This month’s speaker is Ruben Sauleda (http://www.rubeninorchids.com/). He will be speaking on Bifoliate Cattleyas. This presentation covers the species of bifoliate cattleyas, their variations (color forms) and specific culture. Our society is looking into several ways we can help in the conservation of orchid species. We hope to contribute to the research being done into scale insects that are attacking the Ghost Orchid here in Florida. We are also looking at helping The Orchid Conservation Alliance in their efforts to preserve orchid habitat.

Happy Orchid Growing

Lou

This Month's Speaker

Dr. Ruben P. Sauleda began growing orchids at the age of 12. At the age of 16 he established Ruben In Orchids. Almost half a century later Ruben In Orchids is recognized internationally and is one of the oldest orchid businesses in the United States. After graduating from Miami Senior High School, he attended Miami-Dade Junior College where he received an Associate of Arts. He was the first biology student in the first graduating class to receive a Bachelor of Science at Florida International University. He was then accepted to Florida Atlantic University where he received a Master of Science in biology working on the orchids of the Bahama Islands. During this time he was asked by Dr. Donovan S. Correll to collaborate on the Flora of the Bahamas by contributing the treatment of the orchids. After graduating from FAU, he was accepted to the University of South Florida, where he received his Ph.D. in Orchid Taxonomy. He has held positions as a Research Associate at Fairchild Tropical Gardens, Florida Atlantic University, the University of South Florida and several other research institutions. He has taught classes at Florida International University and Miami-Dade Junior College. Dr. Sauleda has written several books on orchid culture and has written over a hundred articles in scientific journals. He was Chairman of Education for the 2008 World Orchid Conference in Miami. His was responsible for arranging all the lectures, overseeing all the photography and was the editor of the proceedings. His specialty is flasking and is presently the leader in reproducing Encyclia, Cattleya, Schomburgia and Tolumnia species and hybrids.
1. February: Peter von Scholl  Cattleya Species and their Culture
2. March: Lou Lodyga  Repotting your Orchids
            April: Ruben P. Sauleda  Bifoliate Cattleyas
            May: Alan Koch  TBA
5. June: Jill Godfrey  TBA
6. July: Bernard Lavaud  TBA
7. August: Jim Watts  Tolumnia species or leafless orchids
8. September: TBA
9. October: Auction
10. November: Claude Hamilton  TBA
Thrips

By Susan Jones

Many species of thrips feed on orchids; some of the most common include western flower thrips (*Frankliniella occidentalis*), Cuban laurel thrips (*Gynaikothrips ficorum*), greenhouse thrips (*Heliothrips haemorrhoidalis*) and flower thrips (*Frankliniella bispinosa*).

Thrips are a common problem on vandaceous plants, dendrobiums and to a lesser extent, cattleyas and phalaenopsis. Because they are quite small (about 1/16 to 3/8 inch [1 to 5 mm] long), they are difficult to see with the naked eye. Much more easily detected is the damage to plants, deformed foliage and injured floral tissues caused by their feeding. They most often attack buds and new growths with their rasping mouthparts, sucking the plant sap.

**Symptoms**

Much like aphids, thrips feed in buds and flowers by using their mouthparts to pierce the surface of the plant tissues and suck up juices from leaves, stems and flowers. Blooms may become prematurely brown, and their petals spotted, streaked, silvery or discolored. Damage to leaves appears as chlorotic spots, wilting and eventually dropping. Plant growth can be stunted, and a severe thrips infestation will kill an orchid. If you suspect that thrips are present, gently blow into an open flower and watch for the insects crawling around inside the blossom.

Because of their method of feeding and ability to travel from plant to plant, thrips, like aphids, may introduce and spread virus through an orchid collection.

**Life Cycle**

The majority of the pest thrips belong to the family Thripidae. The adults of most species are brown or black. The winged adults (males and females) are found mainly on flowers and developing growths. Females deposit their eggs beneath the surface of the plant tissue. Often the only visible evidence of this is the callus tissue formed by the orchid in response to the wound. The nymphal (immature) stages are creamy yellow to pale orange and resemble adults without any wings. The nymphs feed on the tender young plant growths, then drop to the medium to pupate. The pupae are a darker orange color than the nymphs. As they are generally below the surface of the medium, they are unlikely to be spotted and more difficult to control with pesticides. When they emerge as winged adults, they fly back up to the plant to feed, lay eggs and begin the cycle once again.

Each female is capable of producing 25 to 50 eggs at a time, and many species reproduce at a rate of three to five generations per year. Their reproduction rate is more rapid in warmer temperatures, making thrips a more difficult pest to control in southern climates.

**Prevention**

Thrips are among the more difficult insect pests to prevent and control, but some measures that help include covering all vents and doorways with insect-proof netting, segregation of infested plants and disposal of all affected loose plant material, and overall good general sanitation?removal of all weeds and plant debris from the growing area

Thrips can be monitored using blue or yellow sticky traps, which should be checked weekly. Thrips will appear as small dark specks on the traps. This will allow the application of pesticides while populations are small, so as to minimize chances of damage and infestation.

**Controls**
The nature of the thrips’ life cycle places their eggs and pupal stages fairly well out of the reach of most pesticides. Therefore, multiple applications of the chosen control method or pesticide at weekly intervals are needed to control successive generations of these pests. As with many unwanted insects, monthly rotation of control measures is also recommended, especially when using chemical pesticides. Alternating between at least two different chemicals helps to avoid raising resistance to control measures in the insect pest. Insecticides such as insecticidal soap, malathion and acephate (Orthene) are all recommended for use on thrips, and are listed as safe for use on orchids as well. If your growing area is enclosed and is not part of your living space, such as a greenhouse, biological control with a predatory mite is an option. The female *Amblyseius cucumeris* deposits eggs in thrips. When the young hatch, they parasitize their hosts, killing them. The use of insecticides is not compatible with employing predatory mites for control, as the insecticides are harmful to the mites as well as the thrips. As always, adhere strictly to the manufacturer’s instructions for safe application and use of chemical pesticides.

As with any spray-on pest control measure, any orchid plants infested with thrips should be managed to allow easy and thorough pesticide application. Arrange the plants in the growing area so that they have adequate space for air circulation and ease of spraying, and be sure to cover all plant surfaces, such as those between and on the undersides of leaves, to maximize the effectiveness of the treatment.

**References**


*Susan Jones was the editor of Awards Quarterly and assistant editor of Orchids. American Orchid Society, 16700 AOS Lane, Delray Beach, Florida 33446*

All reuse must contain the following:
March Collage
Q.
Flowering Vanilla
Have you any suggestions to induce a *Vanilla planifolia* to bloom? My plant is growing well at the warm (80° to 85° F) end of my greenhouse, receives ample light at least six hours a day and is fertilized on a weekly basis. It has twined itself up a center support and has attached itself to the center ridge of the greenhouse. Is this species a notoriously shy bloomer? - Tom Capranica

A.
Given enough light and space - and I do mean space - vanilla vines will flower regularly. They require at least as much light as cattleyas, and will grow to completely enclose your greenhouse eventually. We had one at my former place of employment that had to have been in aggregate more than 500 feet long that did not flower until we had scrubbed the roof well (the fiberglass was 20 years or more old at the time). Your plant should flower by the time it is nearing 20 feet, possibly this coming spring. - Ned Nash

Thanks to aos.org
Tasks for April

Cattleya

Although March is, in many parts of the country, still a cold and blustery month, the lengthening days and warmer temperatures allowed by increased light are long-awaited harbingers of the coming change of season. Some of the best standard cattleyas of the year will be in bloom, or will be blooming soon. The last of the winter-flowering hybrids will join the earliest of the spring hybrids in a wonderful display. Be on the alert for senescing sheaths that need removal. If these yellowing sheaths are not removed, the moisture they trap can lead to bud rot. Careful removal of the sheath will allow the buds to develop, although they will need additional support. Changing light conditions can also be a problem in March and April. An exceptionally bright day, especially immediately following a rain, can lead to sunburn of the foliage if shading is not attended to properly. There can still be periods of dull days where spikes can weakened owing to the lower light. Lengthening days will mean increased metabolic rates necessitating increased water and fertilizer. The plants will indicate needs by drying more rapidly, which means more frequent watering and fertilizing.

With the passing of the season for winter bloomers, and the beginning of the season for spring bloom, it is also the time to be on the lookout for plants that will need potting after they bloom. Immediately after blooming has proven to be the best time to repot winter- and spring-flowering cattleyas. In most cases, they will be ready to grow roots, so if potted at this time, they will root right into fresh mix with little or no setback.

Cymbidium

Plants should be putting on a spectacular show this time of year. Adjust all staking and twist-ties and be on the lookout for aphids, slugs and snails. Give adequate water because flowering strains the plants. As new growths appear later, increase the nitrogen level in the fertilizer. Should a plant look healthy but not be blooming, try increasing the light during the next growing season. The number-one reason for no flowers is lack of light.

Dendrobium (Australian)

These hard-cane dendrobiums will be at their flowering peak now. It is not unusual to see a specimen of this type in an orchid show boasting 1,000 flowers. The secret with this group -- bred primarily from Dendrobium kingianum and Dendrobium speciosum -- is to provide ample water, fertilizer and light during the growing season.

Lycaste

This genus of superb orchids will be coming to the end of its flowering season. Soon you will see the beginning of new root growth, which is an excellent time to repot into fresh media. As new growth emerges, provide ample fertilizer and water. A sign of good culture is an increase in the size of pseudobulbs with each successive year.

Miltoniopsis

This marks the beginning of the flowering season. Amazing displays of color will dazzle the grower over the next few months. Prepare your plants for optimum display by staking spikes (if needed) and cleaning off
the older yellow foliage. Do not miss the wonderful fragrance as the flowers unfold.

**Paphiopedilum**

March is the beginning of the season of heaviest potting for lady’s-slipper orchids. However, it is a month where the volume of plants needing attention is still small. It is an excellent month to take the time to work with your paphiopedilums before the pressure of other potting prevents your doing the thorough job you should. Look at each plant: Is it clean of dead and dying foliage? Is it weed free? Does it need potting? Is it in spike? Does it have an insect problem? Cleaning and restaging your paphs is one of the most satisfying tasks of the orchid year. Cleaned and potted paphiopedilums look happy.

The summer-blooming types will be showing the first of their buds in March and April. Be on the lookout for the buds, as well as any insect pests that may have found their way into the crowns of your plants. It is especially difficult to clean mealybugs, in particular, once they have become established in the plant. Better to get to them before they get a good toehold.

Increasing light levels should give emerging spikes the strength they need to grow straight and strong. Do not be too anxious to stake the spikes, because if they are staked too soon, the flowers may develop a "nodding" stance, where the dorsal will not stand upright. If the spikes seem to develop at an angle, let them, and stake after the flower has hardened for best carriage, especially on the hybrids with fairieanum background.

**Phalaenopsis**

In most of the country, March is the peak blooming month for phalaenopsis. Staking needs to be carefully attended to, so that the flowers will be displayed at their best for orchid shows and judging -- even those intended for your home will look best if properly staked. One of the most decorative aspects of phalaenopsis spikes is the way they gracefully arch. If not staked properly, the spike will lack this grace and will not be as pleasing. Most growers like to have the final support just below the first flower, allowing maximum support, without sacrificing the beauty of the arching spike.

Rapid-growing spikes and open flowers place extra demands on the plant. Careful monitoring of watering and feeding will give the plants the energy they require to give their best floral display. Remember, too, that the lengthening days will also increase the frequency at which plants need water.

Beware of the invasion of sucking pests that accompany the flowering season. Flowers and spikes are favorite targets of mealybugs and scales. Be on the lookout for their presence, often indicated by the appearance of sooty mold resulting from the exudate of the bugs, and treat before flowers or buds are too advanced. If flowers and buds are too far along, the chemical treatment may damage or abort them.
Elanbee Orchids

Understanding your Orchids

By Phil Spence

It is hard to know what to do with your orchids for example when to feed and when to water what to spray with etc., as every one and every book has a different way. After 40 years of experience I feel I can give the amateur and expert some guidelines to help you understand a little better about your plants and in turn you should be able to make better decisions when, how and what to do what you have to.

One of the most important things is to remember that nearly all popular cultivated orchids are epiphytes, that means they live on the air and only attach themselves to a host for support. The host takes the form of trees or rocks etc., and with the use of leached out salts from these droplets that are mixed with rainwater or droplets of mist to form food that splashes on the leaves and roots. The leaves and roots absorb most of the moisture, during rain or when the humidity is at it's highest. Orchids that are generally cultivated are found predominantly in a wide variety of conditions ie., forests and all of these forests have one thing in common like the rest of the places that orchids grow. The humidity increases during the night and is much lower in the day, but this can vary when it's raining. Where orchids are plentiful in their natural habitat a light to heavy mist or fog can be readily seen almost every night.

Most orchids have adapted to use this higher night humidity to absorb moisture through their leaves and root. Where plants have extended drought or dry seasons, species such as Dendrobium bigbbum, Dendrobium canaliculatum and Dendrobium bifalce regularly endure then they rely on this night rise of humidity to survive for many months. Often if a wet season is missed they can last for up to two years as has just happened in Papua New Guinea. Almena or as in Pidgin English the Big Sun.

How do plants maintain the moisture without loosing it during the day? If you look closely at an orchid leaf or new root you will see lots of small dents, which are holes, called stomata. These holes open as the sunlight dwindles to darkness or as the light is greatly reduced because of heavy cloud and as the sunlight becomes brighter they close so reversing the process. Commonly known as Stomatal Rhythm.

This process helps the plant hold moisture within itself when in strong light and replenish what moisture is lost at night.

It is this reversal of the normal Stomatal Rhythm, which enables Crassulacean Acid Metabolism (CAM), in orchid plants to be drought tolerant. CO₂ diffuses into the leaves and is fixed into organic acids during the night, when temperatures are low and humidity is high, so minimising the loss of water by transpiration (Arditti and Sinclair).

What does this mean?
To get the best results from your watering and feeding you should water at daybreak before the stomata close.

Only use insecticides or fungicides that are not oil based such as white oil as the will seal over the stomata. Use an agricultural wetting agent to help spray cover the leaves and roots that reduces the meniscuses on the water. If none is available use a little dishwashing detergent but only use a few drops and mix well in. Not many plants CAM and Orchids are one of the few groups of plants that do another group is Succulents. Orchid roots can tell you a lot if you have a little understanding of them also. Keeping in mind and applying the above information the roots will tell you if they like being potted in a fine, coarse mix or even mounted on a wet or dry host just hanging free in the air. If the new root ends are white they can be potted in a medium that is not very open, but if the ends are green there is a need for a fresh supply of oxygen and the darker the green those tips are the more open the mix should be. For example Phalaenopsis and Vanda plants have a few roots that secures the plant to the tree and all the rest hang in the moist air these root tips are dark green and the roots are thick.

Spathoglottis have thin roots and like a close medium.

Dendrobiums have white green root tips that are medium thickness and nearly all species have dark green root tips. They do best on a host but will do fairly in a pot that has plenty of holes in to let in the air along with an open potting mix that does not become soggy but maintain a small amount of moisture.

Just remember research your orchids and where they come from, or what species are in your hybrids this will give you the information on what your orchids require as to building a microclimate and to assist you in growing better orchids.

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Tasks for April

- Full speed ahead with repotting.
- Water heavily and well.
- Don’t forget to fertilize.
- Spray for mites and *Thrips*.
- Naturalize excess divisions in the garden.
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