

Platinum Coast Orchid Society

The Rhizome

August 2022

Message from the President:

As many of you know, I spend my summers in Maine, high up on a granite cliff overlooking beautiful Beech Hill Pond. For the past two summers we have been mostly isolated here, but this year I ventured out to visit two local orchid society meetings. I even did two presentations. It is a real struggle for these two very small societies, with 37 members in one and 26 in the other. However, they are determined to continue.

We are so very blessed to have such a great society in Platinum Coast, with a great bunch of members all working together. We have so many resources that are not available to other societies. The clubs here were grateful to have me, so that should tell you something.

I hope everyone is having an enjoyable summer, staying well, and keeping all your orchids free of black rot. See you in September.

Ed

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

If anyone is interested in serving on the Nominating Committee, please let President Ed know by responding to the Newsletter Editor by August 10th.

SUNSHINE

Get well wishes for Monica Overman, Barbara Biondi, Margaret Croucher, Nadine Kern, and Betty Adamson.



CALENDAR

August—No Meeting

The Garden Club is having some work done.

Sat., Aug. 13th, 10-3 Mark Walters has volunteered to have the ramble at his new business, Orchid Trail at 800 North Tropical Trail, Merritt Island

Mark is using wine corks in his orchid potting, so please bring any you would like to donate. See his new video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hA6fRcx6l3s>

[v=hA6fRcx6l3s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hA6fRcx6l3s)

UPCOMING EVENTS:

September: Alan Koch of Gold Country Orchids

October: Fred Clarke of Sun Valley Orchids & Yearly Picnic

November: Phillip Hamilton of Bredren Orchids

December: Holiday Party



C. Margaret Hort, a division given to Charlie Scholes by Ed.



Many thanks to Sally and Peter for hosting us. Everyone who attended the July ramble had a great time. In addition to several potting demonstrations (shown at left), members had a chance to see how Sally and Peter manage their collection. There were tables of free divisions available to all who attended (shown below). Plan to be at the next ramble scheduled for August 13th, since we will not have a meeting due to work being done at the Garden Club.

JULY RAMBLE



This was a great mixture of new and long time members. We even had a few visitors who joined PCOS on the spot.

Give Us Air! By Sue Bottom

Reprint from the July 2015 "Orchids" Magazine

The importance of fresh air to orchids is possibly the least appreciated aspect of growing orchids. All the orchid books tell you to ensure there is air movement around your orchids. For years I kept adding fans to my growing area thinking I was satisfying this basic requirement. But orchids do not want recirculated stale air, they want to be bathed in fresh air, particularly the wafting breezes they get when they are outdoors.

The first time Ruben Sauleda of Ruben in Orchids talked to our orchid club, we talked about how I could improve my orchid growing. At that time, we had the traditional greenhouse with a wet wall at one end, exhaust fans at the opposite end and polypropylene covering all the other surfaces. Ruben took one look at the greenhouse and said rip out the water wall and replace the side wall with stucco metal lath, keep the vents open at either end of the greenhouse and open the top vent. This allowed free movement of air throughout the greenhouse during the growing season. A retractable curtain closes off the stucco metal lath during cold weather, but otherwise the plants are always bathed in fresh air. That was the year the greenhouse exploded with new growth and an incredible display of blooms.

I struggled trying to grow vandas in the hoop house covered with greenhouse film with doors at either end. When Rafael Romero of Plantio La Orquidea looked at our growing set up, he told us to rip out the film on the side wall and replace it with stucco metal lath and a retractable curtain. Voilà, the vandas bloomed freely and the incidence of leaf spotting and rots was greatly diminished. During the summer growing season, the vandas are now all moved out into summer shade structures that allow free air on all four sides. The vandas grow like weeds in the fresh breezes.

This demand for fresh air makes sense if you think about how many orchids evolved from understory terrestrials to epiphytes. Many types of orchids left the forest floor to grow high in the canopy on the trunks or branches of tall forest trees where more light was available and where winds were stronger than on the ground.

Wafting breezes offer many benefits to your orchids:

- Fresh moving air improves gas exchange through leaf pores and around the rhizomes and roots, a process that is required for the plant's metabolic processes.
- Fresh moving air cools the leaves during warm weather when high light and high temperatures could otherwise cause the plant to overheat and restrict its metabolic processes, and possibly result in leaf sunburn.
- Fresh moving air helps distribute warm and cold air so extremes in air temperature will not harm the vegetation.
- Fresh moving air helps dry excess moisture from the leaves so bacteria and fungi will not proliferate.

Of course, air movement and humidity must be in balance. In a low-humidity environment, excess air movement will cause more evaporation and possibly result in dehydration. In a high-humidity environment, air movement is a must to prevent orchid disease problems.

During the cooler months, your orchids are probably in their winter homes inside. You can group your plants on humidity trays filled with pebbles to hold extra water after watering and provide some humidity around the plants. A fan blowing a gentle breeze around your plants is good. When the temperature is right, you can open a window by your plants and let them get a taste of the fresh air they crave.

When warm weather returns, try to find a location outdoors where your orchids can get loads of fresh air. A screened porch is great, particularly for phalaenopsis that want shadier conditions and a covered roof where water won't accumulate in the crown of the plant causing rot. Hanging your orchids under a tree where they'll receive dappled light and fresh breezes 24 hours a day will result in an incredible summer growth surge, particularly if you ramp up your watering and fertilizing schedules to match the increased plant vigor.

(Article continued on next page)

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 for check out.
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 how others in your area grow their orchids.**

PCOS is an affiliate of the **American Orchid Society (AOS)**. There’s an abundance of information on the AOS website. Please visit www.aos.org for articles, advice on growing orchids, and lots of free information.

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.

FOR AOS MEMBERS: The AOS also has a presence on Facebook. There is a [group](#) with close to 65,000 members, and a [page](#). Each allows you to post photographs and ask questions about your orchids. The group is the most active of the two, and group members usually respond quickly to posts. The page is parallel to the AOS Instagram account. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/52597049839> <https://www.facebook.com/AmericanOrchidSociety>

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Proper air movement is just as important to your orchid as providing the proper amount of water and light to your plant. It is also the least appreciated aspect of orchid growing. If you struggle with fungal and bacterial problems on your plants, you can apply chemicals to treat the symptoms. However, in many instances, proper air movement would have prevented the problem from arising in the first place.

— Sue Bottom started growing orchids in Houston in the mid-1990s after her husband Terry built her first greenhouse. They settled into St. Augustine, Florida, Sue with her orchids and Terry with his camera and are active in the St. Augustine Orchid Society, maintaining the society’s website and publishing its monthly newsletter. Sue is also a member of the AOS Editorial Board.

The Bulletin of the American Orchid Society

Published since 1932, *ORCHIDS* magazine (formerly known as the AOS Bulletin) is among [many benefits of an AOS membership](#). Exploding with glorious full-page color photographs, each monthly issue is packed with topics of current interest for both beginners and advanced orchid growers.

Rounding out our June 2022 issue

- Tom's Monthly Checklist - “July: The Month of the Empath” by Thomas Miranda
- Orchid Places - “Private Orchid Gardens” by Thomas Miranda
- Collector's Item - “Aerangis biloba” by Judith Rapacz-Hasler
- For the Novice - “Summer Rots - The Water Molds” by Sue Bottom
- “Judge's Corner: “Fillable forms” by Jean Allen-Ikeson
- Orchids Illustrated - “Sudamerlycaste” by Wesley Higgins and Peggy Alrich
- “Lindleyana - Quantitative Morphological Variation in the Orange and White Fringed Orchids (*Platanthera*) in the Eastern US” by Ida Hartvig, Simone Evans, Jason Ligon, Lauren Eserman, Emily Coffey and Melissa McCormick
- “Parting Shot - .Tiny Tim Rides Again. Maybe?” by Leon Glicenstein, PhD

2022 PCOS OFFICERS & CHAIRMEN BE PART OF THE TEAM!

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