

# Platinum Coast Orchid Society

June 2015 Edition

## The Rhyzome



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello Everyone,

I'm so excited about the success of our show. So many people worked very hard and the results were fabulous. When I heard we had 30 new members and saw their faces in this newsletter, I was so proud of our society. To all you new members and all our regulars on behalf of our board, we commit to making our meetings exciting and educational. Please check the Calendar to the right to follow our enjoyable summer activities and plan to come to the picnic in September. We all have so much fun and Bingo nets some beautiful orchids. Note the June and August meetings will be at \*\* 6:00 pm \*\* leaving for the ramble at 6:30.

My best to all,

Cathy

### MEMBERS WHO WERE WINNERS AT THE SHOW

Best Niche-Rosa Blair

Best Pedestal-Maria Maloney

Best Cattleya-AI Valentine

Best Dendrobium-Margaret Croucher

Best Cymbidium-Betty Adamson

Best Misc. Genera- Sally Pancoast

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR/SAVE THE DATE

Wed., June 3rd Post show meeting

Wed., June 10th Board Meeting

Wed., June 10th 6pm General Meeting

Doyle Carlton Pavilion at Kiwanis Island

Followed by a ramble at the home of Sally and Peter Pancoast, 1390 Leslie Drive, Merritt Island, FL. From Kiwanis, go west to Courtenay Pkwy. Turn left (south) and travel 4.8 miles. Turn right onto Leslie Drive and the house is the first on the right.

**If you need help repotting your orchid bring it to Sally's. Please pre-soak you plant for at least 24 hours. Bring your new pot and favorite potting media. Sally will have some pots and media available for a small charge. If you have a special problem plant call Sally @ 321-459-1996 for a pre-consultation.**

July—No meeting, ramble place and date TBA

Wed., Aug. 12th Board Meeting

Wed., Aug. 12th, 6pm General Meeting followed by a ramble at the Crouchers.

Sun., Sept. 20th Noon Annual Picnic

## **2015 PCOS OFFICERS & CHAIRS**

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Betty Adamson

### **PLANT FORUM**

Betty Adamson

### **GREETER**

Wendy Benison

### **PROGRAMS**

Judy Law

### **PHOTOGRAPHER**

Charlie Scholes

Jan Castillo

### **RAFFLE**

Karen Snee

### **PUBLICITY**

Ann Colchin

### **REFRESHMENTS**

September

October

November

**\*Thank you, Judy Law, for May's refreshments. They were delicious.\*\*\***

*Please consider being responsible for refreshments at a monthly meeting. If you have signed up and are not listed here OR if you would like to sign up for a month, please let Patti know at the meeting (or you can just hit reply and send by email.). Be sure to keep your receipts so you can be reimbursed by the club. You can make it simple by just picking up some iced tea and cookies at the store or you can surprise us with some special treats.....it's up to you.*

# Monthly Checklist for May and June

## **Cattleya**

The last of the spring-flowering types -- those that flower from a ripened hard pseudobulb -- will be finishing, while the first summer-blooming types will be showing buds on their rapidly growing, soft pseudobulbs. Both may need potting, as signaled by deteriorating mix, this month. The spring bloomers present no problems, as you will be dealing with fully ripe, well-hardened pseudobulbs. They will be ready to root on the mature front pseudobulb and will establish quickly. The summer bloomers, will be brittle and may be in bud. Nonetheless, experienced growers know that unless potted now, they may not root later, as this type tends to be seasonal in its rooting behavior. Stake the lead growth to avoid breakage. May can still present some changing light conditions that can lead to burning of the foliage if the plants have not been properly acclimatized. Allow them to build up their tolerance to higher light gradually. Changing light and temperatures can also be the source of some frustration when trying to determine when plants need watering. While cattleyas will be entering into a period of rapid growth starting this month, they have still not built up sufficient momentum to be significantly slowed by your missing a day or two of watering owing to dark weather. As always, it is safer to err on the dry side than on the wet. It is important, though, especially to the summer bloomers. Too much shade will cause rapidly developing inflorescences to droop unattractively.



## **Paphiopedilum**

The *Paphiopedilum* Maudiae types will be well into their season now, so a careful eye should be used toward staking. Do not be too anxious to stake, however. Many of this type, if staked too soon, will develop nodding flowers that do not face the observer. It is better to allow the flowers to ripen naturally, then support the spike right below the ovary for best display. This is especially common in *Paphiopedilum* fairrieanum-derived hybrids. If you have to do something when you first see the emerging spikes, just put the stake in the pot next to the spiking growth. Not only will this help you, but you will be able to see where the spikes are, so you can continue to pay attention to their development. The multifloral types will be entering their most active growth phase, so lots of light, water and fertilizer are called for to mature their large growths. Many will be spiking in the next couple of months, so be on the lookout for the emerging inflorescences. These may benefit from earlier staking than most, as the inflorescences grow so quickly in some cases that they can be quite soft. Again, best support is right below the ovary of the first flower. This will allow the most natural presentation of the blooms.

## **Phalaenopsis**

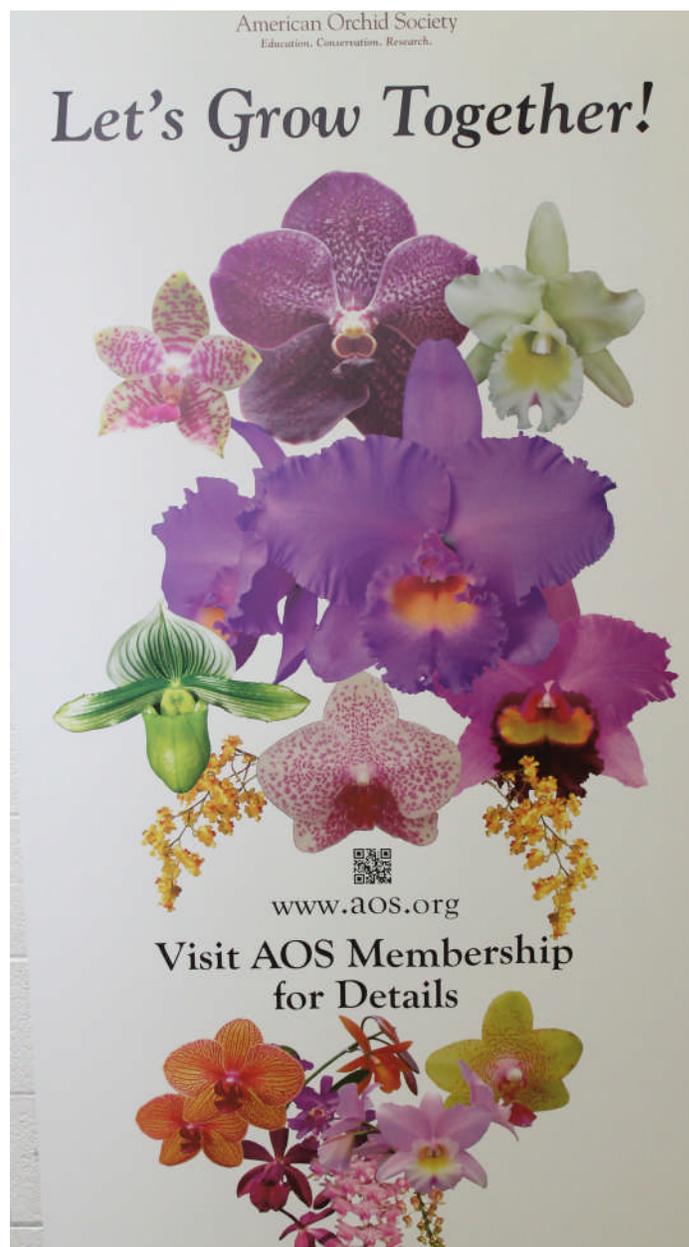
Except for the latest-spiking plants, all phalaenopsis should be ready for potting or already potted. Because phalaenopsis are tropical plants, they tend to be seasonal in their rooting behavior. The critical point for potting is when new roots emerge from the base of the plant. This is absolutely the best time to repot a phalaenopsis. The summer-flowering types, based on *Doritis* background, have ideally already been potted and are becoming freshly established, ready to support their soon-to-emerge spikes for the summer season. Phalaenopsis potted at the right point in their growth cycle will reestablish almost immediately, with fresh roots growing into the new medium nearly uninterrupted. As soon as the flush of new root growth is seen, begin regular watering and fertilizing to make maximum use of the major growing season. Do not get over-exuberant with your watering, though, allowing water to splash between plants. This can be a source of infection for both water-borne pathogens and viral contamination. Phalaenopsis are much more susceptible to virus than was previously thought. Take extra care to keep your collection free of bacterial and viral problems, which you can accomplish by maintaining a clean growing area.

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

*\*Look for more articles like this on [www.aos.org](http://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. Check out the great AOS article on the next page.
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.



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](http://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](http://www.aos.org)

# Spring into Action

## Orchids are Awakening and Entering the Prime Growing Season

By Sue Bottom

The dull, gray, cold days of winter are behind us. It's warm, it's bright and new green orchid root tips are growing. It's time for you to spring into action!



**Move Plants to Their Summer Home** – Sometime after mid-March, it should be safe to move your plants from their winter to their summer homes. The plants may have been in a less than optimum situation during the winter while you were keeping them alive, perhaps too crowded, too cold, too shady or too dry. Never fear, they will regain their growing vigor when they are outside in the fresh air with enough sun and water.

- ★ *Acclimate Plants to Increased Light* – Move your plants into higher intensity light gradually to avoid sunburn, transitioning them gradually for 2 or so weeks until they are in their ideal spot. The amount of light your plants receive increases in the spring, both from the changing location of the sun and from number of hours the sun is out. Keep an eye out for potential sunburn on leaves and shade plants when necessary. If you notice that those nearest your light source are getting yellowish, make sure that they are not burning. Thin leaved orchids such as oncidiums and dendrobiums will show the problem first; most cattleyas will turn yellowish or show reddish shadows on their leaves.
- ★ *Vary Your Watering Schedule* - With up-and-down temperatures, cloudy days and unpredictable weather, spring can be a hard time for orchid growers. Match your watering schedule to the weather. If the temperature is warm and the sun is out, water as you do during summer. If the days stay cool and cloudy, revert back to your winter schedule. Watch your plants carefully and check how damp the pots are. When everything feels dry, wait a day or two and then water.
- ★ *Stake your plants* - Since orchids grow so slowly it is just our nature to leave them in one place, and very often they will start tilting in the direction of the most light. We need to stake our plants (particularly dendrobiums and cattleyas) so that they will grow in an upright fashion to present their flowers aesthetically. Dendrobiums in particular will lean over without proper staking. Use stakes that are the same height as the tallest growth and tie or clip two or three times along the full length of the stake.

✦ *Turn Your Plants* - In addition to staking your plants, turn them one quarter of the way around each week if you are growing in a windowsill or with the light source on one side. This will allow the plant to grow more evenly and keep it from leaning in one direction. The exception to this rule is when the plant is producing an inflorescence or flowering stem. You want to stake the inflorescence, but do not turn the plant or you will ruin the presentation of your flowers as the flower stem grows toward the light.



**The Annual Repotting Marathon** – Get ready for the repotting season. Sterilize your pots ahead of time. Make sure you have enough potting mix to finish your repotting chores before the suppliers sell out of your ingredients. Select your potting mix to match your watering habits so orchids in a given area can be watered with the same frequency. If you've purchased orchids that are in different mixes you may want to repot them into the same mix so you can deliver the right amount of water and fertilizer to each plant. Coarse, freely draining mixes are generally better for the cattleyas and dendrobiums that have pseudobulbs or canes to store energy and water. More water retentive mixes like coco husk, bark, soilless peat or sphagnum moss are better for the phalaenopsis that just have fleshy leaves to store their energy. Oncidiums seem to thrive in either mix. Check out Greg Allikas' [Potting Workshop](#) for some great instructions on repotting a wide variety of different orchids.

✦ Cattleyas – The best time to repot cattleyas is right before they send out new root tips. You'll see a swelling on the youngest pseudobulb that will signal the beginning of the repotting season. Your unifoliate cattleyas will be ready for repotting first and the bifoliate a little bit later. If you're growing outdoors, select a tree fern/aliflor type open mix, so the roots will have the air they love so much around them. Remove the old growth leaving at least 3 to 5 pseudobulbs and select a pot that will allow the plant enough room to grow for 2 to 3 years (look at the distance between

pseudobulbs and assume you'll get 1 to 3 new growths each year). Use a rhizome clip to anchor the plant until the new roots are established.

- ✦ *Dendrobiums* – In general, dendrobiums resent repotting and being overpotted. The canes tend to grow very close together so several years of new growth can be accommodated in a smaller pot than you might select for a cattleya. They tend to like lots of water during the growing season and lesser amounts during the winter rest, so the mix should not contain too much degradable organic matter (like coco husk, sphagnum or bark).
- ✦ *Oncidiums* – Oncidiums can be repotted at any time though it is best to repot right before new root growth begins. Oncidiums are happy in a variety of mixes depending on your watering habits and growing conditions.
- ✦ *Paphiopedilums* – Paphiopedilums love to be repotted, perhaps because they are so sensitive to salt accumulation in the mix. They can be repotted every 6 months if you are so inclined. Jim Krull recommends a mix of 90% fine bark, 5% charcoal and 5% peat for most paphs, using half coarse bark for 6 in and larger pots.
- ✦ *Phalaenopsis* – Phalaenopsis should be repotted every year or two after flowering. The commercial growers all seem to favor sphagnum moss, which is great as long as you allow it to dry slightly between waterings. If you are a heavy waterer or find sphagnum difficult, perhaps a soil-less peat, bark or coco husk based mix would be preferable.
- ✦ *Catasetum Relatives* – Watch for signs of new growth on the catasetum relatives. Remove the old medium, cut off dried roots and pot in a sphagnum moss (if growing under cover) or soilless peat, coco husk mix (if growing outdoors) interlayered with the time released fertilizer Dynamite. DO NOT WATER until the new growth is about 4 inches tall.



**That River in Egypt** - Inspect your plants and note any that do not appear to be vibrant and happy. If the plant is not growing well for you, try a different regimen. Perhaps the plant would prefer a more water retentive or more freely draining potting medium or try mounting the plant and see if that works better. Perhaps the plant is growing but will not bloom for you. Try relocating the plant so it receives more light (gradually so a sudden increase in light won't sunburn the leaves). If you've tried everything, consider giving the plant to someone with a different shade green thumb to see if their conditions suit the plant better. And if all else fails, send the plant to orchid heaven to make room for plants that you can flower and enjoy more.

*Thank you to Sue Bottom for permission to reprint this article for our newsletter. Sue and her husband, Terry, who is the photographer, are active in the St. Augustine Orchid Society, maintaining the society's website and publishing its monthly newsletter. Check out the STAUG (St. Augustine) Orchid Society Website and the AOS magazine, ORCHIDS, for more of Sue's articles.*

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES FOR THEIR DONATIONS.THEIR GENEROSITY COVERED THE SHOW AWARDS, DOOR PRIZES, RAFFLE PRIZES, POSTERS, SHOW PROGRAMS, AND PALMS.

Ritter-Tropic 1 Orchids

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Home Depot Merritt Island

Many thanks to Florida Today, Hometown News ,Florida Gardening Magazine, and Senior Life staff writers for their beautiful articles about our show. Also, to Joe Crews, at Brevard Notes Bright-house TV for his interview.. Many local community calendars listed us in print and on their websites, providing us with a broad spectrum of exposure, for which we are very grateful.

Welcome to the thirty new members, who joined at the show.

Above are a few who

attended the May meeting.



## Raffle Fun

Every current member who wears a nametag to the meeting will receive a raffle ticket for an orchid drawing.

# ON WITH THE SHOW—2015



**PCOS EXHIBIT, SARAH AND NADINE GREET VISITORS WITH A SMILE, ISLAND ENTRANCE**



**Winning Pedestal**

**Niches**



**Courtesy Booth**

