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A note from our President

Yesterday was the Autumn Equinox – September 23, 2023! This Equinox marks the end of the summer and the beginning of autumn in the Northern Hemisphere. Days now become shorter and night fall arrives earlier. Surely time to begin to bring your outdoor orchids inside except of course for your cool orchids and Cymbidiums. As I begin this process, I always find less space for those plants looking to come inside. Sound familiar? Maybe a good time to consider donations to our next Fundraiser Table! If so, your donations are most welcomed. Just kindly let me know if you plan to donate!!

Next Sunday's NSOS Meeting should be special. A **FIRST** time NSOS presenter, Joe Silva of Silva Orchids (Neptune, NJ) will share his extensive knowledge on "The Most Important Thing for a Healthy Orchid Is Your Potting Medium"! Never has NSOS had someone dedicate their presentation to this intriguing topic. Looking forward to an enlightening session which will benefit all. Joe is also bringing many bloomers and other orchids to have on hand for your perusal and purchase.

Hope to see you on Sunday, October 1 at the Senior Center in Farmington.

Have a great week!

Jeanne

TREASURER'S REPORT

NSOS financial data is available to members upon request. Send your inquiries to our Treasurer, Tom Mierzejewski: tommajeski@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.

2023 Schedule of Meetings & Events

Oct 1, 2023– Speaker = Joe Silva of Silva Orchids (Neptune, NJ) will share his extensive knowledge on the Topic: “The Most Important Thing for a Healthy Orchid Is Your Potting Medium”!- This month's NSOS meeting will be held in-person at the Farmington Senior Center. Refreshments will be provided. Farmington Senior Center, 321 New Britain Ave., Unionville, CT @ 12:30 pm – 5 pm

Oct.7, 2023 - AOS Judging Center Tower Hill Botanic Garden, Classroom C, 11 French Dr, Boylston, MA 01505

Oct. 21, 2023 - AOS Judging Center - Flat Rock Brook Nature Center, at 443 Van Nostrand Avenue, Englewood NJ, 07631April 16, 2022

Nov. 4, 2023 - AOS Judging Center Tower Hill Botanic Garden, Classroom C, 11 French Dr, Boylston, MA 01505

Nov. 5, 2023– Speaker = TBD- Topic: - TBD - This month's NSOS meeting will be held in-person at the Farmington Senior Center. Refreshments will be provided. Farmington Senior Center, 321 New Britain Ave., Unionville, CT @ 12:30 pm – 5 pm

Nov. 18, 2023 - AOS Judging Center - Flat Rock Brook Nature Center, at 443 Van Nostrand Avenue, Englewood NJ, 07631April 16, 2022

Dec. 3, 2023 - AOS Judging Center Tower Hill Botanic Garden, Classroom C, 11 French Dr, Boylston, MA 01505

Dec. 3, 2023– Holiday Party and Elections - 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. 16, 2023 - AOS Judging Center - Flat Rock Brook Nature Center, at 443 Van Nostrand Avenue, Englewood NJ, 07631

Monthly Checklist for September and October

Cattleya

Despite the shortening days and lowering angle of the sun, September can still be one of the hottest months. Water and fertilizer need to be in balance with heat and light. The alert grower will notice, however, that his or her plants are beginning to slow down a bit. Growths are maturing, and the sheaths are giving the promise of the next six-months' bloom.

Check plants for potting needs for the last time this season. Any in dire need should be potted, even some that may be on the cusp, as there is just enough of the growing season left to allow the plants to establish before the days start to get really short and cold.

This is the month for purples derived from *Cattleya labiata* breeding to flower. If you are short on flowers, look into this group. There is nothing that can quite match this type for beauty and fragrance. They are easy to grow, too.

Plants summered outdoors should begin to be prepared to be brought back into the winter growing area. Clean the plants up and be on the lookout for any pests they may have picked up during the summer. Treat as necessary.



Cycnoches chlorochilon, the green swan orchid.

Cycnoches

This little-known and under-appreciated genus, which can have male or female flowers, is at its best in the autumn. Two of the spectacular varieties are *Cycnoches loddigesii*, with its large brown flowers resembling a prehistoric bird, and *Cycnoches chlorochilon*, the swan orchid. This last one has large, fragrant green flowers. The biggest problem, culturally, will be red spider mite infestations that require immediate attention. Plants are quite seasonal, requiring heavy watering in the growing season and then a drier dormant winter season.

Cymbidium

Summer can be the most rewarding season for cymbidiums. Growths should be coming strong now. The leaves of the new growths are best when they are broad and fairly stiff. The color should be a light green to nearly yellow. Early flowering varieties should be showing flower spikes, so move the plants into a cooler area with lower light. For mid-season varieties, lower the dosage of nitrogen to assist in spike initiation.



Dendrobium Burana Stripe is a popular and easy phalaenopsis-type hybrid.

Dendrobium

This is a good season for hybrids of the *Dendrobium phalaenopsis* and *Dendrobium canaliculatum* types. Both are capable of putting on tremendous shows of long-lasting flowers. Fertilize with a low-nitrogen formula to promote the best flowers. *Dendrobium phalaenopsis* can get tall and top heavy, suggesting an attractive and heavy container would be appropriate for this type.

Rhynchostele bictoniensis

Both *Rhynchostele bictoniensis* and its *hybrids* bloom in this season. *Rhynchostele bictoniensis*, formerly known as *Lemboglossum*, *Odontoglossum*) is a showy species from Mexico that has three different color forms: sulphureum (green with white lip), album (brown with white lip) and roseum (brown with a pink lip). It is a vigorous grower with tall inflorescences of many flowers, and imparts to its progeny (as seen in Odcdm. Bittersweet and Odm. bicross) ease of culture, warmth tolerance and eye-catching patterns. They make a prime candidate for odontoglossum beginners and advanced alike.

Paphiopedilum

Standard, green-leaved paphiopedilums begin to show their bloom sheaths this month. Late-season heat waves can blast these early sheaths, so be observant about proper cooling and air circulation. As with the rest of your plants that may have been summered outdoors, it is time to prepare for their move inside. Clean each plant and implement pest-control practices. Repotting, if necessary, is appropriate.

Phalaenopsis

The bulk of this season's growth is being ripened this month, with growers in cooler climates seeing the first emerging inflorescences. Some night heating may be necessary in the cooler areas. Begin to watch watering more carefully, and reduce feeding proportionately with reduced watering needs. An extra dose of phosphorus and potassium, such as a bloom-booster or high-acid-type fertilizer, is beneficial.



Rossioglossum grande shows off its large, dramatic flowers.

Rossioglossum grande

Once known as *Odontoglossum grande*, this is a spectacular orchid with six to eight flowers up to 8 inches across. Often known as the tiger orchid, it has bright golden yellow flowers heavily marked with chestnut brown barring. The plants are beautiful with a grey-green cast to the foliage, which is borne on succulent pseudobulbs. It prefers hot and wet summers with cooler, even down to 40 F, dry winters. Grow under filtered light. Watch for snails and slugs that eat the flowers, pseudobulbs and leaves.

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

AKATSUKA ORCHID GARDENS

Cultural Requirements of Phalaenopsis By George Vasquez



MOTH ORCHIDS, OR PHALAENOPSIS (fail-eh-NOP-sis), are some of the most rewarding orchids for the beginner. Their cultural needs are easily met, with or without a greenhouse. Large mature plants can bloom for three months at a time and, in some cases, bloom twice a year. Phalaenopsis species range from Asia to the Philippines to New Guinea and parts of Australia. Here the weather is constantly warm and generally provides a humid environment. Among the approximately 50 species are epiphytes (growing on trees) and lithophytes (growing on rocks). Taxonomists divide the genus into several sections, but the two important sections are Euphalaenopsis and Stauroglottis. Members of Euphalaenopsis have long, arching

inflorescences petals much broader than the sepals and are roundish in outline (*Phalaenopsis amabilis*, *Phalaenopsis schilleriana*). They usually flower in winter and spring. Section *Stauroglottis* is composed of species that bloom primarily in the summer. The sepals are usually as broad as the petals, and the flowers are smaller and somewhat star-shaped (*Phalaenopsis violacea*, *Phalaenopsis amboinensis*). Hybridizers are creating new colors in all categories, including the standard –sized phalaenopsis and the miniature multifloras, the latter being characterized by masses of smaller flowers on branching inflorescences.

Meeting these goals satisfies the needs of greenhouse growers, who cultivate larger plants, and the windowsill orchidist, who prefers the smaller types. *Phalaenopsis* lack pseudobulbs (such as cattleyas and encyclias have) which store water and aid the plants during natural water shortages. They are monopodial and store water only in the leaves. *Phalaenopsis* receive a great deal of air movement and moisture in their natural habitats and respond favorably when these conditions are duplicated in cultivation.

Temperature and Humidity Although phalaenopsis will grow at temperatures between 60 F and 90 F, the optimum maximum is 68 F at night and 85 F during the day. However, plants perform reasonably well at temperatures of 64 F during the night and at warmer day temperatures. Commercial growers realize that bottom heat is the best source of heat for plants; it warms the pots so the plants grow faster. In the greenhouse, lay inexpensive propagating mats on the benches. These heat the pots and, therefore, warm the plants to a proper temperature, without wasting energy heating the air. Relative humidity should be 70 percent during the day and 50 percent at night. When night temperatures drop, the relative humidity increases. The easiest way to provide adequate humidity in a home is to fill a plastic or glass tray with gravel or small rocks, and maintain a layer of water in the bottom of the tray. Place the container on the gravel or stones; make sure the bottom of the pot does not touch the liquid. Water evaporating from the tray will bathe the orchid in humidity. Choose a tray approximately the diameter of the orchid's leaf spread to concentrate humidity around the plant.

Air Movement Reliable air movement prevents fungi and bacteria from settling on plants, and will also eliminate spotting of the flowers due to high humidity. Constant cross ventilation is sufficient. However, if a home or apartment must be closed – especially when one is departing for a day or two in warm weather – operate a fan constantly. In a greenhouse, it is important to have air movement 24 hours a day, because relative humidity increases as the night temperature drops and because of the area and size to be ventilated.

Light Provide phalaenopsis with approximately 1,000 foot-candles of light for superior growth. Never allow direct sunlight to reach these orchids. Smaller seedlings require more exact light conditions; strive to maintain the 1,000 foot-candle mark for them. Older and more mature plants are stronger and more tolerant of varying light intensities. *Phalaenopsis* can bloom and grow when exposed to light intensities ranging from as low as 800 to as high as 1,800 foot-candles. However, they do not continue to grow optimally when they are stressed, receive inadequate light or their other cultural needs are not met. An eastern exposure is ideal for phalaenopsis on the windowsill. It is important that the plants are exposed to filtered light, but never direct sunlight. In the winter, phalaenopsis need 12 hours of light, and in the summer, 14 hours of light. If this is unavailable in the home or apartment, supplement the light source with artificial lights. Morning or afternoon light alone is inadequate for proper growth.

Watering Typical phalaenopsis grown in a pot under an average day temperature of 80 F will dry out about every five to seven days, depending on whether the vessel is clay or plastic and the type of medium used. It is important to understand that the roots of the phalaenopsis adhere to the potting medium, and the plant absorbs its water directly from the bark. Thoroughly drench the medium once a week. If the weather is extremely overcast, the medium may not dry out in that time. During the intense heat of summer, the plants can dry out a day or so earlier. Many phalaenopsis growers maintain that the roots

should be kept evenly moist, with only a slight drying out time. Small seedlings in 3 and 4-inch pots dry faster, and, therefore, should be watered at shorter intervals. Adjust the watering schedule accordingly. Water in the morning on a sunny day to allow any water that collects in the crown of the leaves to evaporate. Many beginners kill plants because too much water is left in the crown overnight; this causes crown rot. When it is absolutely necessary to water on an overcast day, be sure to examine the plants later and remove any excess water. Either tilt the plant to remove excess water or absorb the fluid with a piece of cloth or tissue.

Fertilizing Give a dilute balanced fertilizer (20-20-20 or 18-18-18) to seedlings. Once the plant has bloomed, it should receive a high-nitrogen fertilizer (30-10-10) twice a month, or approximately, at every other watering. Avoid applying high-nitrogen fertilizers to small, unflowered seedlings. Although the application of the extra nitrogen promotes faster growth, the plant will not be any stronger and it will bloom accordingly. Fertilizing at every other watering should eliminate a buildup of minerals because the regular application of plain water every other week flushes out any accumulation of fertilizer salts.

Potting Good drainage is essential regardless of the environment, medium and whether the plants are raised in container or on plaques. The majority of phalaenopsis grown in the United States by commercial houses are rooted in fir bark. Generally, small seedlings require a finer bark (1/8 to 1/4 inch) and larger mature plants a medium grade (1/2 to 5/8 inch). Repot phalaenopsis when the plants' foliage is dry; the medium should be moist. To the bark, add a small percentage of coarse sifted peat and equal amounts of perlite (or sponge rock) and charcoal. The additives should be the same size as the bark. Phalaenopsis potted in medium-size bark mixtures need to be repotted at 14 to 18-month intervals because the bark eventually decomposes. By then, the plant will have outgrown the pot. The better quality fir bark (clean bark without any wood in it) can last two years, and the plant will actually outgrow the pot before the bark breaks down.

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: TheAOS@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

