normal' conditions the mites are widely dispersed on and among plants. In dry conditions, the mites concentrate in the most protected areas

in the static air layer next to the plant and between hairs. Further, the silk spun by spider mites acts as a tent to deflect air flow and hold humidity close to the plant. Low humidity and lack of free moisture is also bad for predatory mites and insects, important natural control factors for spider and flate mites. In-doors and in greenhouses, spider and flat mites become serious problems during the winter under the combination of reduced overhead watering and absence of predators, and use of insecticides. In the home, typical gentle misting methods simply are not effective on mites when dry air is circulating from furnaces and heaters. Overall, it is a rather delicate balance between high relative humidity, free moisture, a dry air source, breeziness, temperature, and the presence of predators that keeps mites well managed.

Two-spotted spider mites and flat mites are small and relatively delicate creatures. The easiest method for keeping mites under control is to regularly spray, or syringe, the plants with water. In the home placing your plants in a shower or using a sink sprayer is very effective. Mites are readily washed from the plants or are damaged by a heavy spray. In a greenhouse regular spraying and misting is effective.

Biological control of mites is feasible even in small hobby greenhouses. Numerous predatory insects attack mites, including lacewings, ladybeetles, and wasps. The use of predatory mites is particularly successful in greenhouses. Most of the predator mites that are sold by suppliers are from several genera. Phytoseiulus persimilis is a commonly used and readily available species. Of course, the use of insecticides and miticides when biological control agents are active is self-defeating, and mite problems can be exacerbated by use of general insecticides.

## **Rubbing Alcohol**

Light infestations restricted to one or a few plants can usually be treated with household products. When possible, immediately isolate infested plants from others to prevent the mites from moving amongst them. Probably the most popular home remedy is to spray plants with a mixture of isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol and liquid mild dish detergent, such as Ivory. Do not use other alcohols, such as ethanol or methanol, as these will penetrate the plant tissues and cause considerable damage! The concentration of the isopropyl seems to make little difference, the common 70% concentration available in stores is satisfactory. Alcohol treatment is effective against all the life stages of mites, except eggs.

A potential problem with alcohol treatment is the rapid evaporation of alcohol causing cooling of plant tissues. Especially with air movement that increases evaporative cooling, this chilling may over-cool tissues and create zones of dead cells that can become necrotic with bacterial or fungal infection. On

warm days or in a breeze consider blotting residual alcohol with a tissue instead of permitting it to evaporate off the plant. Alcohol and detergent solutions can also damage delicate buds and blooms, so caution is urged for prized plants.

Repotting is not very effective against mites. However, with an extreme infestation it may be worth repotting a plant as eggs and resting adults may be in the growing media.

Horticultural oil, neem oil, mineral oil, and insecticidal soaps are readily available, inexpensive, and effective against mites. Oil solutions smother the mites so a complete coverage of all sprayed plants is essential. These oils are mixed with water and usually a plant-safe detergent or commercial spreader-sticker should be used for enhancing the effectiveness of the oil. The main caution with these oil solutions is that they should never be applied to plants on hot days (>85°F/29°C) or in direct sunlight, as to prevent burning of tissues. Leave the plant in shade until the application has dried. Some plants or parts, such as buds and blooms, are sensitive to oils so due care and consideration is urged.

Insecticidal soaps are usually solutions of a synthetic pyrethrin and potassium salts of fatty acids, otherwise known as soaps. Pyrethrins are synthetic analogs of pyrethrum, the natural extract from certain Asteraceae, particularly certain species of Chrysanthemum. Caution is urged with so-called "safe" insecticidal soaps as some plants are sensitive, particularly tender new tissues. Piperonyl butoxide is a common enhancer of pyrethrins but can cause allergies in some people and may affect plants, too. Some non-orchid ornamentals will drop leaves and abort flowers when sprayed with insecticidal soaps, so again caution is urged with prized orchids.

Because the life cycle of mites is so short and there are overlapping of generations, to bring a serious problem under control you may need to do treatments every 1-3 weeks. The time period between control efforts will depend upon the growing conditions, especially temperature: greater frequency in a warm greenhouse, less inside a house. As with any pest, persistence is a key to success and correlating the control method to the mite species is important for effective management. Cultural conditions are a key to managing mite populations.

## Insecticides and Acaricides

Persistent populations of mite or infestation in many plants usually demand the need for synthetic pesticides. Mites are unrelated to insects and most common insecticides are not effective against mites. Pesticides designed for mite control are called miticides or acaricides. There are few miticides specifically registered for use on orchids, but there are many miticides for ornamental plants in

general and several are available as inexpensive home-and-garden solutions. Miticide formulations not labeled for ornamental plants are often mixed with solvents that aide in the application of the active ingredient for specific purposes. These solvents, not necessarily the miticide itself, often produce phytotoxicity and may seriously damage or kill plants. Thus, never use any chemical that is not specifically labeled for ornamental plants.

Common insecticides are not effective against mites, though some do have some weak suppressive action, but will kill mite predators. Acephate (Orthene), malathion, and disulfoton (Di-syston) are labeled for mites but are not very effective. Resistance by mites to pesticides is a serious problem and is in part due to the excessive use and weak action from common insecticides. Dimethoate, diazinon, and chlorpyrifos were recently removed from the market in the U.S. for non-commercial applications due to excessive and careless use causing some serious health and environmental problems.

There are many miticides available for ornamental plants, but some are not tested on orchids, and others are generally too expensive or otherwise not readily available for the small-collection grower. Effective miticides for ornamental use include avermectin (Avid), bifenthrin (Talstar), dienochlor (Pentac), fenbutatin-oxide (Vendex), and fluvalinate (Mavrik). Fenbutatin-oxide is mixed with acephate and sold in home-and-garden formulations. Avermectin is probably the least toxic of these chemicals to people and pets.

Of course, always follow label directions and never exceed the minimum recommended concentration given in mixing directions! Recommended solutions are based on extensive testing for selected pests and plants. Orchids are sensitive to many chemicals, particularly under direct sunlight or high heat, and while certain species may not react to a given formulation others may, so your own testing on plants before general application is recommended.

Home orchid keepers that need to apply miticides during inclement weather need special care for applications. If you cannot spray out of doors, place your plant(s) inside a large plastic bag (remove the bag after the spray has settled!) and let the plant ventilate where the fumes will not be wafted around the house or work area.

## **Final Considerations**

Heavy infestations of mites, especially on many plants may require extensive control methods. Since the damage done by mites is permanent, constant management of the population more effective than control of a major infestation. On the extreme side if you have a plant showing signs of severe change or general decline from mites you may have to seriously consider destroying that plant, as the likelihood of rejuvenating that plant may not justify the expense and effort of continued treatments. Too, destruction of a sick plant can be used to justify the purchase of a new and healthier plant!

If you are battling mites for long periods of time (e.g., >2 months) and have been using the same miticide then you likely developed a resistant population of mites. Remember the short generation times of mites. The best resolution to this is to change methods and chemicals frequently; that is do not use the same chemical mix more than 3-4 times sequentially. After isolating infested plants give them a thorough application of something different from what you have been using. Resistance is not a problem with alcohol, oils, and soaps as these suffocate or dessicate the mites.

Generally, never use a miticide not labeled for ornamental plants. Be thorough. Prophylactic use of miticides is tempting but does little good as it is a waste of chemical and money, and allows resistant mites to develop.

Orchid growers with an entomological penchant and desiring detailed information are referred to the excellent book Mites of Greenhouses: identification, biology and control, by Zhi-Qiang Zhang (2003), CABI Publishing, Oxon (UK) and Cambridge (USA), ISBN 0 85199 590 X.

Image Credits: False spider mite and spider mite images are from the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service and USDA-ARS, respectively. Other images are those of the author.



A severe infestation of mites has

stripped the chlorophyl from this Phalaenopsis leaf. Photo © Greg Allikas



#### 2021 AUGUST AOS Corner – for Affiliated Societies

The AOS Corner is for society representatives and newsletter editors: Orchid societies are welcome to reproduce the AOS Corner completely, or in part, in their society publications.

We encourage use of the AOS website by all members. http://www.aos.org

https://www.aos.org/about-us/affiliated-societies.aspx

#### **Got Questions?**

#### Q. So what does the Affiliated Societies Committee do?

**A.** We have several duties assigned to us by the AOS Board of Trustees. We are the interface between affiliated orchid societies, AOS Reps and the AOS. We assist societies by sending out information for their board, their membership, and their newsletters. We receive information, concerns, and suggestions, and forward it to the appropriate staff person or committee. If your society does not have contact with the AOS please let us know and we will set up the necessary communications.

Check out this <u>question-and-answer</u> page on the AOS website. It gives you more insight into the role of the Affiliated Societies Committee. <u>https://www.aos.org/about-us/affiliated-societies/affiliated-society-faq.aspx</u>

## We Are Your National Volunteers Let us Know What We Can Do For You

#### Valued Members and Volunteers

An organization is only as good as its members. The AOS is deeply indebted to the many talented and dedicated volunteers who give their time and service to encourage a widespread interest in orchids. They advance the mission of the AOS more than they will ever know. *Please contact any of us if you would like to join our committee.* 

#### Affiliated Societies Committee

affiliated\_societies@aos.org Denise Lucero, Chair Chad Brinkerhuff, Lois Dauelsberg, Edna Hamilton, Eileen Hector (vice-chair), Candace Hollinger, Donna Petitt, Graham Ramsey, Alex Rodriguez Staff liaison: Naya Marcano



#### Watch For It!

OrchidMarketplace.com rolls out August 1st!

We are pleased to announce the launch of <u>The Orchid Marketplace</u><sup>™</sup> This curated collection of the world's top orchid, and related product vendors will provide discounts for ALL active AOS members! This new, improved program will replace the Orchid Source Directory. It is designed to be mobile friendly, and fully searchable by keyword/genus, location or featured products. <u>https://marketplace.aos.org/</u>

Encourage your society members to become AOS members now to take advantage of this new member benefit. You will want to browse this program often to look for Orchids, Jewelry, Books, Potting Media and more!

#### AFFILIATED SOCIETY BONUS EARN AOS MEMBERSHIP EXTENSIONS FOR YOUR SOCIETY AOS MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Individual society membership and AOS Membership are not the same. Although affiliated, each requires separate membership dues and benefits may vary.

Affiliated Societies can earn a one-month extension on their AOS society membership for each new individual AOS member they recruit. If you start now, with twelve new AOS members, your Affiliated Society can obtain a FULL FREE YEAR OF AOS membership! Be sure and advise new members to note their society affiliation in the comments section online at checkout or on the <u>printed</u> <u>membership form</u>. <u>https://www.aos.org/AOS/media/Content-Images/PDFs/AOSJoinForm2020.pdf</u>

AOS Representatives, please remember to let your society members know that we want to sweeten the deal and give them every possible reason to join AOS today! Once they become an American Orchid Society member, they have considerably more resources available to help make orchid growing enjoyable and successful. Though it is a highlight, there is more to membership than a magazine subscription. <u>https://secure.aos.org/join/new-membership</u>

#### **ADULT MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS**

- US Gold Membership / US Joint Gold Membership for residents with mailing addresses in the United States. Monthly print and digital magazine included.
- Canada & Mexico Gold Membership / Canada & Mexico Joint Gold Membership for residents of Canada or Mexico. Monthly
  print and digital magazine included.
- International Gold Membership / International Joint Gold Membership for residents outside the United States, Canada, or Mexico. Monthly print and digital magazine included.
- Silver Membership / Joint Silver Membership / International Silver Membership Monthly digital online publications.

#### YOUTH MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS

Youth members must be under the age of 25. Valid proof of age is required at time of application.

- **US Youth Gold Membership** for youth with mailing addresses in the United States. Monthly print and digital magazine included.
- Canada & Mexico Youth Gold Membership for youth residing in Canada or Mexico. Monthly print and digital magazine included.
- International Youth Gold Membership for youth residing outside the United States, Canada, or Mexico. Monthly print and digital magazine included.
- Youth Silver Membership Monthly digital online publications.

There is sure to be a membership level to fit the needs of each society member.

#### **Striving for Excellence**

The American Orchid Society has long recognized those that have served the organization above and beyond a simple membership. Outside the quality and cultural awards granted to our members and their orchid growing excellence, such as HCCs, AMs, FCCs, CCMs and CCEs; there are also awards granted to individual members or groups that work tirelessly behind the scenes to support and further the mission of the AOS. Traditionally, these <u>special awards</u> are publicly acknowledged twice a year at our <u>Meeting of the Members</u>. <u>https://www.aos.org/about-us/medal-award-recipients.aspx</u>

## **Don't Miss the Celebration of a Lifetime**





AMERICAN ORCHID SOCIETY + 1921 TO 2021 In form of land land land in the land

#### Get Published in ORCHIDS Magazine

Have you got a great idea that works in your indoor or outdoor orchid collection? Are you keeping track of a group of seedlings and watching them grow up with different attributes like siblings in a family? Do you have an innovative way to display your collection in a contained space? Don't be shy. Write about your experiences and submit to Orchids. Submissions may be made at any time. Follow the <u>submission</u> guidelines. <u>https://www.aos.org/about-us/article-submissions.aspx</u>

Don't forget your AOS Centennial themed entry for the <u>Dillon-Peterson Essay!</u> The winner receives a cash prize, publication in Orchids, and a certificate suitable for framing.

Deadline for Dillon-Peterson Essay submission is November 30, 2021 https://www.aos.org/about-us/article-submissions/essay-contest-winners.aspx

Submit all entries to the Dillon/Peterson Memorial Essay Prize: Ron McHatton - American Orchid Society at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden PO Box 565477, Miami, FL 33256 Email: rmchatton@aos.org

Going to brag a bit here. Your newsletter editor won this competition in 2015. I didn't come to orchids naturally. I was attracted to them by the man who decided to grow them and then become an American Orchid Society Judge (my dear husband).

## Phrases That Confuse Me the Most

Winner of the 2015 Gordon W. Dillon/Richard C. Peterson Essay Prize BY EILEEN HECTOR

Preface-

To some folks, growing orchids is serious business. There is no doubt that there is always more to learn whichever type of grower you may be. To those of us who grow purely for pleasure, we have a need to make learning fun.

A phrase is defined as a group of two or more words that express a single idea but do not usually form a complete sentence. In the orchid world, my dictionary has many words that do not make a complete sentence or even complete sense.



2015 – Phrases That Confuse Me the Most and What They Really Mean

This was a fun write about my journey to understand the language of orchids.

We must write what we know. Step back and examine your own orchid journey and write what you know for the 2021 competition.

#### **ORCHIDS 101 - A GOOD PLACE TO START**

#### **Basic Orchid Culture**

Knowing which orchid you are trying to grow is your key to managing cultural requirements. Orchids, like all plants, need a balance of light, air, water, and food to grow and flower well. <u>https://www.aos.org/orchids/orchid-care/orchids-101.aspx</u>

#### OrchidPro

Are your society members entering orchids for monthly judging at the nearest AOS Judging Center? Has anyone out there thought about becoming an orchid judge? Thrilled at the thought of winning awards, or seeing award winning orchids every month of the year?





Take in the view! More than one view is offered on many of the orchids photographed for the OrchidPro awards database.

Coelogyne South Carolina 'Matthew's Mind Melt' AM/AOS (85 points) (Coelogyne Burfordiense x Coelogyne pandurata)



#### Award No: 20213354

Date: Jun 19, 2021

Twenty bright, light green flowers on two arched inflorescences and seven buds on one developing inflorescence; sepals and petals lanceolate; lip ruffled heavily overlaid contrasting black, side lobes veined black on interior, fine light green calli; substance firm; texture matte.

Event: Great Lakes Center Monthly Judging (Ann Arbor, MI) Judging Center: Great Lakes Judging Center Exhibitor: Dennis Seffernick

Photographer: Lynn O'Shaughnessey

It's all possible! Here are some of the <u>rules to live</u> by if you are thinking about judging or exhibiting orchids. <u>https://www.aos.org/orchid-awards-judging/judging-handbook.aspx</u>

Among the goals of the American Orchid Society (AOS) is the promotion of knowledge and appreciation of orchids by the public, as well as the education of the public relative to orchids. The AOS Judging System, as implemented by this <u>Handbook</u>, is designed to support these goals by providing a process to its members, affiliated societies, and orchid growers everywhere (both domestic and international) by which their orchids can be evaluated and judged for AOS awards. AOS judges provide this service through regularly scheduled judging sessions at the various AOS judging centers and additional sites, at AOS-sanctioned shows, and at other AOS-sanctioned events, such as outreach judging and orchid-related symposia. This process is designed to recognize quality orchid plants and flowers, exceptional achievements in orchid cultivation, and significant advancements in breeding, hybridization, and artistic design. It also seeks to increase public awareness of the vast variety and diversity of orchid species found all over the world. All orchid growers are encouraged to take advantage of this service.

# Webinars-Coming Attractions!









| When      | August 05, 2021<br>8:30pm EDT<br>Thursday                     | August 18, 2021<br>8:30pm EDT<br>Wednesday                           | September 02, 2021<br>8:30pm EDT<br>Thursday                  | September 16, 2021<br>8:30pm EDT<br>Thursday  |
|-----------|---|--|---|---|
| Topic     | Greenhouse Chat<br>(Orchid Q&A)<br>Send in your<br>Questions! | Leafless Orchids   | Greenhouse Chat<br>(Orchid Q&A)<br>Send in your<br>Questions! | Sarcochilus<br>Australian Miniatures  |
| Presenter | Ron McHatton<br>Chief Education<br>and Science<br>Officer     | <b>Dr. Mary Mancini</b><br>AOS Judge,<br>Louisiana Judging<br>Center | Ron McHatton<br>Chief Education<br>and Science Officer        | Jean Allen-Ikeson<br>JC National Education<br>Coordinator, AOS<br>Editorial Board Chair |

#### **REGISTRATION REQUIRED:** http://www.aos.org/orchids/webinars.aspx

Cannot make it on the scheduled date or time? No need to worry. Register anyhow! Webinar announcements are posted to Facebook, Instagram and in the AOS Corner of your Affiliated Society's newsletter. We digitize the webinars and they are available to view at your leisure. GREENHOUSE CHAT Webinars are indexed by topic for future viewing. Send your Greenhouse Chat questions and photos to: greenhousechat@aos.org

#### **DID YOU KNOW?**

Besides the Greenhouse Chat webinars, the AOS has helpful hints for beginners on the <u>webpage</u> titled Orchid Care. <u>https://www.aos.org/orchids/orchid-care.aspx</u>

# ORCHIDS CONTENTS August 2016 Volume 85 Number 8

#### Reprint: TOM'S MONTHLY CHECKLIST - AUGUST: THE MONTH OF STIMULANTS

#### By: Thomas Mirenda

In the hazy, hot, and humid dog days of summer, it can be difficult to motivate ourselves to even budge from the air-conditioned comfort of our dwellings. Sipping a delicious iced coffee as I write this, I am nervously contemplating how I will manage to get anything else done today. Then I remember one simple truth, if I do not get my work done, there are consequences! And if I am being honest, I genuinely do not want to let anyone down. I want to pull my weight and contribute to the greater good. All of us do. A wise gardener once said: "The lazier you are, the more diligently you should weed." Were truer words ever spoken? While this propensity of weeds to get out of hand in the summer is obvious to conscientious gardeners, this truism carries over into so many other aspects of our lives. Not keeping up with work, housekeeping, tending to relationships and other tasks can lead to impenetrable patches of thorny weeds in our lives. Having made these kinds of lapses multiple times in my own affairs, I have learned there is no greater stimulant than the knowledge of what could happen if I do not buckle down, focus, and get to work. This is very true in orchid collections too. Despite our best intentions, in our desire to acquire more and more plants we often start to fall behind in the tasks necessary to give all those wonderful plants the care they deserve. For me, a beautifully grown and cared for plant, even out of bloom, is an incredibly beautiful thing. A well-grown orchid exudes vigor and strength and makes me happy inside. There is nothing quite so stimulating as a thriving plant, especially when it is your own personal effort that made it so.

**SUMMER FUN** If you have the luxury of an outside space to summer your plants, chances are they have started to send roots outside their pot rims by this month, particularly cattleyas, oncidiums and dendrobiums. While some find this to be unsightly, generally it means your plants are growing and progressing. Aerial roots are natural and indicate that the plant is benefiting from the natural humidity and air movement it gets when placed in just the right microclimate outside. I like to think that those roots indicate the plant is enjoying summer camp, and will return in the fall healthier, happier, stronger, and just plain better off for the experience.

**SUMMER STRESSES** Not all plants are made for the rigors of summer camp. Phalaenopsis, for example, might enjoy the summer weather, but should never be left outside in the rain or under messy trees that drop debris in their crowns. On a hot summer night, this is a sure way to cultivate crown rot (certainly no one's goal). Similar problems can occur on paphiopedilums. Even orchids such as coelogynes, dendrochilums and lycastes, which are often in active growth this time of year, need some protection from overhead watering and debris falling into their newest growths. Often funnel-like until those newest leaves unfurl, it can be such a disappointment to see those tender new growths suffer or die back from bacterial or fungal pathogens.

**FEEL THE HEAT** While most lowland tropical orchids such as cattleyas, vandas and dendrobiums are enjoying the increase in temperatures and putting on weight in fattening pseudobulbs, it is important to feed your various orchids according to their needs. This is always a judgment call, but it is almost always common sense to fertilize plants that are growing rapidly. It can be tempting though, to overfeed struggling plants, thinking they will do better if you do, but this is generally not advisable. Summer heat might actually shut down metabolism in heat-sensitive plants, leaving dangerous salts in your potting mix that do more harm than good. Touch your plants' leaves on a hot a day, if they are cool then they are out of danger. If they feel hot to the touch, they are likely overstressed and should be moved inside to an air-conditioned windowsill.

BEAUTY AS MOTIVATION There tend to be a lot fewer orchids in flower this month, because so many need cooler nights to bloom

well, so you might not get as much satisfaction from your collection as you might in the fall, winter, or spring. If the rigors of keeping an orchid collection start to wear you down this summer, break out the orchid books and get some pictorial inspiration for the glories to come later in the season. Growing orchids is about patience, nurturing and virtue. Like any other relationship, you need to commit for the long term if you expect great things from your plants. Imagine how beautiful those plants will be next year, in five years, in 30 years, if you do a few simple things for them every year. Now, that is stimulating!

— Tom Mirenda has been working professionally with orchids for over three decades and is the past chair of the AOS Conservation Committee. He is an AOS accredited judge in the Hawaii Center (email: <u>biophiliak@qmail.com</u>).



If you would like to spotlight an issue or share news with other affiliated societies, we welcome your input. Let us know what you would like to see in this newsletter! If there is something within your society that is working extremely well – let's share it here. If there is something you could use help with – let us know. By chance, another affiliate may be able to offer a solution, or want to try something you have achieved. Your contributions are critical to bringing fresh, timely content to this publication each month. Please send your questions, solutions and submissions for the AOS Corner to <u>eileenh@aos.org</u> or <u>askmasc@verizon.net</u>.



Thanks for meeting me down at the Corner! *Eileen Hector, AOS* Corner - <u>Affiliated Societies Newsletter Editor</u>

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#### Native Orchid of the Month—August

*Platanthera integra* (yellow fringeless orchid)

Yellow fringeless orchid, Platanthera integra, found in southern New Jersey and eastern North Carolina south

to Florida and Texas and north to Tennessee, has orange-yellow flowers with a fringeless lip. It flowers from July to September and it found on pine barrens, peaty depressions in pine savannas, and wet sandy woods.

*Platanthera integra* is a medium-sized terrestrial orchid up to 18 inches tall and bearing a flower head 3 inches or smaller in height.

The small yellow to orange flowers have slightly lacerated edges (but not the deep fringing seen in other *Platantheras*) and are packed in a very dense cluster atop a fluted, blue-green stem. The leaves (one to three) start out rather long for the small plants at the base of the plants, but are quickly reduced to





the size of the floral bracts somewhat below the actual flower head.

Although small, the flowers are quite conspicuous. Perhaps the best time to look for these is in the late afternoon, when the sunlight itself is golden. Under such conditions, the flowers of these orchids have been described as looking

like small torches having been lit within their grassland setting.

*Platanthera integra* is considered globally vulnerable and is rare throughout parts of its range.



