

February 2024

Issue 122 Volume 18

NUTMEG STATE ORCHID SOCIETY

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2008 - 2024

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Presidents Message

Feb 2023 Newsletter President's Message –

Winter got the better of us in January with our meeting being snowed out, but Feb is looking sunny!

It's time to look toward our March show and all that it entails. It takes the proverbial village to make a society show work and I hope that you all will take an active involvement in its success. The board cannot do it all on our own. Even small contributions of time make a difference and I thank you in advance for your participation. A successful show provides a substantial portion of the funds the society has to provide events and opportunities to our members.

Please consider signing up for one or more of the teams needed to make our show work. Sign up sheets will be available at the Feb meeting.

And take good care of your blooming plant babies as many should be spiking or flowering already. We need those beauties for our upcoming shows. Whether you have 1 or 100 hundred plants, all are beautiful and worth sharing with fellow enthusiasts.

Wishing you all health and happiness in the coming year

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Ginna

NSOS financial data is available to members upon request. Send your inquiries to our Treasurer, Barbara Putko, bwputko@comcast.net

Advertising in our NSOS Newsletter

Advertising is now open to members and businesses. The following rates apply: \$10/month business card size ad. ¼ page \$25, ½ page \$50. Members would get \$5 & \$10 off these rates respectively. A four-line word ad for members would be \$2. Contact Walter Doehr if interested and send your check to Tom Mierzejewski, our Treasurer.

2024 Schedule of Meetings & Events

Feb. 3, 2024 - AOS Judging Center Tower Hill Botanic Garden, Classroom C, 11 French Dr, Boylston, MA 01505

Feb. 4, 2024– Speaker = Kim Feddersen of Fair Orchids will be our speaker and his topic is: "Cymbidiums - an overview of the more important species, hybrid types and cultural requirements This month's NSOS meeting will be held in-person at the Farmington Senior Center. Masks will be optional. Refreshments will be provided. Farmington Senior Center, 321 New Britain Ave., Unionville, CT @ 12:30 pm – 5 pm

Feb. 17, 2024 - AOS Judging Center - Flat Rock Brook Nature Center, at 443 Van Nostrand Avenue, Englewood NJ, 07631

Feb. 25 - 26, 2024 - Amherst Orchid Society Show & Sale

Mar. 1 - 3, 2024 - New Hampshire Orchid Society Show & Sale

Mar. 2, 2024 - AOS Judging Center Tower Hill Botanic Garden, Classroom C, 11 French Dr, Boylston, MA 01505

Mar. 3, 2024– Speaker = Sandy Myhalik & Ginna Plude Topic: Upcoming NSOS Prep - This month's NSOS meeting will be held in-person at the Farmington Senior Center. Masks will be optional. Refreshments will be provided. Farmington Senior Center, 321 New Britain Ave., Unionville, CT @ 12:30 pm – 5 pm

March 16 – 17, 2024 “Come See Our Bloomers” Show & Sale - The West Hartford Meeting & Conference Center 50 South Main Street West Hartford, CT

Mer. 16, 2024 - AOS Judging Center - Flat Rock Brook Nature Center, at 443 Van Nostrand Avenue, Englewood NJ, 07631

Apr. 6, 2024 - AOS Judging Center Tower Hill Botanic Garden, Classroom C, 11 French Dr, Boylston, MA 01505

Apr. 7, 2024– Speaker = TBD Topic: Beginner Basics This month's NSOS meeting will be held in-person at the Farmington Senior Center. Masks will be optional. Refreshments will be provided. Farmington Senior Center, 321 New Britain Ave., Unionville, CT @ 12:30 pm – 5 pm

Apr. 20, 2024 - AOS Judging Center - Flat Rock Brook Nature Center, at 443 Van Nostrand Avenue, Englewood NJ, 07631

May 4, 2024 - AOS Judging Center Tower Hill Botanic Garden, Classroom C, 11 French Dr, Boylston, MA 01505

May 7, 2024– Speaker = ." Mark & Mary Wendell, Topic: “Orchids of the Amazon”-This month's NSOS meeting will be held in-person at the Farmington Senior Center. Masks will be optional. Refreshments will be provided. Farmington Senior Center, 321 New Britain Ave., Unionville, CT @ 12:30 pm – 5 pm

May 18, 2024 - AOS Judging Center - Flat Rock Brook Nature Center, at 443 Van Nostrand Avenue, Englewood NJ, 07631

June 1, 2024 - AOS Judging Center Tower Hill Botanic Garden, Classroom C, 11 French Dr, Boylston, MA 01505

June 2, 2024– Speaker = TBD Topic: TBD - This month's NSOS meeting will be held in-person at the Farmington Senior Center. Masks will be optional. Refreshments will be provided. Farmington Senior Center, 321 New Britain Ave., Unionville, CT @ 12:30 pm – 5 pm

June 15, 2024 - AOS Judging Center - Flat Rock Brook Nature Center, at 443 Van Nostrand Avenue, Englewood NJ, 07631

July 6, 2024 - AOS Judging Center Tower Hill Botanic Garden, Classroom C, 11 French Dr, Boylston, MA 01505

July 20, 2024 - AOS Judging Center - Flat Rock Brook Nature Center, at 443 Van Nostrand Avenue, Englewood NJ, 07631

Aug. 3, 2024 - AOS Judging Center Tower Hill Botanic Garden, Classroom C, 11 French Dr, Boylston, MA 01505

Aug. 17, 2024 - AOS Judging Center - Flat Rock Brook Nature Center, at 443 Van Nostrand Avenue, Englewood NJ, 07631

Sept. 7, 2024 - AOS Judging Center Tower Hill Botanic Garden, Classroom C, 11 French Dr, Boylston, MA 01505

Sept. 8, 2024– Speaker = TBD Topic: TBD - This month's NSOS meeting will be held in-person at the Farmington Senior Center. Masks will be optional. Refreshments will be provided. Farmington Senior Center, 321 New Britain Ave., Unionville, CT @ 12:30 pm – 5 pm

Sept. 21, 2024 - AOS Judging Center - Flat Rock Brook Nature Center, at 443 Van Nostrand Avenue, Englewood NJ, 07631

Oct 5, 2024 - AOS Judging Center Tower Hill Botanic Garden, Classroom C, 11 French Dr, Boylston, MA 01505

Oct. 6, 2024– Speaker = TBD Topic: TBD - This month's NSOS meeting will be held in-person at the Farmington Senior Center. Masks will be optional. Refreshments will be provided. Farmington Senior Center, 321 New Britain Ave., Unionville, CT @ 12:30 pm – 5 pm

Oct. 19, 2024 - AOS Judging Center - Flat Rock Brook Nature Center, at 443 Van Nostrand Avenue, Englewood NJ, 07631

Nov. 2, 2024 - AOS Judging Center Tower Hill Botanic Garden, Classroom C, 11 French Dr, Boylston, MA 01505

Nov. 3, 2024– Speaker = TBD Topic: TBD - This month's NSOS meeting will be held in-person at the Farmington Senior Center. Masks will be optional. Refreshments will be provided. Farmington Senior Center, 321 New Britain Ave., Unionville, CT @ 12:30 pm – 5 pm

Nov. 16, 2024 - AOS Judging Center - Flat Rock Brook Nature Center, at 443 Van Nostrand Avenue, Englewood NJ, 07631

Dec. 1, 2024– Holiday Party - This month's NSOS meeting will be held in-person at Lions Club Camp Happy Hill, 87 W Avon Rd, Unionville Ct. Masks will be optional. Refreshments will be provided. Farmington Senior Center, 321 New Britain Ave., Unionville, CT @ 12:30 pm – 5 pm

Dec. 7, 2024 - AOS Judging Center Tower Hill Botanic Garden, Classroom C, 11 French Dr, Boylston, MA 01505

Dec. 21, 2024 - AOS Judging Center - Flat Rock Brook Nature Center, at 443 Van Nostrand Avenue, Englewood NJ, 07631

Monthly Checklist for January and February



Cattleya trianae 'Mary Fennel' HCC/AOS is a good example of this winter-blooming species.

Cattleya

Watering and fertilizing will be at a minimum, as will potting. Be on the lookout for senescing sheaths on your winter-into-spring bloomers. Careful removal of the dying sheaths will still allow buds to develop without the danger of condensation-induced rot. Low light will lead to weak spikes, so, and as noted above, staking is critical. If you have a chance to get out to nurseries, there may still be a chance to acquire good plants in sheath for spring bloom. Getting them now not only ensures that you'll have them, but allows them to acclimate to your conditions and bloom at their best.

Cymbidium

We are well into the flowering season now. Outdoor growers should be cautious of freezing temperatures. Damage starts to occur below 30 F. Be diligent about tying the inflorescences for best arrangement of the flowers. Also watch closely for slugs and snails. If weather is quite wet, protect the plants from the rain and this will help to reduce the risk of botrytis spotting.

Lycaste

The most glorious of all orchids, Lycaste, will be moving toward their flowering season. Make sure the palm-like leaves do not interfere with the emerging inflorescences. Tying them loosely together often is helpful. Some growers cut the leaves off at the pseudobulb, but this removes part of the attractiveness of this elegant orchid. Resist picking up the plant to inspect those

beautiful buds and then setting it down in all different directions as the flower buds will be forced to re-orient themselves to the light source each time and will not open as nicely as they should. Keep plants a little drier during the shorter days.

Odontoglossums

Odontoglossums and their intergeneric hybrids offer a great splash of color now. Though once thought of as being difficult to grow and requiring cool temperatures due to the emphasis on odontoglossum breeding, the new intergeneric hybrids made using *Oncidium* and *Brassia*, for example, are just the opposite. These plants are quite content in more intermediate conditions. New growths generally emerge in the spring, later forming beautiful plump pseudobulbs. Look for the flower spikes to emerge from the inner sheath of the pseudobulb. If your plant's pseudobulbs are shriveled, then the plants have been kept too dry or too wet. Inspect the roots to determine which condition prevailed. If the lead pseudobulb is large, plump and green (and back bulbs are shriveled) but no flower spike is evident, the plants may have been kept too dry.

Paphiopedilum

The standard *Paphiopedilum insigne*-derived hybrids, which are called "bull dogs" and "toads," are at their peak. Unlike most other orchids, they can even be potted while in bud. There really is no wrong time to pot a paphiopedilum, and no other orchid responds so favorably to fresh mix and a cleanup. Keep an eye on watering until roots begin to grow.



In the fall *Phalaenopsis* should start initiating flower spikes. Inflorescences should be well developed by mid-January.

Phalaenopsis

Now is the peak of spike development, with the first plants in full flower. Staking and plant preparation is a must for those all-important spring shows. Correct staking now will give a better display and also make it much easier to transport to your society meetings and shows.

Care with watering is vital to avoid mechanical damage to the flowers, as well as rot-related problems. Keep spent blooms cleaned up to avoid botrytis inoculation. Do not repot this month. Now you'll be seeing lots of phalaenopsis at orchid shows and sales.

Zygopetalum

For the most part, the flowering season will have ended for this group, providing the grower a chance to do some repotting. The plants will then have a chance to become well established before the hotter months of summer arrive. Most growers use bark mixes, but some exceptional results have been seen lately using rock-wool blends. You may want to try this mix, but do not change your whole collection over to this new media until you are sure it is right for you. First, experiment with a few plants to see how they respond.

The AOS thanks Ned Nash and James Rose for this essay.



AKATSUKA ORCHID GARDENS

Cultural Requirements of Oncidium

By H. Phillips Jesup

A genus that includes a great many species attractive and intriguing to the hobbyist is *Oncidium* (on-SID-ee-um). The lip dominates the flowers of many *oncidiums* and, in a number of species, fancifully resembles a full, swirling skirt, with the other, smaller segments being the “dancer's” arms and head. This accounts for this group's popular name, dancing-lady orchids. *Oncidiums* are found exclusively in the New World Tropics, ranging from Florida an Mexico through Central and much of South America. The genus contains approximately 600 species and, as with most sizable aggregations, is divided into a number of taxonomic sections of closely related species. The most common flower colors are combinations of yellow and brown, although lavender and white are occasionally seen in the genus. A veritable rainbow of colors is found in the popular variegata *oncidiums* (now placed in the genus *Tolumnia*). These species and their numerous hybrids are also commonly termed equitant *oncidiums*. The individual flowers of many species are not large, but this is more than compensated for in most species by the great numbers of flowers produced on long, often branched inflorescences, producing a shower-of-gold effect. The flowers of some species are used in corsages or as boutonnieres, and the airy sprays of others make handsome floral arrangements. The flower forms tend to be stylized, the sepals and petals in some crisped and ruffled and with a lacquer-like texture. A diagnostic feature of the flowers is an often-ornate, complicated callus or crest at the base of the lip. This can range from a toothed protuberance to a shiny, warty one. In fact, the genus takes its name from this feature, *Oncidium* being derived from the Greek work *oykos* which means warty and refers to the wartlike growths on the lip. Naturally, this feature (as well as most aspects of flower form) serves a function related to pollination. Plant forms in the genus vary widely. The majority of species have rather prominent pseudobulbs and strapshaped, somewhat-thin leaves. One group has terete (pencil-shaped) leaves, whereas another has dwarf fans of hard, three-edged leaves. Plants of another popular group, commonly called the mule-ear orchids, produce folded, leathery leaves. Inflorescences are produced from the base of the plant in the axils of the sheathing leaves, not at the apices (tops) of the growths as in *cattleyas*. The inflorescences range from a few inches in length to an extreme of 12 to 15 feet in a few species in section *Cyrtochila*. Roots of most *oncidiums* are fine and numerous. Most species are epiphytic, growing in trees, although a few grow on rocks and some are content to grow on the ground among the leaf litter.

Temperature and Humidity *Oncidiums* grow in many different habitats. They are found from hot, humid tropical lowlands to the cool and misty mountains to some places with almost desert-like climates for much of the year. While *oncidiums* are more accommodating in their temperature requirements than many orchids, the various species will do best if grown for most of the year in temperatures approximating those in their native habitats. The majority of species grow well in the intermediate temperatures (70 to 85 F days, 60 F nights) suitable for *cattleyas*. Position those from lowland habitats in the warmer microclimates of the growing area. Those from somewhat higher elevations should be in the cooler areas. The genus has not evolved primarily in high, cool montane areas, as has the closely related genus *Odontoglossum*, and only a few sections notably *Cyrtochila* and *Cucullata*, are decidedly cool growers. Many species that do reasonably well intermediate temperatures will grow and flower as well or somewhat better in 50 to 55 F night temperatures. Most *oncidiums* do not need a seasonal change in temperature to initiate inflorescences. While there is some variation in humidity needs, for most species the optimum is 50- to 60-percent relative humidity.

Light The majority of oncidiums thrive in the same light conditions as cattleyas, roughly 1,500 to 2,000 foot-candles. Some, such as the terete-leaved species and the mule-ear group, can tolerate even higher illumination with positive results, while the cool-growing species are best grown with somewhat less light in order to keep the plants cooler. The leaves should be a medium green to slightly yellow- or red-tinged, never dark, glossy green. The leaves of mule-ear species and the dwarf equitant or variegata oncidiums will show evenly distributed tiny dark dots often on a reddish background, when grown in suitable light. Finally, strong light (short of damaging the foliage), coupled with adequate fertilizer and good roots, will result in robust inflorescences. This can be obtained in a bright greenhouse, a window with a good deal of sun (particularly in winter), or close to the lights in an artificial light setup.

Air Movement As for all orchids, movement of air is requisite. The air should be moist to prevent desiccation, and the flow should be gentle. While sizable fans are normally used in greenhouses, small muffin-type fans obtainable at electronics stores are useful for growing areas in the home. They are small, quiet and use little electricity. Good air circulation tends to result in rapid drying of potting media, something that is essential for healthy roots.

Watering The watering schedule for oncidiums is similar to that for cattleyas, although some species require slightly more frequent watering in order to keep at least the most recent pseudobulb from shriveling. The sections of the genus *Oncidium* differ somewhat in their need for water. Some enter a substantial rest period of up to several months during which the plant is neither growing nor flowering. Others have a short rest period. A few have none at all because they initiate inflorescences immediately after completing vegetative growth and begin growth anew right after flowering. Those that rest should have somewhat less water during quiescence – but not so little that the pseudobulbs shrivel severely. Hobbyists learn through trial and error how often to water under their particular conditions so that only the older pseudobulbs are slightly shriveled.

Fertilizing The fertilizer requirements of oncidiums are similar to those for most other epiphytic orchids, such as odontoglossums.

Potting Oncidiums initiate new roots, often in large numbers, during active vegetative growth. This dictates that the proper time to repot is just after new growth begins but before tender developing root tips can be broken. Do not disturb a resting or flowering plant because it often will fail to re-establish itself. Most (but not all) oncidiums start new growths between March and May. However, treat each plant in accordance with its cycle. Oncidiums grow well in most standard epiphytic orchid potting media. However, it is essential that drainage be perfect. The roots are quite fine and die if the medium becomes soggy. It also must be fresh. Oncidiums grown in pots normally should be repotted every second year. A solution used by many to avoid the chore of frequent repotting and the attendant trauma to the plants is to mount rather than pot oncidiums. Tree-fern or cork plaques are the most commonly used, but sections of small limbs from rough-barked trees are particularly useful, and they are aesthetic as well. Each of these mounting media affords excellent drainage except for some tree fern that may be too dense. The only disadvantage is that mounted plants require more frequent watering than those in pots. Oncidiums root strongly on plaques or logs, and with the roots being exposed to air, the plants often do not require remounting for five years or more.

Reprinted from *Growing Orchids*, a culture handbook published by the American Orchid Society. To receive a free colorful brochure about this wonderful hobby and to learn more about growing orchids,

contact the American Orchid Society at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden 10901 Old Cutler Road, Coral Gables, FL 33156 Phone: (305) 740-2010 Fax: (305) 740-2011 Email: The AOS@aos.org Website: www.aos.org

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Robert Hirnyk Memorial Library

TITLE		AUTHOR
1	Book of Orchids	Withner, Dr. Carl
2	Botanical Orchids and How to Grow Them	Kramer, Jack
3	Complete Guide to Maine's Orchids	Kenan, Philip E.
4	Exotic Orchids -- Successful Indoor Gardening	Rittershausen, Wilma
5	Expanding Your Orchid Collection	Rentoul, J. N.
6	Field Guide to the Orchids of Britain and Europe	Williams, John & Andrew
7	Flowers of the Amazon Forest	Mee, Margaret
8	Forgotten Orchids of Alexandra Brun	Cribb, Philip
9	International Book of Orchids	Hunt, P. Francis
10	Miniature Orchids	McQueen, Jim and Barbara
11	Orchid Genera Illustrated	Sheehan, Tom and Marion
12	Orchids	Black, Peter McKenzie
13	Orchids	Menzies, David
14	Orchids -- A Guide to Cultivation	Cribb, Dr. Philip & Bales, Chris
15	Orchids -- Natural History & Classification	Dressler, Robert L.
16	Orchids -- Wonders of Nature	Kijima, Takashi
17	Orchids at Kew	Stewart, Joyce
18	Orchids from Seed	Thompson, P.A.
19	Orchids of Africa	Stewart, Joyce & Hennessey, Esme F.
20	Orchids of Asia	Eng Soon, Teoh
21	Slipper Orchids	Hennessey, Esme F. & Hedge Tessa A.
22	Southern African Epiphytic Orchids	Ball, John S.
23	The Specialist Orchid Grower	Rentoul, J. N.
24	Wild Orchids of Britain and Europe	Davies, Paul and Jenne
25	Orchid Pests and Diseases Guide	American orchid Society
26	Growing Orchids Guide	American orchid Society
27	Understanding Orchids	Cullina, William



25TH Anniversary
Orchid Show and Sale
February 16th, 17th, 18th



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Saturday March 16, 2024

12 noon - 5 pm

Sunday March 17, 2024

10 am - 4 pm



Conservation Through Knowledge



**The West Hartford Meeting & Conference Center 50 South
Main Street West Hartford, CT Wheelchair Accessible**

ATTENTION PHOTO BUFFS: On Sunday, March 18th 2024 orchid show will be open from 8 to 9:45 am for photographers only!!! Tripods will be allowed during this time. All tripods must be removed at 9:45 am. \$10 per person

