

# news

Volume 15.1 - January 2003

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## President's Message

Another year has begun and who knows what it will bring?

I hope that it will be a happy year, with lots of beautiful, entrancing flowers for the orchid growers! Could we also ask for a year with very few bugs, slugs and disease on our plants?

Having just returned from the (snowy) Okanagan, I am very pleased to let you know that there is now the sixth British Columbia orchid society, established in the North Okanagan valley around the city of Vernon. Congratulations to our newest group and best wishes for the future!

As many of you already know, the Canadian Orchid Congress meeting for 2003, will take place in Toronto during the SOOS show that includes the Mid America Congress. The dates will be April 3 – 5, 2003 and I hope that many of our Canadian orchid societies will be represented either through a delegate or by a letter from each orchid society to let the COC assembly know where you may need assistance and what suggestions, beefs and bouquets you may have for us. Please, do communicate with us! You can always reach a few of us at the e-mail addresses listed on the back page of this newsletter; you can write to me: 7005 Brentwood Drive, Brentwood Bay, BC, V8M 1B4 and of course, you could even telephone: (250) 652-6133.

We do want your input, because we (the Executive of the COC) are, in a simile: the tip of the iceberg, which is all the Canadian orchid growers. We all are interested in orchid growing and even if you just have a question about orchids, please, do talk or write to any of us, we would love to hear from you!

For the fall, we are hopeful to have again the COC speaker tour. It will most likely be in two parts: one for the East and one for the West. When you consider that there are about 25 separate orchid societies in Canada, it becomes obvious that we cannot expect one person to tour Canada for (at least) four weeks in a row to present orchid programs, perhaps also sell plants. If anybody has any suggestions about this, please, let us know. We cannot satisfy anybody without knowing what you want! Also, it would really be nice, if someone would offer to help with the COC speakers' tour.

*Ingrid Schmidt-Ostrander*

MidAmerica Orchid Congress  
Canadian Orchid Congress  
SOOS Orchid Show  
April 4-6, 2003

The entire show and conference will be at the Inn on the Park, Eglinton Avenue East at Leslie Street in Toronto.

For details and registration see:  
Southern Ontario Orchid Society  
<http://www.soos.ca/>

Presentations by -

**Christie Borkowsky** - MAOC CONSERVATION  
LECTURE

Christie Borkowsky received her BSc. (Zoology) in 1994. Following graduation, her interest in wildlife led to a position at the Manitoba Tall Grass Prairie Preserve where she has since been employed. She is responsible for monitoring the flora and fauna found within this fragmented habitat and this was where she developed her interest in native orchids. Three Provincial endangered orchid species *Cypripedium candidum*, *Platanthera praeclara*, and *Spiranthes magnicamporum* occur on the Preserve.

**Tom Harper** - DEVELOPING RED  
PHALAEENOPSIS

Everyone wants a fire-red flower. Species as well as several hybrids, such as Brother Purple, must be carefully combined to achieve this goal. Tom Harper of Stones River Orchids in Franklin, Tennessee is a founding member of the International Phalaenopsis Alliance and an A.O.S. Judge. Both the Orchid Digest and Orchids, the American Orchid Society publication, have published his articles on Phalaenopsis.

**Howard Liebman MD** - GENUS CYRTOCHILUM

The Cyrtochilums produce a stunning show with their enormous inflorescences and spectacular results when they are used in hybridizing. Howard Liebman, an A.O.S. judge from Pacific Palisades, California, has done extensive hybridizing in the Oncidium/Odontoglossum alliance for the past 35 years.

**Andy Easton** - SIX DECADES OF ORCHID CULTURE CHANGES

The orchid hobby has grown and changed significantly. Andy's experience in New Zealand, Australia, Japan as well as Europe and the United States gives him a unique perspective. Andy Easton is a Senior A.O.S. Judge, Emeritus judge of the Cymbidium Society and Director of Education/Orchid Operations at A.O.S. headquarters.

## Note from the Treasurer

As a reminder, notices will be mailed out to each society regarding the COC dues. The COC memberships for 2003 are due to the Treasurer by January 31, 2003. Memberships are \$1.00 per each member of your society.

Cheques are to be made out to the Canadian Orchid Congress.

Dues are to be mailed to:

Janette Richardson, Treasurer  
38 Straub Crescent  
Regina, Saskatchewan S4T 6S6

## Let us hear from you

The COC meeting for 2003 will take place in Toronto during their spring show April 5 and 6. You are invited to please, write a letter to the COC President Ingrid Ostrander (7005 Brentwood Drive, Brentwood Bay BC, V8M 1B4, phone or fax her (250) 652-6133 or send an e-mail to [ifl@telus.net](mailto:ifl@telus.net)).

In this letter, I want you to state your concerns with the Canadian Orchid Congress, any wishes, hopes, beefs or bouquets. You may also send your letters along with your delegates who must hand your letters to the president before the meeting starts. In absence of a delegate, your letters will be read out aloud to the assembly. We want your input. We need to know what you would prefer the COC to do on your behalf. If you don't tell us, we cannot help you.

## New Orchid Society

Welcome to the Vernon Orchid Lovers. They have a new web site at <http://members.shaw.ca/vernonorchidlovers/>

## JEWELS OF THE FOREST - NATIVE, WILD ORCHIDS.

During the last week of June, a few years ago, a friend and business associate was kind enough to arrange for me to see some native Orchids near a village where he grew up, a short distance north of Portage La Prairie, in Manitoba. What a pleasant surprise and a long overdue diversion from the otherwise monotonous business meetings that make up my work week.

The places where my friend had seen orchids in his youth had been changed to pasture and the orchids had disappeared. With the kind help of his aunt, who made inquiries for us, we were directed to the farm of the "ROMAN" family. What a surprise! There, just a few yards off the main highway, on a gravelled side road was a fenced-in ½ an acre bush pasture land (to keep the cows out), well advertised with signs, and connected with a bridge to the road. The orchids were well identified with pictures and botanical names. A remarkable and unexpected effort!

The plants we found were three species of *Cypripediums* and a *Corallorhiza*. The first three are commonly known as "SLIPPER ORCHIDS." The last is mostly of botanical interest, however when closely examined, the small flowers are very beautiful.

The area around lakes Winnipeg and Manitoba are home to some two dozen orchids with a flowering time that extends from June to August and some years into September. Because I had only one day to visit this area, the two species of yellow Slippers (the small *Cypripedium parviflorum* var. *parviflorum* and the large *Cypripedium parviflorum* var. *pubescence*) had reached the end of their flowering time and the large pink slipper *Cypripedium reginae* was one or two days away from fully opening their flowers. Still, it was a beautiful sight.

To understand and appreciate the native orchids, a person should take some time to investigate their very interesting and special place in the botanical world. Unlike their tropical relatives, who grow mostly on trees and rocks, the orchids of the northern hemisphere are terrestrial perennial herbs. They grow in soil and during spring and summer they are in a hurry to grow, produce flowers and set seeds, only to disappear for the duration of the winter. There are orchids growing on every continent except Antarctica. There are orchids found in the North-West Territories, Alaska and on Greenland. Some are circumpolar. They grow in North America, Europe and in Asia. Others are more confined to a special area. Orchids are the largest

plant family on earth. Because the terrestrial orchids do not have a commercial value, they are mostly overlooked by the public. This is sad and tragic. Sad, because it deprives many people of enjoying their beauty. Tragic, because people not knowing of their existence in the woods that surround their homes overlook them and do not give them the protection that they so desperately need. Point in fact, I have seen orchids growing alongside railway right of ways and in ditches along roads, to find when I later returned to take photographs that they had either been mowed down or sprayed with a weed killer. Add to this the destruction of wood-lots, the draining of wetlands, and the harvest of forests and one can predict the outcome.

Some interesting facts about native orchids: Like all Orchids, they belong to the botanical group of the monocotyledon, that is, plants that germinate with only one seed leaf. This family contains all Grasses, Lilies, Bromeliads (air-plants, Pineapples) and Crocuses, just to name a few. The other group, the dicotyledon, germinates with two seed leaves. It contains, the roses, the daisies all true trees etc. Botanically speaking, the monocotyledon families of plants are the more modern plants.

Northern native Orchids share many characteristics with their distant cousins, the lilies and the irises. The root, just like the iris, is an underground horizontal rhizome with undivided roots. The next year's growth starts to form just about when this year's flowers open. One can dig up an orchid in the fall when the plant has completely died down to find one or several light green upward pointing, pencil like growth points. Next spring these points will grow a complete new root system, a plant and flowers.

The flower has the basic structure like that of the wild lilies. Three sepals and three petals, for a total of six parts, that make up the outer flower parts.

Now, the two big differences:

- 1) In orchids, one of the petals, the uppermost, is modified into a special form. In the slipper orchids it is a pouch, in other orchids it can be modified to mimic an insect; in others it is changed into a specially coloured landing platform for insects. Just to add a special twist to all of this, the flower turns just before it opens so that the special petal, instead of being on top of the flower, ends up on the bottom.
- 2) When inspecting a lily, one can see in the centre of the

flower the column; this is the female part that is set to receive the male pollen. Around this pencil like structure the stamens are arranged and they contain moist pollen. These parts are well separated. In orchids, the male and the female parts are arranged into one central column.

The seeds, after fertilization which is done mostly by insects, the orchids develop three chambered seed pods just like the lilies and irises. This is where the similarities end. The seeds of most other plants contain the germ that contains the basic plant genes and a supply of food in the form of sugars and starches. The orchid seed contains only the plant's genes, no food at all. To make up for this and to broaden its chance of survival the orchids produce several hundreds of thousands of seeds per seed capsule. These seeds resemble in size ground-up pepper and are dispersed by air movement. Because there is no food for the germinating seed, it needs a fungus to produce food for it.

Only when an Orchid seed lands where a fungus is present can it start to grow; indeed it needs the fungus to penetrate the seed to initiate growth. This process can take several years, where the seed develops into a small pea size plantlet without roots and leaves. Because of this time factor, it is very important not to disturb areas where orchids grow and not to use fungicides.

All this should not discourage people from growing wild orchids in their gardens, rather it should encourage all garden lovers to cultivate several different species. All that is needed is to gather the basic knowledge of the growth habits of the orchid that is to be cultivated and a specially prepared place that is similar to the orchid's wild habitat.

Rather than trying to transplant plants from the wild, plant seedlings are available from growers who have perfected seed cultivation in labs. Because these plantlets have started to grow without a fungus, they will favourably respond to very low concentrations of special orchid fertilizer.

For persons who are really interested in this subject, below are the names and addresses of sources for hardy orchid seeds and of a magazine specializing in native orchids.

## INTEREST GROUPS

**North American Native Orchid Journal**  
Nancy Webb, 84-Etna Str.  
Brighton, Massachusetts 02135-2180, USA.

**North American Orchid Journal**  
published quarterly by

North American Orchid Alliance  
Editor: Paul Martin Brown  
15 Dresden Street, Jamaica-Plain, MA. USA 02130-4407

## BOOKS

**Field Guide to Orchids of North America**  
ISBN # 0-87663-415-3

**Hardy Orchids**  
ISBN # 0-88192-147-5

## SOURCES FOR HARDY ORCHIDS

**Spangle Creek Labs / Bell Steele**  
2295 Country Road 445  
Bovey, MN. 55709 USA.  
Ph: 218-247-0245  
Cypripedium seedlings only, flasks: reginae, candidum, marcranthos, parviflorum, kentuckiense, guttatum, arietinum, formosanum

**Hortico Inc.**  
723 Robson Rd., Waterdown, Ont. LOR-2H1  
Phone: 905-689-6984  
FAX. 905-689-6566  
has assorted plants

**Cyp.-Heaven/Carson E. Whitlow**  
2291-280.-Street, Adel, Iowa, 9417 USA  
has assorted plants

**Thompson & Morgan**, The Seedsmen, est. 1855  
220 Faraday Ave. P.O. Box 1308  
Jackson, N.J. U.S.A. 08527 - 0308  
Phone: 908-363-2225, 1-800-274-7333  
FAX: 909-363-9356  
has assorted plants

**Holes Greenhouses & Gardens**  
101 Bellerose Drive  
ST. Albert, Alberta T8N 8N8  
Phone: 1-888-884-6537  
FAX: 403-459-6042

**Bluestem Farm**  
S-5920 Lehman Road, Baraboo, Wisconsin - 539113 USA  
Phone: 608-356-0179  
Scott Weber/Martha Barrett

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*W. Bischoff*, Surrey, B.C. Member, Vancouver Orchid Society/Fraser Valley Orchid Society.

# Orchids and Latin and/or Greek

The following write-up is meant to stimulate an interest in the reader and enhance the enjoyment of growing orchids. Because of the vastness of the subject matter it is impossible to cover all nuances in detail, this is left to the interested reader. Corrections and suggestions are invited.

A book, "Orchid Names and their meanings" by Hubert Mayr, is very interesting, informative and entertaining. (international order # ISBN 3-904144-07-3). Also available through the American Orchid Society book store. Everybody should have it. If you plan to buy a copy you need not read any further. For all you others who want to save a few dollars please read on.

You have a splendid hobby growing orchids and it's all in Latin and Greek. Not to despair, speaking English you already speak 50% Latin with a rather bad pronunciation mind you. That's all right, the French speak almost 100% Latin and look how badly they pronounce it. One advantage English speakers have, besides the Greek and the Spanish, they can properly pronounce a "th" sound, as in Anthos (meaning flower in Greek).

Orchid names are largely based on Latin and Greek or Latinized Greek and many other languages, also Latinized. Most Greek orchid names which start with a "C" are latinized where the "C" should be pronounced as "K". As an example, as in Julius Caesar, the Caesar is pronounced similar to the German "Kaiser". The pronunciation "Sesar" is simply mediaeval church Latin.

The flower parts especially, are sometimes compared to human or animal body parts and given Latin and/or Greek names. These names can have diverse forms but always the root word is there. Just look for it and use your imagination.

Starting from the top of the human body:

**Head:** Kephalos, make sure that you don't write it Kephallios. Just get the book and look it up - it will save you some embarrassment.

**Heart:** cordatum, any word which has "corda" or similar in it makes reference to the heart.

**Hair:** pubic, pubescence means "with hair". You know that word from puberty, a hairy time especially when you are raising teenagers.

**Eye/seeing, to look like:** usually as an ending to orchid names ... oides

**Nose:** nasutum

**Lip:** labiata, mostly refers to the lip on an orchid.

**Tongue:** lingua/glosso..., our word language comes from there

**Finger:** digitatus, you know this name from the non-orchid plant "Digitalis".

**Foot/shoe:** pedalis/pedilon, now there is an interesting word. You find it on your bicycle and in "pedestrian", also in several slipper orchid names. *Cypripedium* means foot or shoe of "Cypria" the other name for Venus (in German, Venus Frauen Schuh). Cypria refers to the island of Cyprus where Venus allegedly came from. Cyprus in turn gives us the name for copper via the Latin cuprum.

*Phragmipedium* - the first part means to fragment or break - it means broken shoe and has a deep botanical meaning.

*Paphiopedilum* - Paphia, yet another name for Venus and pedium for shoe. Aphrodite, a further name for Venus has so far not been used to name an orchid.

**Naked:** gymnos, as in *gymnoglossus*, a naked tongue, or *gymnopodus*, as in naked foot (the "g" is pronounced as in go, all g's in orchid names which stem from Greek words are pronounced like this. Interesting is that the word *gymnasium* means a place where the naked boys do sports etc.

**Beautiful:** there are two words, *formosus*, and *pulcher*. An interesting play on words - when the Portugese discovered Formosa, even so other people lived there all along, they named it Formosa (now Taiwan) because they thought it to be a beautiful island. A slipper orchid which grows in the mountains of Formosa is called *Cypripedium japonicum* var. *formosanum*, that means the Lady's Slipper Orchid japonicum from Formosa. So it is a beautiful orchid from a beautiful island. This orchid is grown on the west coast of Canada as an outdoor plant all year in the garden.

**Woman:** gyne, the orchid genus *Coelogyne*, interestingly is the opposite of gynecologist.

Animal names and parts are also used

**Bird:** ornitho...

**Eagle:** aquila

**Bee:** api..., *apifera* to carry a bee, *fer* is interesting because our word ferry comes from there, simply a carrier, Conifer a group of wind pollinated trees means simply to carry cones. Christopher, to carry Christ. (pher = fer)

**Wasp:** vespa

**Butterfly:** papilio

**Spider:** arachni...

**Moth:** Phalaena as in *Phalaenopsis/opsis* = to look as; (in

German, Falter, if the F is changed to the Greek Ph, you can see the relationship of European languages

**Wing:** ptera, pronounced "tera"

### Colors

**Red:** rhodo, as in rhabdomyolysis (red lip). Sanguinea, red as blood. Erythros also means red as in Eritrean sea

**Purple:** purpurata, after the color that was being produced in the eastern Mediterranean from a sea mollusk, "Royal Purple". Also violacea, names after the plant Viola.

**Blue:** azureus, as in sky blue.

**Green:** viridis

**Yellow:** lutea, flava, both mean yellow

**Scarlet:** coccinea, named after an insect from whom this color is produced.

**Shade:** tenebrosus, means shady and implies dark.

### Plant parts

**Flower:** anthos

**Fruit/Seed:** capsula - carpus, as in streptocarpus a plant related to African Violets. It means twisted fruit. You also know this word from streptococcus, a pathogenic bacteria.

**Stem:** caule, as in *Cypripedium acaule*, meaning stemless, our two leafed pink north American Lady's Slipper Orchid.

**Leaf:** phylum

Endings of names are also interesting, for example, they will tell you where an orchid is from. Such as "ensis or ana", as in *Laelia itambana*, from the Pico de Itambe, or *Oncidium paranaense*, from Rio Parana.

Very interesting is "*Dendrobium forbesii*". It is named after the English orchidist Forbes. When latinizing this name, the Latin pronunciation is used as Forbes with the accent on the "e", and not as Forbsiy where the "e" is totally omitted. So properly pronounced it would look like "Forbesi-ee", where the double ii is pronounced correctly as in English "ee".

A name which ends in "oides" means looks-like, such as *Coelogyne lycastoides*, looks like a Lycaste.

Another example: Rothschildianum and how to pronounce it properly. The root word is Rothschild a German name of a prominent European banker family, who sponsored orchid expeditions. Rothschild sometimes is in error written Rothchild (it has nothing to do with the English word child), it is made up of two parts: Roth & Schild. Roth means red and Schild means shield, a red shield. The "red shield" was the trade mark of the Rothschilds. The "th" is pronounced as a "t" and the "sch" is pronounced as "sh". So pronounce it Rotshield. The initial "r" is rolled as in Scottish. You're doing well, now you can even speak some German.

Generally speaking, growing orchids gives you licence to speak Latin and Greek badly. The trend is to follow persons who are knowledgeable. Be cautious however, some publications contain errors. In time you can detect these errors and point them out. Doing this during a presentation or discussion at a show table will make you highly popular. People will remember you as an anthropos sapiens, Greek for wise guy.

There you are, with a second hobby, and on your way to become a polyglot. (Greek, many-tongues, speaking many languages).

After all this, I hope that I have interested you enough to buy the book or have your society buy it for its library. In time you can memorize orchid names and repeat them to the astonishment of others. Wouldn't it be nice if you also knew what they meant.

*W.Bischoff* / member, VOS & FVOS

## The Need for Canadian Culture Sheets

For a long time, I have been concerned about the AOS Culture Sheets. Most societies hand them out blithely at shows because they are concise and available. The idea is to help beginning growers understand how to take care of their plants. The purpose is to foster success and encourage more people to grow orchids. Unfortunately, the AOS sheets are often of most use in Florida conditions where you have humid warm weather, escape the ravages of months of drying central heating systems and experience gentle changes in day length from summer to winter as opposed to very short days in winter and very long days in summer that Canadian growers endure. Most beginning growers, to which the culture information is directed, take the Florida conditions as a bible for windowsill growing, often with disastrous results. A catch-22 is that the information in their "Orchids in the Home" culture sheet is a necessary prelude to the sheets for specific genera. It is rarely copied and distributed. Some of that information needs to be repeated in the culture sheets. If you have not looked at the sheets lately, look them up on the AOS website at [www.orchidweb.org](http://www.orchidweb.org)

Most of us must heat our homes for a large portion of the year (unless you live in the narrow region of the west coast),—dry heat and worst of all forced heat systems. And where do contractors install the ducts? Under the windows of course. So to tell people who grow on windowsills to plant something like Miltoniopsis in bark, which dries rapidly, is a scandal. Even Cattleyas will desiccate in the winter in straight bark with a forced air heat duct blowing on them. Cultural information needs to take into account that a major portion of windowsill beginners view care on the same level as they have been doing with indestructible house plants: if it wilts, water it, (which is usually too late for most orchids) and gee, the plant is getting a bit big for the pot, maybe I should repot it when I have time—maybe next year!!

The concept of good drainage is a holy grail in Florida where it can be very wet and humid, and plants are grown outside or in shade houses. For windowsill growers, moisture retention is far more important. I make up two litre bags of 'mix' for beginners—it really makes no money and is a pain bagging and mixing—but it is more of a service—I include a bit of sphagnum in the mix to help keep it from being too dry in windowsill conditions. It also works in the greenhouse. I suggest they pot gently with dry mix and then water, which causes the sphagnum to expand and anchor the plants in the pot. I cringe every

time I see the AOS video demonstrating packing media so tightly that the plant is wedged. The first thing that happens is that roots are bruised and fungal infections set in and destroy much of the root system.

Now the other problem with the AOS culture sheets is that they say grow in an east or west window. Yet with our very long day lengths in Canada in the summer, a west window is about as bad as a south one for extremes in heat and light. Even catts will fry unless they are shaded. Because of the atmospheric effects, morning sun in an east window is not as hot or as bright as sun coming in a west window in the summer. The culture sheets treat east and west windows as equals.

Do you remember when we used to chant our ABC's or multiplication tables in school? We do that with the standard cultural suggestions for watering and fertilizing when beginning growers ask for help. "Weakly, weekly" is in the culture sheets but is just the tip of the iceberg. When we suggest that, we are really being lazy and doing growers a disservice. Why? Because we have left out most of the story. Since we do not know what the mineral content of their water is, we suggest weak fertilizer to not further burn plants already stressed by city water or high mineral content well-water. And once upon a time, when there were not easily available commercial fertilizers formulated specifically for orchids, growers depended on house plant fertilizer that was too strong. However, in practice the recommended 'weekly' becomes 1/4 strength monthly. So the plants grow slowly and flower less often and with lower numbers. Now that fertilizers are designed specifically for orchids with directions for the major genera, this suggestion should be dropped in favour of pushing a dedicated orchid fertilizer. I suspect that far more plants suffer from under fertilization than over fertilization. The reason that commercial growers grow plants quickly is that they practice heavy fertilization—in conjunction with good management.

We also need a discussion of water quality and simple remedies. Most long time commercial growers of paphs or phals or miltoniopsis will tell you that water quality is the single most important feature of culture, yet it is the one that is left out. For instance, most of southern Ontario sits on limestone, yet most people with wells or municipal water from large wells do not realize that the water has a high pH and a high mineral content—not the best for orchids. For most beginners, good water means bacteria

are absent. I try to tell people to treat their orchids like they treat themselves: a MacDonald's hi-salt diet is unhealthy for us and the same goes for orchids. It is something they remember. I encourage them to use rainwater if possible (with a few plants they can store it as ice cubes), or buy RO (reverse osmosis) water in the grocery stores. The Loblaws chain (Atlantic Superstore in the Maritimes, Ontario Zehrs, No Frills, etc) sells it. And I warn them that 'spring water' usually has a high mineral content and do not use water from a water softener.

On the same topic, I know that 'leaching' monthly is also part of the holy grail and that some of you may need smelling salts. If you leach with high pH/ high mineral water, it probably does little or no good. But if you use water with a somewhat acid pH and lower mineral content, massive leaching might do as much harm as good. There was an article this fall in *Greenhouse Canada*, the commercial greenhouse grower's magazine, on watering that suggested that flooding plants, as we orchid growers do in leaching, may actually kill roots by suffocating them because it is such an abrupt shift from dry to saturated conditions that choke off the oxygen supply to roots. The point is that it is always worthwhile to rethink the most basic advice for beginners and it needs to be done with Canadian conditions in mind.

Moving to the topic of humidity, the culture sheets chant off certain humidity requirements that most people never achieve on a windowsill. I would not want to discourage people from using gravel with a bit of water as a base for pots to sit on, but the research is adequate that this makes little or no difference to humidity levels. Better to suggest covering or partially blocking hot air vents under the window to slow down drying along with a morning misting.

As for light, the point needs to be made that light is not independent of temperature, air movement, and fertilizer. Most orchids can take a fair amount of light providing they do not dry out, have air moving around them and have adequate fertilizer to make use of the light in photosynthesis. I tell people that if they are too hot sitting in a sunny window, then their orchids will be as well: a simple idea that is easily remembered. I think many of us that grow in greenhouses would be horrified if we had light levels equal to a west window of a house in May. Because

our winters drag on into late springs, it is difficult for new growers to recognize that just because it is still cool or cold outside, that plants can easily sunburn in high light in unshaded windows in May.

Potting recommendations should take into account what is easily available in Canada and something to retain moisture for windowsill growers. The AOS culture sheet for *Miltonia* (OK, perhaps you can hear me grinding my teeth as they include *Miltoniopsis* which is like putting *Cattleyas* and *Paphs* in the same sheet) suggests "any potting mix suitable for fine roots such as 70 percent seedling bark with charcoal and perlite or a mix of 70 percent tree fern and 30 percent chopped sphagnum is adequate" for *Miltoniopsis*. Adequate for a greenhouse grower perhaps, but fine, fresh fir bark dries far too rapidly and sucks too much of the nitrogen out of the mix for easy culture of *Miltoniopsis* on a dry windowsill. And tree fern is usually hard to find and expensive these days. Or suggesting a well-drained, water-retentive mix as they do for *Paphs* puts repotting on the same level as a driving instructor that suggests staying in your own lane as the key to learning how to drive defensively. Just too simple to be of any use.

I would like to suggest a different approach to culture sheets: instead of 'rules', emphasize 'thinking' about your own microclimate, treating your orchids like pets that need attention——if you can get people to think about caring for their plants rather than panicking when they get crinkled leaves or shriveled pseudobulbs, and treat them with the same thought they would put into a cat or dog (not quite that extreme), then perhaps new growers would be more successful with other genera besides phals.

But if we are were to produce sheets for northern growers, (people in New York, Minnesota and Washington state are left just as much in the cold) then we need writers or reviewers that have grown in a variety of situations and are in tune with beginners. The worst is someone who has grown in the same greenhouse or light setup for 20 years and will tell you that you can't grow this or that or that you must do this or that, meaning that you must do what has worked in their microclimate. These growers don't need culture sheets: they grow what genera and using what culture they have found over time to be successful in a particular microclimate.

*Jean Allen-Ikeson, Windsor Greenhouse*

## Society Executive Update

Would the COC Reps for each society please mail or email the following contact information for each of your society Executive members listed below.

DATE:  
NAME OF ORCHID SOCIETY

### Contact information

NAME:  
ADDRESS:  
CITY:  
PROV.:  
POSTAL CODE:  
PHONE: (AREA CODE)  
E-MAIL:

### Executive members

PRES.  
1 V.P.  
2 V P  
SECRET.  
TREAS.  
COC REP.  
PAST PRES.

### Send to:

Ingrid Ostrander, President COC  
7005 Brentwood Drive  
Brentwood Bay BC V8M 1B4

Or email to: [ifl@telus.net](mailto:ifl@telus.net)

## Slide Programs

**Cattleyas** - by Ken Girard. This is an excellent program.

**Oncidiums** - by Gordon Heaps. Slides have been added and the script has been re-done by Gordon Heaps.

**Fragrant Orchids** produced by Marilyn Light. More and more hobbyists nowadays cite fragrance as one of the major factors they consider when selecting orchids for their collections. Orchid flowers can offer a veritable potpourri of olfactory delight to adventurous growers. With sweet, spicy, citrus, vanilla and floral notes, the orchid fragrance palette is as varied as are the insect pollinators that the scents may attract. This presentation will tantalize the senses and introduce hobbyists to some common and not so common orchids that can be easily raised. A set of informative notes accompanies the slide set.

**Terrestrial Orchids and Their Culture**, compiled by Bill Bischoff

**Phragmipediums** includes fifty colour slides of all the Phragmipedium species, including all the newer ones up to September 2002 and a good number of hybrids. There is a short written introduction, with instructions on caring for Phragmipediums etc. and there are short notes for every slide.

A program on *Paphiopedilums* has been promised.

The slide programs may be ordered from:

Janette Richardson  
38 Straub Crescent,  
Regina, Sask., S4T 6S6

Phone: 306-543-0560

Email: [dale.richardson@sk.sympatico.ca](mailto:dale.richardson@sk.sympatico.ca)

# COMING EVENTS

2003

**Feb 21-23:** Orchid Society of Alberta. in the Grant MacEwan College, Millwoods Campus, 7319 - 29 Ave. Edmonton, Alberta.  
"http://www.telusplanet.net/public/macklam/pages/aborchsoc"  
For more info: rmerz@telusplanet.net or call (780)483-0137

**Mar 1-2:** Victoria Orchid Society Spring Orchid Show will be in the Students' Union Building, University of Victoria.  
Contact: "Ingrid Ostrander" email: ifl@telus.net 250-652-6133  
"http://www.members.shaw.ca/bearman1/"

**March 8-9:** London Orchid Society Orchid Show, Wonderland Gardens, 284 Wonderland Road South, London, ON  
"http://los.lon.imag.net/losshows.htm"

**March 29-30:** Orchid Society of the Royal Botanical Gardens, 680 Plains Rd., Burlington, ON.  
Show chair is Ben Boers, email bmboers@hotmail.com.

**April 3-5:** The 2003 Mid America Orchid Congress, COC meeting and Show is being hosted by the Southern Ontario Orchid Society at The Inn on the Park at Eglington Avenue East and Leslie Street.  
"http://www.soos.ca/"

**April 4-6:** The Manitoba Orchid Society  
"http://www.mosorchids.com/"  
For more information, email: info@mosorchids.com

**April 5-6:** The Regina Orchid Society annual show and sale at the Core Ritchie Community Centre, 445 14th Ave., Regina.  
Contact Janette Richardson, (306)543-0560  
email: dale.richardson@sk.sympatico.ca

**April 12-13:** Kingston Orchid Society at Portsmouth Olympic Harbour. Contact: Tony Capon, aecapon@cogeco.ca

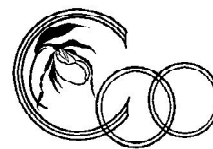
**April 12-13:** The Orchid Society of Nova Scotia at the Nova Scotia Museum of Science, Halifax. Contact Gail Schwartz, 902-422-4553  
Email: rschwarz@hfx.eastlink.ca

**April 19-21:** The Annual Toronto Artistic Orchid Association Show, Chinese Cultural Centre, 5183 Sheppard Ave., East (Markham Road) "http://www.cccgt.org/"

**April 26-27:** The Ottawa Orchid Society show, Nepean Sportsplex, 1701 Woodroffe Ave., Nepean  
"http://www.ottawaorchidsociety.com/"

**COC Web Site - <http://www.CanadianOrchidCongress.ca/>  
This newsletter may be found there.**

**Please send in your show information - date, location, contact, etc.**



news

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Editor: Jerry Bolce

The purpose of COC news is to inform members of the meetings, policies of the COC, to profile members, and to provide technical information regarding happenings, trends and techniques in orchid cultivation across the country and around the world.

We welcome your suggestions and contributions. Deadline for each issue is one month before the issue dates previously announced.

Recipients of this newsletter are strongly urged to pass a copy on to other members of their society

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