

Platinum Coast Orchid Society

The Rhyzome

February 2023



January plant forum at left. Below, Betty Adamson installing officers.



At left, Cattleya Eleanor Roosevelt

FROM THE PRESIDENT:

With the new year come thoughts of how I can be a better grower. This will be the year (I hope) that I will apply all the expert care tips that I have been gathering for years. We have so many wonderful resources. I do love the AOS *Orchids* magazine that comes with my AOS membership. I always look forward to Sue Bottom's column "For the Novice". Yes, that still applies to me.

Our speaker in February will be Art Chadwick of Chadwick & Son Orchids in Virginia. The Chadwick nursery is famous for its collection of First Ladies Cattleyas. In the January 2023 edition of *Orchids*, Art has an article about Eleanor Roosevelt and her namesake cattleya.

Margaret

Calendar

Wed., Feb. 1st @5:30—Show meeting for show chairmen.

Wed., Feb. 8th @6pm—Board meeting

Wed., Feb. 8th @7pm—Meeting and Speaker Art Chadwick



Dues are now due and can be paid at the February meeting or mailed to the P.O. box on the last page.



2023 Officers: l-r President Margaret Croucher, Vice President Ed Kidder, Secretary Carolyn Andersson, Treasurer Mary Ellen Jelen, and Directors Bert Forbush, With a Lacuesta, Jim Rice, and standing in for Anna Palermo and Tammy Cheng are Laura Blackmon and JoAnn Amos.



Baby It's Cold Outside



Except for a few parts of the country, winter is in full swing. This week the midwest and eastern states received the first big storm of the season. The shorter and often dull days, along with cooler temperatures, affect our orchids in both good and bad ways. This newsletter will cover orchid care for the winter season.

First the good news; cooler temperatures and/or shorter days send the signal to many orchid genera and species that it is time to flower. Inflorescences on many *Phalaenopsis* (left) and *Cymbidium* hybrids should be well developed by Christmas. Be on the lookout for bugs that think of your precious orchid buds as tasty winter treats. Mealybugs will be the most likely suspects. Fortunately, these soft-bodied pests can be easily controlled with one teaspoon castile soap (we use Dr. Bronner's Peppermint Soap) in a quart of water in a hand sprayer. This safe home treatment may require several applications every other day until control is achieved. Don't be tempted to mix any chemical control, even one as benign as soap, stronger than recommended.

It is a good idea to begin staking *Phalaenopsis* spikes before they get too far along. We will have a photo essay in the April issue of ORCHIDS magazine showing how to prepare orchids for display, but for now there is a brief explanation of how to [stake a Phalaenopsis here](#). Certain *Cattleya* species bloom on cue for the holidays, notably *Cattleya trianae* and *C. percivaliana* (although both bloom across wider seasons in nature). It is a good idea to stake cattleyas also, as the flowers will display better. Decorating the home with blooming orchids can provide colorful accents that are always admired by guests. If you have any orchid shows nearby at this time of year, try to make the time to attend one and pick out a few plants that will bloom reliably at the holidays for years to come.



shown at right: *Cattleya trianae* 'Mary Fennel' HCC/AOS

Here are a few suggestions to keep your orchids healthy this winter;

- If you are a windowsill grower, the light will be entirely different at this time of year. Assess it carefully and make any necessary adjustments. A south window may be brighter due to bare trees and the sun being lower in the sky. Watch for sunburn and move plants back from the window or add a sheer curtain to cut down the light.
- Shorter days and gloomy weather in many parts of the country can cause plants to produce soft growths that are more susceptible to pests and disease. Some orchids will not flower if they do not receive enough light. If necessary, use a growlight on a timer to provide additional light in winter.
- Orchids grow more slowly in winter and will need less water and fertilizer. Most growers cut their fertilizer back to twice a month at half strength. Monitor orchids to keep them at their proper moisture level for their type. Generally, orchids will need about half as much water in winter as they do in summer. Some orchids must have a dry winter rest in order to flower.
- The loss of humidity as a result of forced air heating can take its toll on your orchids. Remember, most orchids grow optimally with 60-75% humidity. If your home is especially dry, and you will know by the way your own skin reacts to winter, provide extra humidity for your orchids. A tried and true method is to set orchid pots on trays of pebbles that are filled with water; just make sure your plant is not setting in the water. Misting a couple times a day can also help.

Winter is cold, so protect plants from drafts. If buds start falling off of a *Phalaenopsis* inflorescence the first thing to suspect is a drafty window. Do not put plants close enough to a window to touch the glass!



If you happen to be lucky enough to live in an area where you grow your orchids outdoors year-round, don't be caught with your guard down. Even South Florida, the Gulf Coast and Southern California can experience damaging cold temperatures. Have a plan and supplies for covering or moving plants should cold weather be heading your way.

Providing a little extra attention to your orchids at this time of year will get them through the winter in good health and bloom!!!

Greg Allikas

December 2009 (See more articles like this on www.aos.org)

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.

www.aos.org

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>

UPCOMING FLORIDA SHOWS

- MAR. 3-4** **Englewood Area Orchid Society Show**
“Bewitched by Orchids”
Ann & Chuck Dever Regional Park,
Englewood, FL
- MAR. 4-5** **Tampa Bay Orchid Society Show**
“For the Love of Orchids”
Sons of Italy Hall, Tampa, FL
- MAR. 18-19** **Jacksonville Orchid Society Show**
Mandarin Garden Club, Jacksonville, FL
- MAR. 18-19** **Nature Coast Orchid Society Show**
VFW Post 8681, Spring Hill, FL
- MAR. 25-26** **Orchid Society of Highlands Show**
“Art in Bloom”
Agri-Civic Center, Sebring, FL
- APR. 1-2** **Port St. Lucie Orchid Society Show**
“Hoot Loves Orchids”
Port St. Lucie Polish American Club
Port St. Lucie, FL
- MAY 5-7** **Platinum Coast Orchid Society Show!!!!**

2023 PCOS OFFICERS & CHAIRMEN BE PART OF THE TEAM!

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Anna Palermo (2023-2024)

Witha Lacuesta (2022-2023)

James Rice (2022-2023)

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REFRESHMENTS

Kathy Ballance

SHOW CHAIR

Jodi Kittleson

Members—If you would like to be more involved, please let Margaret know, so she can fill chairman positions for the coming year. In addition, there will be many opportunities available to help with the show. Let Jodi know if you are interested in a particular show position.