

December 2021 Newsletter

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to friends who might be interested in knowing about Five Cities Orchid Society and encourage them to subscribe at www.fcos.org



Laelia anceps 'Mendenhall' blooming in my backyard in Los Osos.

From the Presidents' Potting Bench

I hope that you all are enjoying your Holiday Season so far!

This last month has been a lot of fun. My own little grow area is bringing me a lot of joy. I have several Laelia anceps, Paphiopedilums, Phalaenopsis, Potinaras, as well as an Aussie Dendrobium and a Mystacidium in spike. Out in the yard, several Cymbidiums are sporting flower spikes, promising more color in the near future. I've been on some adventures with my wife and good friends, visiting the Santa Barbara Orchid Estate, CalOrchids, CalCoast Orchids, SloOrchids, Kingdom of Plants and Asbell's Orchids.

The Five Cities Orchid Society (FCOS) has certainly been busy this last month. Our informative and inspiring November 11, 2021 meeting featured Marni Turkel, who discussed caring for Miniature Orchids. The next day, many FCOS members participated in a tour and sale hosting the SLO Newcomers Garden Club at CalCoast Orchids. We gained some new members, and CalCoast orchids made a monetary donation to our Society at that event. FCOS also held an online auction of about 40 plants which raised \$620, with Asbell's Orchids serving as the pickup site afterward. I'd like to thank everyone that donated plants, placed bids and helped with transporting plants to the pickup site, and hosting the pickup event. It is always surprising to me how much coordination and participation is needed for a successful auction to take place.

Our December 9th, 2021, 7 pm-Zoom meeting will be eventful. December is elections month, and we will hold an election of officers during the meeting. Jeff Parham-current President and Karen Kolba-Director, both have an additional year in their Term. The Elections Committee puts forth the following candidates for consideration: Eric Holenda-Vice President, Ed Lysek-Director, Denise Florez- Treasurer/Secretary, Kristie Wells-Assistant Secretary, Anne Bachmann-Director. All members are encouraged to join in and vote at the Zoom meeting.

The December meeting will feature Steven A. Frowine, speaking on the subject of Fragrant Orchids. We have had some excellent speakers and topics this year, and are booking presenters for next year. Be sure to keep up to date on events by checking the website for the latest information: https://www.fcos.org/events-and-where.

I encourage you to support the FCOS by <u>becoming a member</u> and staying current with your dues. If possible, you can also send in a donation--the FCOS is a 501(c)3 non-profit and donations are tax-deductible. Your contributions assist us in growing our programs and scheduling speakers for our meetings. You can send donations to: https://fcos.betterworld.org/donate#

Happy Holidays and Happy Blooming!

Jeffery Parham, President, Five Cities Orchid Society



SLC Firelighter 'Mem. Dora Menchaca' AM/AOS

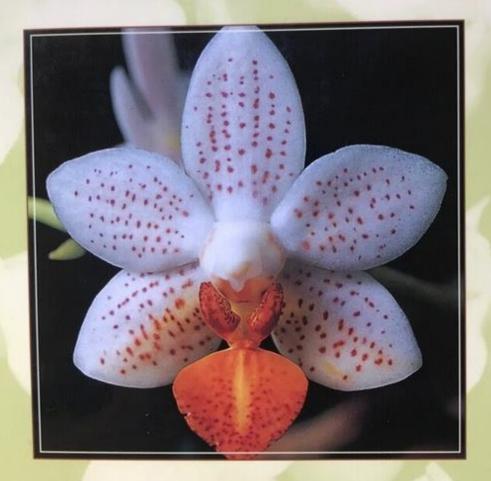


Laelia anceps 'Calaveras' blooming in my backyard in Los Osos



Lady Slipper orchids blooming under LED lights in Jeff Parham's backyard shade house in Los Osos.

Fragrant Orchids



Steven A. Frowine

This book, written in 2005 by our Dec. speaker is available from Amazon.com Click here for details or on eBay. A free e-Book can be downloaded at the website 3lib.net



Fragrant Orchids by Steven A. Frowine

December 9th, 7 pm

Steven Frowine has been obsessed with orchids since growing them in his parent's basement when he was in high school. Author of numerous books including "Orchids for Dummies" and "Fragrant Orchids: A Guide to Selecting, Growing and Enjoying" tonight's Zoom presentation

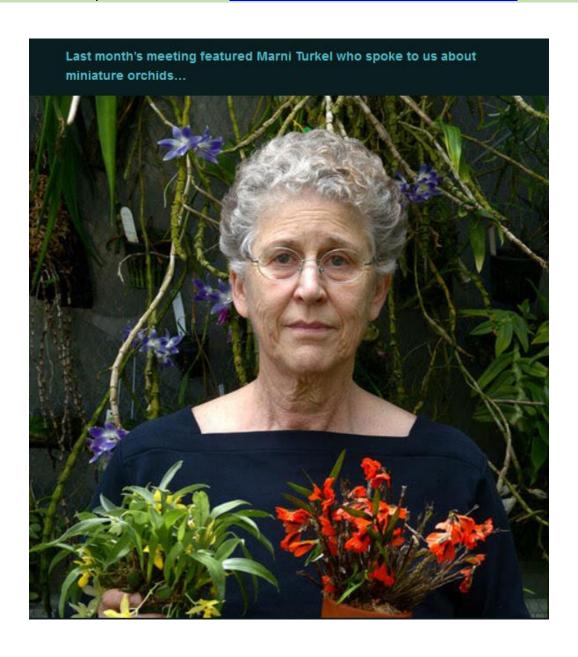
will focus on all aspects of orchid fragrance. Steven holds a B.S. and Master's Degree in horticulture from Ohio State University and Cornell University. He has tended orchids at the National Tropical Botanical Garden in Hawaii and at the Missouri Botanical Garden. Steven currently resides in Asheville, SC.

Join **Zoom** Meeting

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82355435739?pwd=bThHazRPekw5cjhnYmNzMlpkTW96dz09

Meeting ID: 823 5543 5739 Passcode: 204435

Find your local number: https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kcNqzKNn34



FCOS was pleased to have Marni Turkel talk to the group about "Less is More - Small Orchids" at their November 2021 Zoom meeting. Marni switches between three different fertilizers on more or less regular basis in case one of them turns out not to be as good for orchid growth as the others. Marni answers many of the questions asked on https://www.orchidsforum.com/. She began her presentation by discussing what makes an orchid an orchid (petals, sepals, column, anther cap and pollinia). She used many excellent photos of her orchids in talking about the various topics. Marni showed a wide variety of orchid photos with some with big or small flowers, some with fragrance, some with movable lips, others with lips that had lots of details, some with deceptive appearance to hopefully attract a pollinator, some with flowers that are larger than the leaves, and some with patterned foliage. She reminded folks that each species developed to survive and grow in a particular habitat so when you purchase new ones you should choose your new orchids based on what your growing area(s) condition(s) can provide. Marni discussed various general cultural issues including:

- · Water quality: especially higher elevation species need better quality water
- · Temperature: you should consider having a maximum/minimum thermometer in your growing area
- · Light level and quality need to be considered
- · Humidity: most species prefer at least 50%
- · Air movement: All should have some air movement but does not need to be fast
- · Consider if you want to grow your orchids either potted or mounted: potted better if you have lower humidity. Should have at least 70% for mounted orchids
- · Fertilizer: suggested small amount more often.

She also suggested to not use too large of a pot for small orchids. Generally, you might find dead roots at the middle of the root ball during transplanting so she suggests placing an upside-down pot in the bottom of larger pots to add more air to that part of the root ball. Need to be careful of moss creep on small orchids and stated you can kill the moss with 70% alcohol. If your orchid leaves have algae growing on them, you can spray the leaves with a 3% hydrogen peroxide solution, and then wash the leaves off after about 10 minutes. If you have algae growing on your greenhouse panels, she suggested spraying them with a 10% solution of ammonia. Marni also adds a wetting agent (like Dawn soap, or a surfactant liquid) to make the 'water wetter' and the water will drain better and you should see less rot and Botrytis. She also sprays transplanted orchids with an anti-transpirant (like Cloud Cover, or Vapor Guard) to help them become established before they begin to pull water from the roots. Marni also stated you will have less root rot (especially for seedlings) with the addition of beneficial microbes such as Root Shield (by Bioworks) or Bush Doctor Microbe Brew (by FOXFARM). She uses 'Slug-Fest' for control of slugs and snails.



December: The Month of Gifts

By Thomas Mirenda

Reprint: ORCHIDS CONTENTS December 2014 Volume 83 Number

They say it is better to give than to receive, but I am not so sure that is entirely true. Sure, seeing the joy and satisfaction on a loved one's face as they unwrap that perfect present you hand selected and lovingly wrapped for them can be an absolutely sublime pleasure. But it can be equally sublime to be on the receiving end of the transaction too. Gifts are not always material things. All of us have been blessed with unique combinations of talents and abilities that are ours alone, bestowed upon us by some benign force. We have also all been given our own unique sorrows, burdens and insecurities by forces that seem random, unfair and arbitrary. Yes, gifts are not always all that pleasant to get, and often involve dutiful responsibility and conscientious effort to preserve and protect them once received.

At the Smithsonian Gardens Orchid Collection, we are occasionally entrusted with legacy collections. These often consist of beloved, pampered plants that were carefully nurtured by someone's loving care for many decades. Thirty-year old specimen plants can be really magnificent and such extravagant gifts make our collection even more special. But having such plants entrusted to us is a serious responsibility. It is our stability and commitment to collection excellence that allows people to have enough confidence to gift us with such outstanding treasures. Indeed, it is truly wonderful to "receive."

GIVE ME A BREAK With the shortest daylengths of the year coming up this month, many orchids need a serious rest at this time. Deciduous orchids such as catasetums, lycastes, nobile dendrobiums, habenarias and several others require extremely dry conditions in winter and can

be seriously harmed by over exposure to water. Once a plant shuts down its metabolism for the season, a soaking will most likely make that plant rot away. Even plants that retain their leaves, such as cattleyas, oncidiums and phalaenopsis are still growing more slowly or gearing up to bloom and do not require nearly the amount of food and water they did in the spring and summer seasons.

GIMME SHELTER In temperate areas of the Northern Hemisphere, most orchids are being sheltered from the cold in greenhouses, light rooms and windowsills. Tropical orchids would not survive outdoors in colder climates. It is imperative that your growing area be well insulated from cold. Check to be sure there are no cold drafts or greenhouse cracks and that heaters, cold-alarms and circulating fans are in good working order. A little attention to winterizing your set up now can prevent serious heartbreak when the extreme cold weather hits.

GIVE AND STAKE Cymbidiums and phalaenopsis have been elongating their spikes this month and are starting to bud up nicely. As the buds fatten, spikes need additional support, or they will sag or even become pendent. This might be attractive on a mounted or hanging-basket plant, but virtually all potted orchid plants should have their spikes supported with a stake. Always try to do this before the flowers open or they might be angled funny. There is nothing more disconcerting than facing an orchid where the flower is sideways, or worse, upside down, because it was staked too late.

GIMME SOME LOVIN' This may sound a little crazy, but over the years, I have noticed that orchids can pick up on my mood. When I am distraught, so are they! They simply do not grow as well. When they all get the same care, and I am just going through the motions, they muddle along with me, but do not really thrive. However, when I admire and appreciate them all as individuals and take the time to enjoy and learn about each plant's individuality, it is then that my greatest growing successes come my way. I believe the plants can sense when they are truly admired and appreciated. If you give them that simple act of commitment and love, they will pay you back with the greatest gift of all, their spectacular flowers.

— Tom Mirenda has been working professionally with orchids for over three decades and is the past chair of the AOS Conservation Committee. He is an AOS accredited judge in the Hawaii Center (email: biophiliak@gmail.com) ORCHIDS Magazine (aos.org)



FCOS HOLIDAY GET TOGETHER SUNDAY, DEC. 12 AT 11:30 AM

Please join your FCOS friends for a Holiday Gathering on December 12, 2021 at 11:30 am at Rooster Creek Tavern in the Arroyo Grande Village. Everyone will purchase their own food and drink, BUT there just might be a special Holiday Dessert to share! Members can expect a special orchid gift that 'Santa Anne Bachmann' has been growing in her greenhouse.

No reservations needed, but NICE people would send an RSVP. You can do this at the December 9 Monthly FCOS zoom meeting, or email me at kskolba@aol.com anytime. Your friends and family are welcome. We trust that everyone will be vaccinated.

BONUS: This will be a great time to pay your 2022 dues! Your FCOS treasury needs YOUR \$ to continue to pay speakers, internet and Zoom costs, etc.

Hope to see everyone in their Holiday Finery - get those Holiday earrings and sweaters out of the drawer...

Karen Kolba for the FCOS Board of Directors

What's Blooming Now - a few photos from our members and friends



Masdevallia Cinnamon Twist. Grown a clay pot with sphagnum moss.

Grown by Jeffrey Thompson.

Closeup of *Masdevallia* Cinnamon Twist flower.

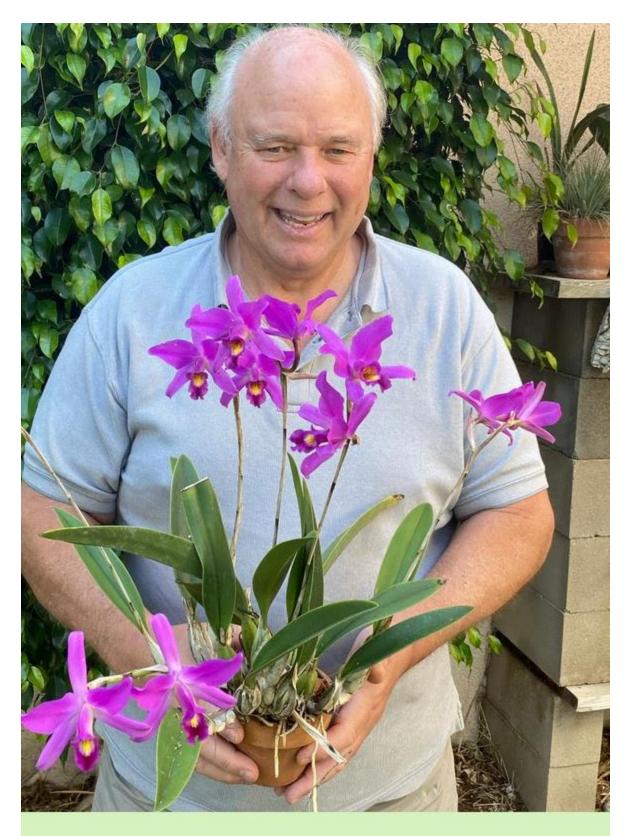




Masdevallia princeps x M. ayabacana. Grown a clay pot with sphagnum moss. Grown by Jeffrey Thompson.

Closeup of Masdevallia princeps x M. ayabacana flower.





Alan Durham with his Laelia anceps Bireriana Type Dark Form/Colipa



Paphiopedilum Gloria Nagel- Second Spike Blooming! Grown by Ed Lysek



Bc. Carnival Kids 'Green Gem' with 7 flower spikes this year. Plant from Tanya Lam's presentation to FCOS in March, 2018. Very temperature tolerant. Grown by Ed Lysek.



Cattleya perciviliana var. alba - a division of a plant originally grown by Larry Verhelig. Grown in large Orchiata bark, net pot inside a larger clay pot. As his plants grew to specimen size, Larry frequently used an inverted empty pot in the center of the pot to prevent moisture build up - exactly what Marni Turkel suggested in her talk last month (and this is the type of orchid Tom Mirenda is standing next to in his photo in the article above). Grown by Ed Lysek



Dendrobium Aussie Parade 'Carrot Splash' x Den Allyn Star 'Crikey' AM/AOS.

This and the next photo have one parent in common (Dendrobium Aussie Parade 'Carrot Splash') but the spots and size of the sepals on each hybrid are different. Both orchids are grown outside and are potting in a combination of Orchiata and lava rock in a plastic pot. Both hybrids are from Sunset Valley Orchids. Grown by Chris Ehrler.

Dendrobium Aussie Parade 'Carrot Splash' x Den. Hilda Poxon 'SVO Spectacular'.



Laelia anceps 'guerrero x irwins'.
This orchid is grown mounted on a piece of cork oak bark and is grown outside year round. L. anceps grows as a warm to cool growing epiphyte in Mexico and Honduras at an elevations of 500 to 1500 meters. Grown by Chris Ehrler.

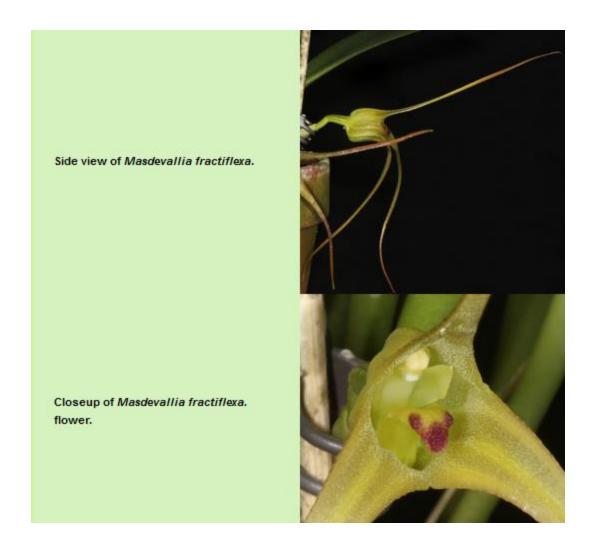


Closeup of the *Laelia anceps* 'guerroro x irwins' lip.

Dracuvallia Blue Boy. This is a hybrid between Masdevallia uniflora and Dracula chimera. This orchid is grown in a cool greenhouse in a clay pot filled with sphagnum moss. Grown by Chris Ehrler.

Masdevallia fractiflexa. A cool to cold epiphyte found natively growing in Ecuador in cloud forests at elevations of 1500 to 2200 meters. Growing in a clay pot filled with sphagnum moss which is in a cool greenhouse. Grown by Chris Ehrler.







Pleurothallis mystax. A cool to warm growing epiphyte found in Panama at an elevation of 650 to 1000 meters. This orchid is grown mounted on a piece of cork oak bark which is hanging in a cool greenhouse. Grown by Chris Ehrler.

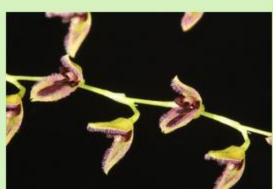
Pleurothallis mystax side view.





Pleurothallis segoviensis. A hot to cool growing epiphyte found in Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia and Ecuador at an elevation of 350 to 2300 meters. This plant is grown on a piece of manzanita with a small amount of sphagnum moss and is grown in a cool greenhouse. This plant has well over 150 open flowers.

Closeup of *Pleurothallis* segoviensis flowers. Grown by Chris Ehrler.





Pleurothallis talpinaria purple. Acquired from Ecuagenera. Found natively at least in Venezuela and Colombia growing as an epiphyte in warm to cold conditions at an elevation of 450 to 3000 meters.

Grown in a plastic pot that is filled with sphagnum moss. Grown by Chris Ehrler.

Restrepia brachypus 'Red Stripe'. This species is a cool to cold growing epiphyte found at elevations of 1180 to 3200 meters in Venezuela, Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia and Colombia. Grown mounted on a piece of manzanita with a small amount of sphagnum moss around the roots. Grown by Chris Ehrler in a cool greenhouse.





Restrepia brachypus side view.

Zootrophion dayanum. This species is found in the Andes of Venezuela, Colombia, Peru and Ecuador growing as an epiphyte at elevation of 1500 to 1900 meters. The flowers are fully open as they only have a 'window' opening for the pollinator to enter. Grown mounted on a piece of redwood with sphagnum moss on the roots. Grown by Chris Ehrler.





Reed-stem Epidendren from Tanya Lamb's plant table, grown by Eric Holenda.

This Oncidium is one of the gift plants from last year's FCOS Christmas bags. Onc. Twinkle 'Pink Perfection'-Grown by Eric Holenda.







Orchid Conservation Alliance

Conserving Orchids by Conserving Orchid Habitat

The OCA conserves orchids by funding habitat preservation. Since inception in 2005 we have helped with the purchase of over 3000 acres of orchid habitat, protecting hundreds of orchid species in Brazil, Ecuador and Colombia. Many species of rare birds, trees, frogs, mammals also find refuge in these reserves.









Dracula gigas (L), D. trigonapetala (R)
Dracula Reserve, Ecuador

Dracula lemurella (L), Leponthes escifera (R) La Selva de Ventanas Reserve, Colombia

We hope you will join us in promoting this important work. We invite you to become a member of the OCA, to make a donation, to take a trip with us to see Orchids in the Wild*, and to purchase merchandise through our website. Since we have no paid staff, all proceeds support orchid conservation. The OCA is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation.

For more information: www.orchidconservationalliance.org

OCA is a very worthwhile organization to join to preserve orchids for future generations.



Angelic and David of ORCHIDesign have been strong supporters of FCOS and our annual show. Angelic frequently posts photos and videos on the FCOS Facebook page in support of FCOS. Click here to go to Orchid Design.



AOS Speaker's Day

Pour Your Coffee and Prepare Brunch! Enjoy a Day with these Delightful Speakers

Explore the Virtual World of Vandaceous Orchids

SATURDAY, January 29, 2022

https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4834617917122351119

Start Time 10 a.m. (Eastern Standard Time) \$30 USD

Building on the 2021 Bodacious Vandaceous Orchids Magazine Supplement, this is an opportunity to learn more about the VANDA family of orchids. Tune in to presentations by four distinguished speakers.

- 1) Kim Fedderson from Fair Orchids: Yes, You Can Grow Vandaceous Orchids at Home
- 2) Jason Fischer from Orchids Limited: The Culture & History of Vanda falcata (formerly Neofinetia)
- 3) Bob Fuchs Pres. of RF Orchids: The Latest Trends in Vanda Hybridizing
- 4) Brenda Oviatt from Botanica Ltd.: Angraecoids Conservation and Culture

Think of this as an FCOS field trip without having to leave the comfort of your home.

Webinars - On Demand!

REGISTRATION REQUIRED: http://www.aos.org/orchids/webinars.aspx



Sign on to the AOS Website

Watch Recorded Webinars Any Time

Topic	Greenhouse Chats	Species and Hybrids	Culture	Pests and Diseases	Judging
Feature	Greenhouse Chat Webinars are indexed by topic	Learn about we'll known and unknown orchids	Learn about best care practices in your orchid collection	Understand what's bugging your collection and control tips	Sit in and learn the judging aspect along with criteria to grant an award

During the Holiday Break - Catch Up On Recorded AOS Webinars REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Webinars are recorded and available to view at your leisure. GREENHOUSE CHAT Webinars are indexed by topic.

Sign-up new AOS members EARN AOS MEMBERSHIP EXTENSIONS FOR YOUR SOCIETY

Affiliated Societies can earn a one-month extension on their AOS society membership for each new individual AOS member they recruit. If you start now, with twelve new AOS members, your Affiliated Society can obtain a FULL FREE YEAR OF AOS membership!

NOTICE: For new individual members who sign up on the AOS website, please email **sandra@aos.org** within thirty days of joining and advise your Affiliated Society name and your membership number so extension credits can be added to the account. Be sure and advise new members to note their society affiliation in the comments section on the **printed membership form** (or call the main office with your society name).



Make Messy Memories

Paint Your Pickets at Home or in the Garden Every 2nd Saturday from 1-4pm in the Children's Garden





Leaves Me Love 501 Shell Beach Road, Pismo Beach, CA 93439.

This newly opened business called "Leaves Me Love" is owned and operated by Matty Miller and is open in Saturday and Sunday from 11am to 4 pm and on Monday-Friday by appointment. His number is (805) 503-2594. Visit this botanical boutique and immerse yourself in an extensive, artfully curated collection of distinct tropical houseplants. New collectors and avid enthusiasts are welcome. Plants are loving grown by local farmers and expertly selected and nurtured within the living library. Matty also designs ecosystems, aquascapes and water features for homes, businesses and as backdrops for special events.

FCOS Lifetime Membership

A New FCOS Lifetime Membership is available for a donation of \$500. The FCOS Board is looking for creative ways to ensure the long-term financial health of FCOS. For those of you who are able to consider this generous donation your lifetime membership will help FCOS maintain its quality speaker programs and prepare for the resumption of our Spring Show. Click here for donation details.

Become a Life Member of FCOS for a \$500 donation!

2022 MEMBERSHIP DUES

YOUR \$25 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR 2022 ARE GREATLY APPRECIATED AND ALLOW US TO SECURE WORLD CLASS SPEAKERS FOR OUR MONTHLY ZOOM MEETINGS. LOOK FOR THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE IN FUTURE NEWSLETTERS FOR DETAILS.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Here's a better way to air your dirty (or clean) laundry. Got a complaint, suggestion or just want to express your opinion, send an email to our editors, <u>Jeff Parham</u>, <u>Chris Ehrler</u> or <u>Ed Lysek</u>. (photo courtesy of Gary Yong Gee).

<u>Question:</u> I was wondering what you use to clean the leaves on your orchids? Mine are all soooo filthy. I am so afraid of getting the roots wet. Do they like having warm water rinses? I thought of just using a wet paper towel....thanks-Kathy.

<u>Answer:</u> Use milk to clean the leaves. Makes them shiny. Many people clean their orchid leaves with milk before they enter it into a judging. As for wetting orchid roots, the only caution is for most orchids, the roots must be allowed to dry before re-watering. This question sparked a memory about an article one of our editors read about the use of milk for orchid care. The article, from <u>Orchid Care Zone</u> is reprinted below.



ORCHIDS AND MILK

It may not be the same thing as cereal and milk or cookies and milk, but there is something good about the idea of orchids and milk. It might not be in some standard orchid care instructions, but this tip is discussed by a member of the EPA. <u>A Green Thumb of my Own</u> For Disease

Many people have problems with the moth or Phalaenopsis orchid. Although they are easy to grow, they can sometimes be plagued with disease and parasites. Many people do not wish to use any kind of insecticide on their delicate plants. And if the plants are indoors, that is all the more reason to resist poisons.

There are some organic types of insecticides on the market, but you may wish to try something less expensive. You can mix non-fat powdered milk with the water and spray it on your orchids. It should be about four parts water and one part milk. This will give you a twenty percent solution.

More Nutrition with Milk

Many people use milk as a fertilizer for their orchids. They do not put it directly on the plant. A good way to apply it is with an empty milk container. It can be a jug or carton that has just been

emptied. Place the water for your orchids in the container without rinsing it out. This will give you a slightly milky solution to water the plants with.

Better Looking Plants

Many people use a product for leaf shine. It will make the plants look a little more vibrant and healthier. This is important if you are going to an orchid show with your plant. However, these products are usually forbidden at shows. You can use milk as a leaf shine. It will make them look good and protect them, at the same time.

Summing it up

Many people do not realize that milk is good for growing orchids. However, it should be given in moderation. Powdered milk and water is good for insects and fungus. A small amount in the water is good for fertilizer. It can also be used as leaf shine.

To discover more ways to care for your orchids, here is an easy-to-follow <u>Checklist for Orchid</u> <u>Care</u>.



NIFTY IDEAS: Winter sun comes in very low, and now with so many hot days, the sun can angle in and burn plants normally under cover. I took a couple old aluminum window screens, reinforced them w/ PVC pipe, affixed them to the glassed in wall, then supported them with rope, awning style. This leaves ample room to get under and access the plants. The light blue vertical piece of shadecloth can easily be flipped up and hooked out of the way so I can walk under the whole apparatus.



FCOS Garage Sale

Send an email to Jeff Parham, Chris Ehrler or Ed Lysek and include an image of your item, a description, price, and your contact info. We'll include your info in our next monthly newsletter if there is space. FCOS assumes no responsibility for payment, taxes, etc. We ask the items be orchid or plant related. FCOS is not taking a commission or participating in any other way.

FREE TO GOOD HOME: 10° x 12° shade cloth, all tricked out w/ edge binding and grommets. $929\ 5749$

Five Cities Orchid Society 2021 Board of Directors

Jeff Parham, President jsp1440@aol.com

Ed Lysek, Vice President edlysek@me.com

Alan Durham, Treasurer

Julie Orr, Secretary

Karen Kolba, Anne Bachmann, and Denise Florez, Directors at Large

Eric Holenda, Show Chairman

Chris Ehrler, Past President ehrler4@juno.com

Orchids are really great!

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