

Platinum Coast Orchid Society

The Rhyzome

October 2015 Edition

The picnic was a great success. Thank you to Joyce for all of her work in making this event enjoyable.

Our Holiday dinner will take the place of the regular meeting in December and will be at the Cocoa-Rockledge Garden Club. Please sign up for this at the October and November meetings, indicating what side dish you would like to bring. We need helpers to set up and decorate and a chairman to organize everything.

We've seen a lot of snails this year, so you may have some damage from them. Check out the AOS article in this month's newsletter, and do a snail patrol in the early morning and late evening.

SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR 2016

President	Dave Colchin
Vice President	Jodi Kittleson
Treasurer	Margaret Croucher
Secretary	Elaine DeRiso

Directors	Maria Maloney
	Walter Bryant
	Clive Gay

PP/5th Director Nadine Kern
(JoAnn Amos remains for the second year of her 2 year term as director.)

The election will take place at the November meeting.



Our check was presented to Vanessa, from Candlelighters of Brevard.

CALENDAR

Oct. 14, 6 pm Board Meeting

Oct. 14, 7 pm General Meeting

Kiwanis Island

Program: Vern Bloch, a local grower, will be our speaker and will bring plants to sell.

Nov. 11, 6 pm Board Meeting

Nov. 11, 7 pm General meeting/election

Program—Charlie Scholes has been dividing his orchids. Show up for a chance to win one and to learn about his methods for growing them.



Dec. 9th, 6pm

Holiday dinner and celebration at the Cocoa-Rockledge Garden Club. Sign up at the meeting.



Picnic

2015

Good friends

Good food



**Many thanks to
Joyce for or-
ganizing another
great picnic!!**



Good fun

Good prizes



Good bingo caller!

2015 PCOS OFFICERS & CHAIRS

PRESIDENT

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Camille Theobald

Nadine Kern

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NEWSLETTER EDITOR

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PLANT FORUM

Betty Adamson

GREETER

Christina Rovira

PROGRAMS

Judy Law

PHOTOGRAPHER

Jan Castillo

RAFFLE

Karen Snee

PUBLICITY

Ann Colchin

REFRESHMENTS

Kathy Jacobson

HOLIDAY PARTY

Chairman ?

Volunteers to decorate/set up?

GREAT PLACES FOR MEMBERS TO FIND INFORMATION ON ORCHIDS:

1. Programs—Take notes—someday they will make sense
2. AOS Magazine articles. “Orchids” is available at every meeting. Check out the great AOS article in this newsletter.
3. Members— Ask longtime members about orchids, but realize that your yard and potting choices are key. We all use trial and error to succeed.
4. Internet sites—www.aos.org—This AOS site has the answer to almost any question.
5. Rambles at members’ homes to help you identify the best way to grow your orchids.

UPCOMING SHOWS

Oct. 3-4 **FL West Coast Orchid Society Show**
St. Pete Garden Club

500 Sunset Dr. South, St. Petersburg

Oct. 9-11 **South Florida Orchid Society Show**

Bank United Center

1245 Dauer Dr., Coral Gables

Oct. 10-11 **Ft. Pierce Orchid Society Show**

Ft. Pierce Shrine Club

4600 Oeander Ave. , Ft. Pierce

Oct. 16-18 **E. Everglades Orchid Society Show**

R.F. Orchids

28100 S.W. 182 Ave. , Homestead

Oct. 17-18 **Gainesville Orchid Society Show**

Kanapaha Botanical Gardens

S.W. 58th Dr., Gainesville

Oct 30-Nov 1 **Delray Beach Orchid Society Show**

Old School Square Gymnasium

51 N. Swinton Ave., Delray Beach



PCOS is an affiliate of the **American Orchid Society (AOS)**. There’s an abundance of information on the AOS website. For the last few months, a selection of the articles available on the AOS website have been featured in our newsletter. Please visit www.aos.org for articles, advice on growing orchids, and lots of free information.

Check out the Orchid magazine at our meetings, so you can see the benefits of being an American Orchid Society member.

Ask Betty Adamson for an application if you’re interested in joining.

For all current members, remember that your renewal notice will arrive in the Orchid Magazine prior to your month of renewal.

www.aos.org

Snails and Slugs

By Susan Jones

Snails and slugs, ubiquitous orchid pests, can inflict a great deal of damage to virtually every part of an orchid. They wait for the cover of night to wreak their havoc. Snails and slugs, left unchecked, can infest a collection and kill your orchids fairly quickly.

If you grow orchids outdoors or in a greenhouse, these pests are likely to be found in the vicinity of your growing area. Indoor growers may introduce them with a new plant, which can harbor snails, slugs or their eggs unseen in the growing medium.

Snails and slugs eat mostly flowers, roots and tender new growths, although, if those are unavailable, they will consume any plant part. Because they do their damage primarily under the cover of darkness, they can be difficult to detect and eradicate.

There are many different types of slugs and snails that will eat orchids; some of the more common are the orchid or bush snails (*Zonitoides arboreus*), the brown garden snail (*Helix aspersa*), the field slug (*Deroceras reticulatum*) and the marsh slug (*Deroceras laeve*).



Early in the morning, you may be able to still find a snail that has been eating your flowers.

Life Cycles

These creatures are hermaphroditic, so every individual has both male and female organs and is capable of laying eggs. The life cycle of the various slugs and snails that prey on orchids is generally about one year in the immature stage, and a second year as an adult. The immatures are smaller in size and lighter in color, but otherwise resemble adults in form. Adults lay up to 300 eggs in batches of 10 to 50 each. These eggs hatch in the spring in as little as 10 days during warmer weather, or up to 100 days in cooler temperatures. The average maturation period is about one month..

Control

If the creatures themselves are not visible when the plant is inspected, telltale signs of their presence include their translucent shiny slime trail; holes with uneven brown edges eaten through the flower tissues; nibbled roots (thicker roots may have only small pock-mark-like holes eaten into them, while smaller, finer roots may be eaten clean through; tender new root tips are especially vulnerable); and new growths may be damaged or chewed down to a nub. To control snails and slugs, baits are commonly available from garden-supply retailers. In addition, a number of low-tech, low-cost, and low- (or no) toxicity remedies have been developed. Whenever chemical controls are employed, check to see that the product has been approved for use on orchids, and carefully follow all instructions for the product's safe use. Also consider the health of any pets and your children.

Metaldehyde (bait or dust) Products containing metaldehyde are effective against snails and slugs, but highly toxic to mammals. If ingested, even small amounts of this chemical can cause severe nerve and kidney damage in humans, pets and wildlife.

Sluggo, EscarGo and Worry Free These snail and slug controls are organic baits in which the active ingredient is iron phosphate. They are safe to use around pets and wildlife. Once the baits are eaten, snails and slugs stop feeding and die within a few days. The baits are biodegradable, so whatever is not consumed will degrade into the soil over time.

Copper Tape This is purported to act as a barrier to slugs and snails, as it holds a small electrical charge that repels the critters. This method is most effective when the plants to be protected are located on a bench or in an area that can be cordoned off by the tape (checking first to be sure that none of these pests are already inside the protected area and will be trapped among your plants). The tape must be at least an inch wide, and can become dirty after a while, necessitating replacement. Its effectiveness is questionable; while some growers swear by it, others seem to swear at it.

Diatomaceous Earth or Dry Ash

In sufficient quantity, these materials create a barrier slugs and snails are unable to cross. They need to be placed in sufficient quantity to repel mollusks; a swath 3 inches wide and 1 inch high should be sufficient. Both lose their effectiveness when they become wet, and so may not be the best choice of repellents.

Predators Snakes, toads, birds, possums, turtles and frogs all enjoy a good slug or snail snack if they can get one. As such, they make great biological controls. Consult your local garden club, agricultural extension office, or search online to find predators native to your locale and ways of encouraging them to visit your growing area.

Beer A favorite of some humans as well as mollusks, beer attracts snails and slugs. Place one or more small containers (clean, empty cat food or tuna fish cans area ideal) filled with enough beer to drown a snail or slug in the growing area. Empty out the stale beer and deceased pests every few days as needed, and replace with fresh beer.

Pet Food Dampen dry dog or cat food and place an inverted foil pie tin over it, propping up the tin enough on one side that the critters can get underneath. Check the tin every morning, removing and destroying the accumulated snails and slugs.

Handpicking Crush, kill, destroy. Although time consuming and sometimes messy, this is still an effective (and satisfying) method of control. Go out regularly after dark with a flashlight, and pick off and destroy any slugs and snails found on the plants. Do not use salt directly on the critters; although this does kill them, it may also get into your plants and growing environment, causing unwanted damage. Better to drop the pests into a container of salt-water solution.

As no one method is likely to be completely successful in eradicating slugs and snails, rotating or combining different controls may be the best defense against these pests. Vigilance and diligence are the best way to keep your orchids pest free.

References

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Fortner, Linda. Slugs and Snails. Orchidlady.com, Linda's Orchid Page, Suite 101 Articles, November 1, 2001. (http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/orchid_gardening/82592)

Hamom, Avas B., PhD. Orchid Pests. In *Orchid Pests and Diseases*. Florida: American Orchid Society, 1995, pp. 45-46.

Susan Jones was the editor of Awards Quarterly and assistant editor of Orchids. American Orchid Society, 16700 AOS Lane, Delray Beach, Florida 33446

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