



July 2022 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



Lc Tiny Treasure 'Star Amethyst' HCC/AOS x SLC Lana Cornell 'Forevermore' AM/AOS

From the President's Potting Bench:

The weather has been lovely these past few weeks at our home in Los Osos. My wife and I have been putting a lot of work into the backyard. We've been repotting various plants and placing

some new pot gardens throughout the yard. It's not done yet, but it looks great already. We anticipate it will be a lovely frame for the orchid blooms that are currently developing in my collection.

Transitioning to FCOS news: for July we have cancelled our regular Thursday night meeting, and are instead meeting in person on July 17th for a BBQ, Potluck and Silent Orchid Auction in Oceano. Members are encouraged to bring plants (or divisions thereof) to donate to FCOS or sell in the Silent Auction. A member can sell up to 5 orchids per auction, with an agreement to donate 20% of the selling price to the FCOS. This is a good opportunity for you to part with your more expensive orchid divisions and make room for more orchids. The auction will also include plants that have been grown by FCOS from plugs, including many of the cooler-growing Large Flowered Epidendrums. If you would like to RSVP to the July picnic, get the location information, and/or donate orchids and need someone to pick them up, the use our donation form <https://fcos.betterworld.org/donate-an-item> or contact our Secretary/Treasurer Denise (fcos.org@gmail.com). We hope to see you at the picnic in July!

In August we have two events planned. The first is our regularly scheduled Thursday night meeting, held August 11th, 7:00-8:30pm on Zoom. Our speaker will be Brandon Tam, Director of the Orchid Collection at the Huntington Botanical Garden (HBG). He will be discussing the Paphiopedilums and Phragmedpediums that are grown at the HBG. Brandon is extremely knowledgeable and an engaging speaker, and we are all looking forward to his presentation.

Our second August event will be held on Aug 13, in person. It is to be a tour of the Cal Poly greenhouse and Leaning Pine Arboretum, behind the Cal Poly Plant Shop. <https://aeps.calpoly.edu/leaning-pine-arboretum> We will also hold an Orchid Plant exchange with the Cal Poly greenhouse. The Cal Poly orchid collection includes hundreds of Cymbidiums at this time. Cal Poly is interested in expanding their diversity of species and hybrids, for teaching purposes and to inspire their students. To participate, bring one orchid to exchange for 2 plants from the Cal Poly collection of orchids and succulents. Note: please bring only healthy plants. No Cymbidiums, please! We will release more information on this event in the weeks to come.

Be sure to keep checking the events section on our website for information on upcoming Orchid Talks and events. <https://www.fcos.org/events-and-where>

I would like to encourage you to support the FCOS by paying your annual dues, if you haven't done so already this year. We are also grateful for any donation you can contribute. These funds help us grow our programs and bring you engaging and knowledge speakers. FCOS is a 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organization, and all donations are tax deductible.

<https://fcos.betterworld.org/donate>

Check FCOS's Member Benefits page on our website for information on becoming a member of FCOS. <https://www.fcos.org/memberbenefits>

Happy Blooming!

Jeff



Vanda Paki- An outdoor-thriving and very free-blooming primary hybrid from the crossing of *Vanda suavis* and *Vanda cristata*. These blooms have the unusual, cinnabar-red lip markings of *V. cristata* and the delightful speckled pattern and rounded shapes of *V. suavis*. The fragrance is spicy! Once they reach 'specimen' size, which usually means the plant is large enough to have branched foliage, they bloom for most of the year! Great outdoors with *Cymbidiums* or in with the *Cattleyas*. Grown in a basket outside in Los Osos, by Jeff Parham.



Thank you to the Plant Shop at Cal Poly for their donation of 90 Cymbidiums. Some of these divisions will be available at the Auction this month and again later this year at our plant sale at the SLO Botanical Gardens on November 5th. We can use some help repotting these plants. Let Denise or Jeff know if you are interested in helping and we can set up a day to meet and repot orchids.



Sobralia (Mirabilis 'Summer White' x Leucoxantha 'T')- grown on my patio in Los Osos, Jeff Parham



*FIVE CITIES
ORCHID SOCIETY*
SAVE THE DATE

Silent Auction and Potluck

At the home of Hoss and Denise in Oceano
Sunday, July 17 from 1-4pm

We're barbecuing TriTip and Chicken
bring a side dish, salad, or dessert
and your favorite beverage.
(bottled water will be provided)

Bring your in bloom orchids for
SHOW and TELL

Bring your extra orchids, etc. to donate to the
SILENT AUCTION

Bring cash for AUCTION BIDDING

Replies are Required by July 10

to:

FCOS.ORG@gmail.com

Please email with the number of persons attending.
You will then be given the address and directions.

LIMITED PARKING — CARPOOL SUGGESTED

"Our mission is to encourage growing, blooming and enjoyment of orchids and companion plants by our members and the general public. To sponsor outreach, research and educational programs to promote orchid growing as a hobby or business. To promote the conservation of orchids in the wild."



**Professor Nishanta “Nishi”
Rajakaruna, Ph.D.**

Faculty-in-Residence
California Polytechnic State University

FCOS had the pleasure of having Dr. Nishanta (Nishi) Rajakaruna speak to the group via Zoom on the topic of “Serpentine Plant-Soil Relations in California and Beyond.” Nishi is a professor at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. He likes to ask the question ‘what makes a plant tick?’ He stated there is a shift in the plant community with different soil or rock types. Serpentine rock has high levels of iron and magnesium, and some heavy metals, but is low in nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium with a Ca:Mg ratio less than 1. Having these low levels leads to physiological trouble for many plants. Serpentine soils generally are open habitat with rocky, dry and shallow soil. This leads to high levels of endemism and a rarity of plants. Serpentine is the California state rock. Stainless steel uses nickel and chromium which is extracted from serpentine rocks. This soil type has either too much or too little of different essential minerals for growth of a wide variety of plants. Many plant types are intolerant of serpentine soils and are excluded from growing in them. Others have a broad substrate tolerance while other plants are restricted to serpentine soils. Thus, geology contributes to habitat diversity and species discontinuity. Nishi showed photos and discussed an experiment where plants growing on serpentine soils can grow on other soil types but with time were out competed for space by other plants. About 50% of the California endemic plants are strict substrate specialists. About 83% of the endemic plants in New Caledonia are restricted to serpentine soils. Nishi stated that many serpentine endemics use mycorrhizal fungus to survive. There is evidence there are some orchids in different countries that survive on serpentine soils but are generally not restricted to this soil type. Nishi said based on aerial deposition of nitrogen (nitrous oxide) from car exhausts this nitrogen is changing the serpentine soil and now some non-native grasses are invading some areas and out competing native species. This decrease in the Bay Area has subsequently decreased the number of a species of butterfly that used the native plants on which it laid their eggs.

There is also some research that has shown certain species of plants have the ability to concentrate metals such as nickel and gold that they extract from the soil. These plants are being grown in areas where the soils have high concentrations and then the plants are harvested and the metals extracted.



Orchid Believed to be Extinct for a Century, Found by Community Scientists

By [Rain Jordan](#) Jun 10, 2022 03:52 PM EDT

Botanists were surprised to discover a rare orchid species that had been considered to be extinct in Vermont for more than 100 years.

According to the [Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department](#), the little whorled pogonia has not been sighted in Vermont since 1902, despite several futile searches, and was thought to have died out in the state. For the full article go to:

<https://www.natureworldnews.com/articles/51310/20220610/orchid-believed-to-be-extinct-for-a-century-found-by-community-scientists.htm>

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



Cattleya gaskelliana according to Arthur Chadwick in his book *The Classic Cattleyas* is a vigorous, easy-to-grow, free-flowering plant. New growths are initiated in February and blooms open mid-May. The new growths should be watered sparingly until 3 inches long and watering should be increased as the growths mature. Grown by Ed Lysek - This plant produced 4 new leads this year, but only one flower on one of the growths. Terrific fragrance!

Tolumnia Popoki 'Mitzi' growing on an oak branch with a Tillandsia companion. I find adding a Tillandsia air plant works well with my Tolumnias. Watered daily and the roots allowed to dry quickly. Fertilized weekly by a pump sprayer. If light levels are a bit too high the leaf tips will turn reddish as in this photo. 9 flower spikes this year. Grown by Ed Lysek.





Tolumnia 'Genting Sunray' close up. Multiple flower spikes stay in bloom for 1 to 2 months, then side shoots continue blooming giving a great performance for multiple months. Grown by Ed Lysek.

Tolumnia 'Pretty-n-Pink' is another favorite. Thanks to Rudy Bachmann for introducing me to *Tolumnias* over 12 years ago when I first attended the FCOS Central Coast Orchid Show. My collection has been growing every year since then. Grown by Ed Lysek.





Tolumnia 'Genting Orange' adds another color to the range in this genus. Grown by Ed Lysek.

Encyclia diurna is found in Colombia and Venezuela and is described as warm to cool growing and is found at elevations up to 1,650 meters. I grow this orchid for the scent which has been described as "a warm banana nut muffin" and with two spikes and 20+ flowers per spike, the scent is amazing. Allow to dry between waterings in a fast draining media and a small pot. Grown by Ed Lysek.





Schoenorchis scolopendria is a miniature “creeping” orchid from Vietnam. One of my frogs on slug patrol is admiring the tiny flowers. Growing in bright shade on a horizontal section of cork and watered daily. Ed L.



Epc. Kyoguchi ‘M. Sauno’ Mutation X (Lc. Seagulls Tangerine X Sl. Pole Star) ‘SVO Sunrise’ growing happily for Karen Kolba.

A little gem of a miniature Vanda. This is *Asc. Cherry Blossom 'Omega'*. Grown by Karen Kolba



Pee Wee - We have had this sweet Cymbidium since 2002. We currently have two large hanging pots in bloom and they will be ready to split and repot this year. They stay outside all year and need only the typical water and feeding. Grown by Judy and Chuck Scheithauer.



Ansellia africana - see the photo below for the amazing history of this plant.

This orchid is one of the most treasured in our collection. Dick Alkema (a longtime member) collected his original piece while in Africa early in his engineering career. He actually showed us a picture of his crew harvesting it. The piece he gave us has grown and grown and has been divided many times. It stays outside all year round and blooms almost continuously. We water and feed it like the Cymbidiums. Grown by Chuck and Judy Scheithauer.





Stanhopea embreii getting ready to pop!

Popped!

Always amazing how long it takes for the buds to develop and then in a matter of a few minutes all of the flowers pop open at once and release a fantastic scent. Ed Lysek





Masdevallia coccinea
SBOE. One of the many clones of this species. A cold growing terrestrial found in Colombia and Peru at elevations of 2400 to 3000 meters. Grown outside under shade cloth by Jeffrey Thompson.



Masdevallia coccinea
'Leywoods'. Another clone of this species. Grown outside under shade cloth by Jeffrey Thompson.





Masdevallia coccinea
'SanBar's Carmen Beauty'.
Another clone of this
species. Grown outside
under shade cloth by
Jeffrey Thompson.

Masdevallia sanctae-fidei.

A hot to cool growing
epiphyte found in Venezuela
and Colombia at elevations
of 500 to 1800 meters.
Grown by Jeffrey
Thompson.





Coelogyne tomentosa. A cool to cold growing species found in Malaysia, Sumatra, Borneo, and Java at elevations of 1150 to 2100 meters. Grown by Jeffrey Thompson.

Paphiopedilum Julius. Is a primary hybrid (cross between two species) between *P. loweii* and *P. rothschildianum* which was registered in 1914. Grown by Jeffrey Thompson.





Dendrobium thyrisiformum.

A cool growing epiphyte, lithophyte or terrestrial found in the Chinese Himalayas, Hainan China, Assam India, eastern Himalayas, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam at elevations of 1200 to 2000 meters. Growing outside in a shady area in a plastic pot filled with a mixture of bark and lava rock. Grown by Chris Ehrler.

Dendrobium thyrisiformum side view of one of the flowers.





Miltonia Pearl Ono. Growing in a cool greenhouse in a pot filled with sphagnum moss. Grown by Chris Ehrler.

Miltoniopsis Lennart Kart Gottling 'Hula Skirt'. Growing in a cool greenhouse in a pot filled with sphagnum moss. Grown by Chris Ehrler.





Miltoniopsis
(Herralexandra x Mp 264).
Purchased from
Ecuagenera. Growing in a
cool greenhouse in a pot
filled with sphagnum moss.
Grown by Chris Ehrler.

Miltoniopsis (Oso Polar x
Nube Blanca). Purchased
from Ecuagenera. Growing
in a cool greenhouse in a
pot filled with sphagnum
moss. Grown by Chris
Ehrler.





Miltoniopsis Lynne Waihee
'Kay' x N. Hajime Ono 'Black
& Blue'. Growing in a cool
greenhouse in a pot filled
with sphagnum moss.
Grown by Chris Ehrler.

Restrepia guttulata
collected from from Atillo,
Ecuador. Purchased from
Dan Newman. Growing in a
cool greenhouse in a clay
pot filled with sphagnum
moss. Grown by Chris
Ehrler.





Side view of *Restrepia guttulata*.



Give Us Air!

By Sue Bottom

The Importance of Fresh Air

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 Saulea 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.

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 (sbottom15@hotmail.com).



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Question: Do you have any suggestions on how to handle the above plant. I'm not sure how to repot this, how do I handle this with all the exposed roots? Joan

Answer: I would wait for new roots to begin emerging before repotting. The old dead roots should be removed to make room for new roots and to prevent the dead roots from remaining wet and preventing the root zone from drying between watering. This orchid looks dehydrated and might benefit from several hours of soaking in a water filled bucket. If you want to grow this orchid in a pot, I would use coarse bark. The plant should be secured in the pot with rhizome clips.-Ed

Question This is a Dendrobium Densifolium (picture below). The flowers just opened 2nd week of June. Some of the flowers look underdeveloped and too dry.

This Dendrobium is potted in bark and kept in an area of the backyard that gets high light in the afternoon. It was left outside for the winter. Its watered once or twice a week. Any suggestions for how to improve its flowers next year?-Jeff

Answer 1: Hi Jeff - I keep mine in my greenhouse so I can keep it on the dry side in the winter. Not sure if you can keep it dry enough if it is outside.

Your leaves look a bit yellowish and perhaps it should be moved to a shadier location - particularly late afternoon sun may be too intense. But my conditions are very different than yours so more water and fertilizer in Spring-Summer might also help. It likes monsoon type conditions in Summer.-Ed

Answer 2: Mine is kept in shade all the time, grown outside the entire year, fertilized once per week with weak solution and possibly watered one additional time per week if the weather has been warm. As Ed suggested, the high light might be too much for it.-Chris



Did I pay my FCOA 2022 Membership? Click [HERE](#) to see if your name is on our Paid Members List. Thank you for all who have paid their 2022 Membership dues.

Membership Benefits and How to Join FCOS

- The FCOS Newsletter emailed every month. Keep up to date on FCOS activities, enjoy entertaining and informative articles, and orchid culture tips. [Sign up for FCOS newsletter.](#)
- Monthly Zoom talks from local and worldwide Orchid Experts.
- Opportunities to win beautiful and quality orchids.
- Network with amateur, advanced collectors and commercial growers
- Select invitation to our Holiday Party/Summer Picnic and Auctions.
- Participation in our Annual Central California Coast Orchid Show
- Create orchid displays for The Huntington Botanical Gardens International Orchid Show/The Santa Barbara International Orchid Show.
- Invitation to exclusive FCOS Field-trips to out of town vendors and events.
- **Click to download a copy of the [FCOS Membership Form.](#)**
- Membership dues are \$25 per year for an individual or family. \$15 after June 1 for the balance of the calendar year.
- **Make your check payable to Five Cities Orchid Society, PO Box 1066 Grover Beach, CA 93483.**
- **Please include your completed membership form with your payment.**
- Thank You for becoming a member of the Five Cities Orchid Society.

Payment by Credit Card with an FCOS-BetterWorld Account

If you wish to pay for your membership by **credit card**, you will need to establish an account with the FCOS processing service BetterWorld. Establishing an FCOS-BetterWorld account will also enable you to participate in FCOS on-line orchid auctions as well as paying for your membership dues. [Click here to create an FCOS-BetterWorld account and pay for your membership by credit card.](#)

A Lifetime Individual Membership is available for a one-time donation of \$500. Your generous donation enables FCOS to attract quality speakers, create content rich newsletters and most importantly helps finance one of the largest regional orchid shows in the western U.S. You can submit your lifetime membership payment by check using the [FCOS Membership Form](#) or by credit card by clicking this link: [FCOS-BetterWorld Lifetime Membership Donation of \\$500.](#)



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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.

Orchid Virus tests from Agi labs. \$8 each, contact Jeff at jsp1440@aol.com

Cymbidiums for Sale in San Luis Obispo. 5-gallon pots of mature plants, many in spike. Seeking for \$20-\$30 each. See photos below. Contact Jerry Camel 805-543-9338.

Cymbidium Divisions \$6 each, contact Denise @ fcos.org@gmail.com

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Orchids are really great!

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