

November 2023

Issue 119 Volume 16

Officers

President

Jeanne McDermott

Vice President

Alan Stauch

Secretary

Karen Timko Gelber

Treasurer

Thomas Mierzejewski

Directors

Walter Doehr

Lori McGowan

Barbara Putko

NUTMEG STATE ORCHID SOCIETY



AFFILIATED WITH THE AMERICAN ORCHID SOCIETY



501 (c) (3) non-for-profit organization

2008 - 2023

Committee
Chairman

Library:

Richard Duvall

Sally Duvall

Hospitality Chair:

Lori McGowan

Webmaster:

Walter Doehr

AOS Representative:

Ginna Plude

Membership:

Lori McGowan

A note from our President

How time flies when you're having FUN!! Halloween is tomorrow and, in a few weeks, it will be THANKSGIVING! This coming weekend is the first New England Orchid Show, the Massachusetts Orchid Society (MOS) in Winchester, MA.

Thanks to Sandy Myhalik and Barbara Putko, NSOS will display our members' bloomers. OMG – and daylight savings time is this Saturday. Please be sure to turn back your clocks to ensure your prompt arrival at our Sunday, November 5th NSOS Meeting beginning at 1 pm. Our speaker extraordinaire is Joseph Silva of Silva Orchids, Neptune, NJ. His presentation: "The Most Important Thing for a Healthy Orchid Is Your Potting Medium". Kindly mark your calendars and do plan to join us. Since our October Meeting was cancelled, we hope to see many of you there. Members will learn more about Silva Orchids and the tried & true tips of selecting potting medium for your selective orchids.

Lots happening within NSOS in the next two months! On Sunday, the complete slate of 2024/25 Board Member Candidates will be introduced to attendees. As Nominating Committee Chair, I am thrilled and so pleased to have had these individuals volunteer or accept the challenge to lead NSOS into the future....and a **STRONG BOD** it will be! 💎💎

See you on Sunday, November 1 at the Farmington Senior Center.
All the Best and enjoy the week ahead.

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

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

Nov. 5, 2023– Speaker = Joseph Silva - Silva Orchids- located in Neptune City, NJ. 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. Masks will be optional. 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, 07631
April 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 November and December

Cattleya

Growers of just about every level of expertise will have begun to notice autumn conditions by now. Days are becoming shorter, hence cooler; the sunlight has less intensity as a result of the sun's lowering angle, nights are longer and generally cooler. Plants are responding by slowing and ripening their growth in preparation for winter.

The first cultural change noticed should be a reduced frequency of watering, as the plants dry out more slowly. This is a function of both the reduced day length and lower temperatures, as well as the plants' slowing growth rate. Reduced water needs signal a reduced need for fertilization. Note that the key word is reduced, not eliminated. Feed less frequently and at lower dosage, but feed. Growths, made during summer's heat, and relatively soft and green, will be ripening -- hardening -- in preparation for a brief period of rest (in many cases).

Many of these ripening growths will have a sheath, presaging the coming winter or spring flowering season. In some cases, these sheaths will have been evident since as early as July. (Early sheath development does not mean early flowering on plants with winter-spring seasons.) You may notice that some of these sheaths are showing signs of yellowing. This is not abnormal. Autumn's more pronounced temperature fluctuation can lead to water condensation inside the sheath, hastening the normal process of senescence, so yellowing sheaths can be left on the plant only so long before they must be carefully removed to preserve the bud primordia within. Water condensation left unchecked can rot the bud primordia. The sheaths can be safely removed by slitting open and peeling down toward the pseudobulb.

Cool-Growing Orchids

One can almost hear a sigh of relief from all of the cool-growers, from masdevallias to odontoglossums. As day temperatures decline, one can see a noticeable improvement in these plants. Shorter days and lower light levels do not seem to bother them. Repot before winter arrives.



Cymbidium ensifolium produces delicate flowers with a delightful citrus fragrance.

Cymbidium

Finally we begin in earnest the main cymbidium season. *Cymbidium ensifolium* can give some early and fragrant hybrids, but it is now that the bulk of the crop will be flowering. The season lasts for about seven months, adding color to any collection. Miniature varieties will peak for the next three to four months. There are three important things to do: stake inflorescences ramrod straight for best presentation, watch for slugs and snails (especially just after a rain), and fertilize with a mild balanced formula regularly.

Oncidium crispum Complex

This is the season for plants in *Oncidium* section *crispum* from Brazil to shine. Extremely vigorous hybrids come in wide varieties of markings dominated with chestnut and brown and butter yellow. Give plants high light to produce strong upright inflorescences. The pseudobulbs should be plump, so do not let the plants dry out while they are in bloom. Later, plants will enter a dormant period.

Paphiopedilum

The flowering season for the "toads" or "bulldog" paphs is just getting underway. These cannot be grown everywhere, but where cooler summer nights allow their growth, there is no longer-lasting or more exotic

display than these. Paphiopedilums are, in general, not heavy feeders, and it is especially important with this type to reduce nitrogen levels now for best flowering and spike length. Be watchful for water accumulating in the growth around the sheath, or for the late-season warm spell, either of which can lead to the sheath's rotting. As the spikes emerge, do not change the orientation of the plant toward the light, as this can lead to a crooked or twisted spike

While paphiopedilums rarely like to dry out entirely, water needs are significantly reduced beginning now. Overwatering at this time of year can quickly lead to root rot or erwinia problems. Now is the time to practice good sanitary practices in your greenhouse or growing areas, as pest and disease problems have a way of multiplying rapidly in the darker and more crowded conditions that generally mark the winter growing area. With paphiopedilums, especially, "cleanliness is next to godliness" and if the growing area is littered with old foliage, weeds and dying flowers, keeping the plants alive and flowering will be next to impossible.

Phalaenopsis

Shortening days and cooler nights are the signals for inflorescence initiation in phalaenopsis. In more northern climates, or on the west coast, growers have already begun to see the early inflorescences that may be ready for Christmas. In the eastern areas, nights in the greenhouse will now be in the low to mid 60s, depending on the thermostat setting, so the first of our phalaenopsis will not begin to bloom until Valentine's Day at the earliest.

A reduction in nitrogen levels will go a long way to giving the best possible spiking, as will a boost in potassium and phosphorus. In other words, a "bloom booster"-type fertilizer is definitely indicated in the next few months. Disease and pest problems are best dealt with now, especially as mealybugs hide in the bracts and flower buds. Once they have established themselves, they are difficult to eradicate, and flower damage or crippling results. Potential disease problems can be dealt with by the application of a copper-based compound to control/alleviate rot problems before they start. There is nothing more frustrating than to have shepherded your plants through a growing season, only to have them decline before your eyes.



Neofinetia falcata will thrive in cooler temperatures and produce graceful vanilla-scented flowers.

Vandaceous Genera

Whereas the general decline in temperatures is beneficial to cool-growing orchids, it is not for vandaceous plants. The only cold-hardy member is *Neofinetia falcata*. Orient your plants in such a way as to take advantage of as much light as possible. This can be a problem in northern latitudes. Reduce watering and feeding schedules.

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

AKATSUKA ORCHID GARDENS

Cultural Requirements for Zygopetalum



Zygopetalums are among the easiest of the orchids to grow outdoors in southern California and are perfect companions for cymbidiums. Zygopetalums grow best under partial shade-partial sun conditions. Zygopetalums can tolerate considerable summer heat and winter chill without damage. Many growers leave their plants outdoors all year long.

Temperatures up to 100 degrees F for short periods will not harm the plants although buds may drop on some susceptible plants. Buds and flowers may be damaged if the temperature drops to 29 degrees F but the leaves and bulbs can usually withstand 29 degrees F under shade cloth for a few hours. For temperatures lower than this, some protection will be required.

Light - Adequate light is the most important factor to grow and flower zygopetalums well. The plants grow best with 3000 to 4000 or more foot candles of light intensity as measured with a light meter. 55% to 63% shade cloth overhead provides this light intensity under most conditions. Plants grown outdoors will generally be a little more compact and will have tougher leaves than they will when grown indoors. During the summer, the leaves should be a yellowish green, not a deep green. Plants grown in too much shade will usually be a lush green and will often not flower well. Providing additional shade after the flowers open will hold the color and increase the flower life as well. If you provide extra shade for the flowers, remember to remove it when the flowers fall so that the plant will grow best for next year.

Watering - Zygopetalums like lots of water and prefer to be constantly moist, but not soggy wet. During the growing season, water at least once a week, more often in warmer or drier locations. The amount of water will depend on the potting mix and the water quality. Rain water or demineralized water will give the best results. Open or porous mixes needing more water than a heavy dense mix that retains a lot of water. Water thoroughly so that water runs through the pot and out the bottom. On hot days, the plants benefit from overhead misting or sprinkling to lower the temperature and increase the humidity in the growing area. During the winter, zygopetalums need less water, but should never be allowed to dry out completely. Watering every 2 or 3 weeks may be adequate, even with no rain.

Feeding and Fertilizer - Zygopetalums are moderate feeders and will do well with the same fertilizer growers use for cymbidiums. Many growers use a high nitrogen fertilizer during the growing season (February to August) and a low nitrogen fertilizer during the blooming season and winter. Others get satisfactory results with a balanced fertilizer all year long.

Pests and Diseases - The giant white fly and scale are the two most persistent zygopetalum plant pests with snails and slugs as the principal flower threats. The giant white fly can be controlled with an insecticidal soap. Wipe off as much of the colony as possible, then spray the underside of the leaves well.

Scale in the leaf axils can be a persistent problem that is hard to eradicate and the use of a good systemic insecticide may be required. Slugs and snails may be controlled with the available snail and slug baits, or with a big foot and a flashlight at night. Do not use an insecticidal soap or an insecticide spray on zygopetalum buds. We have seen severe deformation of buds and flowers as a result. In general, any insecticide should be applied during a cool, shady time of day such as early morning to minimize any potential reaction. Zygopetalums are relatively resistant to bacterial and fungal diseases.

Bacterial and fungal diseases may be a problem under wet and crowded conditions. Adequate spacing of plants on the bench and watering early enough in the day so that the plants can dry out before dark is the best prevention. Zygopetalums can be susceptible to the common orchid viruses. Always sterilize tools and the work area before dividing or repotting each plant, and use disposable rubber gloves or wash hands thoroughly after each plant.

Potting and Dividing - Zygopetalums like a slightly acid potting mix that provides good drainage. Most growers use a fine orchid bark mix with 20% sponge-rock or perlite added. Sand, coarse peat and redwood bark or shavings may be added to improve the water retention in inland locations. Zygopetalums generally need to be repotted about every three years under normal conditions. Zygopetalums should be repotted just after the old blooms have fallen off. If the old mix is broken down, the plant should be repotted as soon as possible to minimize root rot. Broken down mix tends to hold too much water and will reduce the air movement around the roots which often causes the older roots to die back. Vigorous plants will often outgrow the pot before the mix starts to break down. **Care After Repotting** - After dividing and repotting, the plants should be placed in an area with heavier shade than normal, and should be kept cool and slightly on the dry side for several weeks. This encourages the growth of new roots into the new medium. Water the repotted plants after a day or so in the new mix, and water the first time with a dilute solution of Physan or Naccosan, which is a bactericide and fungicide, to help reduce the likelihood of fungal or bacterial disease in the newly repotted plant.

Akatsuka Orchid Gardens * P.O. Box 220 * Volcano, Hawai'i 96785 Phone: (808)967-8234 Fax: (808) 967-7140 Email: info@akatsukaorchid.com Website: www.akatsukaorchid.com



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

