



Volume 24 Issue 10
October 2016

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THE KEIKI



ORCHID LOVERS' CLUB OF SPRING HILL ANNUAL PICNIC

WHEN: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2016

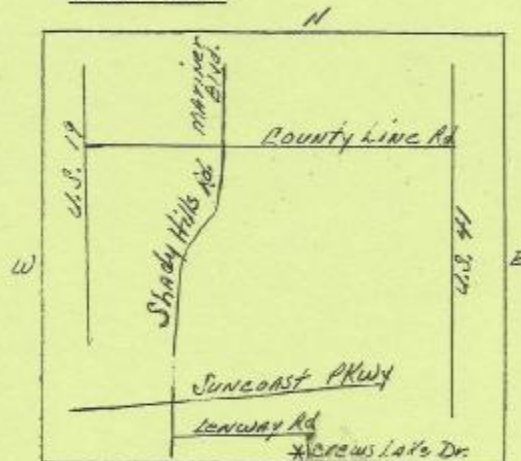
TIME: 12:00 P.M. - ?

WHERE: CREWS LAKE PARK (PASCO COUNTY)
PAVILION #1

PLANT SHOW TABLE, RAFFLES, HIKING TRAILS, BIKE
PATH, AND MUCH MORE

ALL MEMBERS & GUESTS ARE WELCOMED

DIRECTIONS:



TAKE SHADY HILLS RD.
SOUTH APPROXIMATELY
4 MILES TO LENWAY RD.,
TURN LEFT & CONTINUE
TO CREWS LAKE RD.
FOLLOW THE ORCHID
CLUB SIGNS. FOR MORE
INFORMATION, CONTACT
PAT DUPKE @ 727-856-3485
OR MARITA RIESZ @ 732-
673-1179.

**NOTE: THERE IS A \$2.00
ENTRY FEE INTO THE
PARK**

Don't forget to bring your own drink and the dish you signed up for.

*Newer members—See pages 13—16 for AOS
Culture Sheets on Miltonia and Cattleya Orchids*

OFFICERS

President

Jeff Rundell

1st Vice President & Past President

Geary Harris

2nd Vice President

Donna Fazekas

Treasurer

Helen Battistrada

Executive Secretary

Pat Dupke

Recording Secretary (not elected position)

Matt Riesz

COMMITTEES

Bulletin (The Keiki)

Ken & Delia Dunn

Membership

Linda Meyer & Gloria Thomas

Publicity

Julie Smolka

Refreshments

Laurie Ciannamea & Pat Dupke

Show Chair

Marita Reisz

Show Table Report

Matt Riesz

Trips

Sonia Terrelonge & Laurie Ciannamea

Website

Set up by Ken Dunn

Webmaster Bob East



Treasurer's Report

By Helen Battistrada

Balance last month:	\$7,091.06
Income:	\$218.00
2 members' pins:	42.00
Raffle:	\$176.00
Disbursements:	\$1,126.17
2 name pins	20.24
Refreshments	11.93
August Raffle plants	50.00
VFW show deposit	100.00
August Program	150.00
Annual liability insurance	401.00
1 Month storage	40.00
3 future VFW meeting dates	300.00
September Raffle plants	50.00
Bank Charge	3.00
Current Balance:	\$6182.89

REFRESHMENT REMINDER

Laurie Ciannamea



PICNIC

Don't forget to bring the dish you signed up for and also your own drinks.

If you haven't signed up for the picnic then call MARITA RIESZ 732-673-1179 or PAT DUPKE 727-856-3485.

President's Message

by Jeff Rundell



What could be better? We're headed toward the end of the year with a full plate of activities for all Orchid Lovers. By the time you read this our trek to Sarasota to visit Tropiflora and Selby gardens will be complete. I sure hope I'm not the one to get lost. Our club picnic at Crews lake park on October 15 (noon) in shelter 1 is guaranteed to fill you up. We will have our usual show table so bring your bloomers for a ribbon and possibly an extra hot-dog. We will also allow member plant sales but remember the auction is on the horizon. The web-site has directions under the "members only" button.

Then there's the auction on November 19 at the First Methodist Church on Spring Hill drive. Ed Bugbee will reprise his role as auctioneer and I'm nervously hoping that member contributions, bequests and purchases will make our major fundraiser a financial success. Most of all we need to get the word out so please - post those posters, bring friends, put notices in community papers, stand on street corners and yell.

The grand finale is the Christmas party at Buffet City (Cortez rte. 50) on December 10 at noon. We will have a private room but access to a mind blowing variety of food at the buffet. Bring a toy for Toys for Tots (unwrapped). There will be orchid prizes and I promise to repeat a revised version of 'my night before Christmas' rhyme.

On the home front, my permit is in process to construct a new attached sun/screen room which is actually (shh) a greenhouse. No more setting up that winter plastic monstrosity greenhouse that cramped my lanai. Got to get'er done before that first freeze. Another thing I need to mention is that I have some shade cloth to give away. It's only about 20% but I have two large pieces (about 6'x20') from a friend at the wildlife park. Let me know if you are interested

Finally I can't let a month go by without drifting into ecstasy about another one of my favorite groups of orchids.

It's Laelia, and even the name sort of makes me swoon. When you see Blc or Lc in front of some complex hybrid you might want to go to the source and find the real thing, a pure Laelia. The one in the included picture is my favorite: the little Laelia dayana from Brazil. It's been used in hybrids to produce many mini cattleya hybrids. Laelia was one of the Roman vestal virgins and I tried to convince my wife to use the name for one of my daughters. You can guess how that turned out. Laelia is a small genus of orchids, perhaps less than 20 species but intensely fragrant and colored. To me there is something magical about a species orchid, presented as it lives in nature, the product of thousands of years of natural selection.

Thanks kindly for all your help and support and I look forward to a great time with great members at our next event.

Jeff



Laelia is a small genus of orchids, perhaps less than 20 species but intensely fragrant and col-





More Information About Our Club Library

The Club Library is up and running. Several members have already used the system. We have over 50 books about growing and showing orchids, all written to help you be a better Orchid grower.

How do you get your hands on a book? First go to:

www.springhillorchidclub.com/alphabetical-listing-library-books.html

for an Alphabetical listing of our books. If you find one you want to know more about, take note of the order number, go to the bottom center of the page and click on the tab "Back to Library Page" then by moving your cursor over the pictures you'll find the order numbers with a brief description in large print.

If you click on the picture it will enlarge to show you the whole cover.

After you have made your selection, go to the bottom of the page and fill out the Book Order Form.

After it is filled out, click 'SUBMIT'. I will receive your request and bring your requested book to the next monthly* Orchid Lovers' Club meeting or gathering, for you to pick up. Keep the book for a month and return it to me the next month. (No charge to members) *Thank you.*

Tom Govin, Librarian

(*Note the next gathering will be the Club Picnic in October, the Auction in November and the Christmas party in December and the next regular members' meeting will be in January. On the request be sure and let me know which gathering you will attend so I can bring the book for you.)



Orchid Quiz for October

Orchids are now quite reasonably priced thanks to what Scientific process?

- ___ Maricloning
- ___ Maraclonuis
- ___ Merrycloning
- ___ Mericloning

A Few Fact About Orchids

1. Orchids are the largest family of flowering plants. They have also been around the longest as they are one of the oldest flowers in existence. Since varieties of orchids are found all over the world, it's accepted that orchids were in existence prior to the separation of the continents.
2. There are more than 25,000 documented orchid species throughout the world, and more are being discovered every day. This means the number of orchids on the planet is four times the number of birds and four times the number of mammals!
3. Although generally thought of as a tropical plant, orchids grow on every continent. In every climate, from the Arctic Circle to the southernmost jungle (except Antarctica). They're valued and thought of as beautiful across continents and cultures with varying meanings and customs surrounding their existence.



August Speaker

By Kara Warnock

Our speaker this month was club member Steve Mattana, who gave a talk on how he got into growing and flasking orchids. His first introduction to the orchid world came in the mid 1970's when he lived in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and a friend from his tropical fish club was showing off his "fish room" in his basement, which also contained several slipper orchids.

At the time he was not that interested in the orchids, he was wrapped up in his killifish (a brightly colored African minnow fish). In 1978 Steve moved to Clearwater, Florida to be near his parents, and eventually ended up in Spring Hill in 1989 after recommendations from friends that had also moved to the area.

The first orchid he owned was a Cattleya, which he believes was a Ports of Paradise (chartreuse green colored flowers with a nice lemon fragrance) that was purchased from a local florist shop, after a friend had commented his house was too much like a man cave. One orchid eventually led to two, then three...we all know how that goes. After his father's passing in 1993 he returned to Clearwater (giving up his orchids) to help his mother, but by 1998 had settled back into Spring Hill with his new wife, Mary Lou.

After moving back he decided to pursue orchids again, and his first stop was over at Art Stone Orchids in St. Petersburg (on Tyrone Blvd), owned by Michael and Paula Polen. Steve found himself making more and more trips to their nursery buying, talking, and learning about orchids.

For Steve, like most of his other hobbies he pursued, flasking orchids provided an interest level with a certain degree of difficulty and knowledge base of understanding what you are doing, required in order to succeed. When he first got into flasking orchids he would spend 2-3 three days a week with Bud Spence (of Florida Native Orchids

Nursery and his mentor) learning about orchids and how to flask them.

For him it was difficult to find information on how to flask and what to use since most folks seemed to be tight-lipped about the whole process. After doing his own research, he found a company called Phyto Technology (phytotechlab.com) based out of Kansas, which carries everything you need for stem or seed propagation.

Agar is the primary component to flasking orchids, and it is essential to provide nutrients to orchid seeds so that they can germinate and grow properly. Agar comes in different formulas including black agar (contains charcoal) and yellow agar (consists of protein medium and gel base). The key to making good agar is precise measurements of ingredients. If you add too much water when mixing your agar solution the consistency will be soupy and the orchid seeds will sink in the solution. However, not enough water will make the consistency too thick (like concrete) and the orchid seeds will not be able to grow in the solution. The agar needs to be thoroughly mixed using an emersion blender and quickly placed in the jars.



Steve Mattana

(Continued from prior page)

The 'old school' method was to put agar into old milk bottles accompanied with rubber stoppers. Steve found that not only were old milk bottles hard to come by nowadays, but plantlets were very cumbersome to remove from the jars to be plated up. Therefore, he switched to using ½ pint mason jars for his agar containers. Once the mason jars have been filled with the agar the lid is loosely placed on and a small hole is made in the top of the lid. The size of the hole needs to be just right; you need to allow for exchange of air pressure and gases without making the hole too big, which would bring in outside air and allow contaminates into the jar. The next step is to use a sports bandage (able to withstand heat and water and keep bacteria out of jars) to cover the hole in the lid before placing the jars of agar into a pressure cooker at 15 lbs for 15 minutes to sterilize the solution. Once the jars come out of the pressure cooker the lids are tightened completely, a rubber band is used to secure cellophane over the top of the jars, and they are stored in a cool, dark area (such as a closet) until they are needed. For the flasking cabinet, Steve tried a number of different designs eventually settling on a glove box plexiglass model that seems to work best for his setup. The cabinet has a drain hose that is set inside a bucket of water to assist with pressure exchange and prevent contaminates as hands are being placed in and out of the working gloves.



The clear construction of the cabinet also allows for plenty of lighting to be used along the back of the cabinet, and Steve likes to use aluminum foil

around the lights to provide some refracted light into the cabinet. Before using the cabinet the entire surface inside the cabinet, the agar jar, seed pod, and your tools are sprayed down using a 30% bleach solution and allowed to rest for 10 minutes. Inside the cabinet you should have at least 3 bottles of sterile water to use to wash off all of your tools and the seed pod. Otherwise if too much residual bleach is left behind it will kill the plants.

Once the seeds from the seed pod have been placed on the surface of the agar the jars are resealed and placed under lights on baker's racks to allow to germinate. Steve uses a combination of florescent grow lights and at least 2 incandescent white clear light bulbs (to provide red spectrum light) to grow his plantlets. The germination period will be different depending upon the species. For Phalaenopsis orchids the germination period is typically 35-45 days. Once the plantlets have reached ¾-1" in height (around 2 months) they are ready to be replated. The number of plantlets to put per plate also varies with the species; for Phals typically 5-6 plantlets per plate verses 12-15 plantlets per plate for other orchid species. The orchid plantlets will undergo at least one more replate before they are ready to be potted out. On average the plantlets will spend the first 18 months of their life growing inside of a jar, and will take between 5-7 years to reach their first blooming.

Flasking orchids requires skill and patience, however, it can be extremely rewarding and you can create a lasting legacy of plants if desired. If you are the first person to show a bloomed plant of a hybrid cross that has never been done before, you get the honor of naming that cross. With his flasking work Steve plans to focus primarily on Phalaenopsis, Cattleya, and Vanda species orchids that are becoming increasingly hard to come by. He also plans to take on the flasking work for Louis Del Favero nursery. So I am sure that we will be seeing some of his handy work at orchid shows to come in the future.



OLCOSH Meeting Minutes

9/17/2016

Jeff Rundell called the meeting to order and introduced our speaker, Steve Mattana. He also called attention to the plants that were for sale, brought in by Steve and by some other members.

We had a great raffle table consisting of plants from Everlast Orchids and some donated by members.

Board Secretary, Pat Dupke, was unable to attend the meeting due to some serious health issues. We ask that the members keep her in their thoughts and prayers. A card was passed around for members to send their well wishes to Pat.

The previous meeting's minutes were approved by the membership.

Helen Battistrada provided the treasurer's report:
 Balance last month: \$7,091.06, Income: \$218.00
 Disbursements: \$1,126.17, Current Balance: \$6182.89

Guests were welcomed and introduced themselves. Linda Meyer mentioned upcoming events, some of which are members-only:

- October 15th Members only annual picnic at Crew's Lake Park
- November 19th Annual auction – open to the public

Publicity, handled by Julie Smolka, includes mentions of the meetings and events in most local publications. Some suggestions were discussed from the membership.

It was moved and seconded that the spending limit for the executive board be raised from \$150 to \$500, per the board's recommendation from the previous month. The majority of the membership voted in favor of the proposition and the motion carried.

The next regular club meeting at the VFW will be our January meeting.

Upcoming Events:

The club picnic will be on October 15th at the same place as last year, in pavilion #1 at Crew's Lake Park. Another signup sheet was passed around for food to be brought to the picnic. Members should bring food that they volunteered for, and their own drinks. Directions will be sent via email and also available on the club website.

The club trip will be October 1st, and we will all meet at the first site, which is the Tropiflora festival in Sarasota. From there we'll go as a group to Marie Selby Gardens. People joining the trip met during the break to handle logistics.

Jeff discussed the auction, which is coming up on November 19th and will be held at the Methodist church on Spring Hill Drive. Please donate clean and healthy plants for the auction. Checks or cash only – no credit cards.

December 10th Members Only Christmas Party, held at Buffet City on Cortez Blvd. Please bring an unwrapped children's toy.

We broke for refreshments, and Matt and Julie judged the orchids on the beautiful show table. When we reconvened, Jeff and Matt discussed the orchids on the table and congratulated the winners.

Steve Mattana gave a great talk on his orchid growing experiences and his techniques for propagating orchids via flasking in his own home setup.

The raffle was drawn and the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by Matt Reisz

NOTE—These Minutes have yet to be approved by the membership. Please send additions, deletions or corrections to the address below. **THANK YOU!**

kdunn004@tampabay.rr.com

September 17, 2016		SHOW TABLE PLANTS		By Matt Riesz	
(Blue Ribbon Winners in Blue)				<u>Years</u>	
				<u>How Long</u>	<u>Growing</u>
<u>Plant</u>	<u>Grower</u>	<u>Owned</u>	<u>Orchids</u>		
Den. Frosty Dawn 'Perfection'	Wendy	Paracka	2 mos	1.5	
Ascda. Crownfox Golden Dawn	Matt Riesz		8 mos	15	
Angcm. Lemforde White Beauty	Matt Riesz		4 yrs	15	
C. White Bridal	Kishore Sooknanan				
C. dowiana aurea	Dan Grant		3 yrs		
Bulbophyllum carunculatum	Dan Grant		3 yrs		
V. Pachara Delight 'Pachara'	Connie Chase				
Guarianthe bowringiana	Wendy Paracka		1 yr	1.5	
Bc. Kosh Wallis	Wallie Hammer		3 yrs	30	
Guarianthe bowringiana	Wallie Hammer		6 mos	30	
C. Melody Fair 'Carol' x C. Prada Green Deluxe	Thomas Govin		1 yr	13	
Baptidium Hwuluduen Chameleon 'Red'	Sonia Terrelonge		2 yrs		
Ascd. Suksamran Sunlight	Matt Riesz		6 months	15	
V. Robert's Delight 'Inkster'	Matt Riesz		1 yr	15	
V. Tamiami Blues	Matt Riesz		1 week	15	
Blc. Lawless Walkurie 'The Ultimate'	Matt Riesz		2 yrs	15	
B. Jimminey Cricket 'Marita' AM/AOS	Matt Riesz		8 yrs	15	
Onc. Moon Shadow 'Tiger Tail'	Matt Riesz		4 yrs	15	
Habenaria medusae	Matt Riesz		4 yrs	15	
C. Prada Green Deluze x C. Melody Fair 'Carol' AM/AOS	Kishore Sooknanan				
Miltassia Angry Spider	Kishore Sooknanan				
Miltassia Charles M Fitch 'Izumi'	Julie Smolka		2 yrs		
Epi. magnoliae (Bronze Green Fly orchid)	Judy Smith		8 yrs		
Epi. magnoliae	Judy Smith				
Brassavola grandiflora	Jeff Rundell				
Trichoglottis brachiata	Jeff Rundell		6 yrs		
V. Masao x V. Tokyo Blue	Gary Gethen			25	
Ascda. Motes Mandarin 'Mary Motes' HCC/AOS	Gary Gethen		16 yrs	25	

(Continued on next page)

September 17, 2016	SHOW TABLE PLANTS	By Matt Riesz
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(Continued from prior page)

<u>Plant</u>	<u>Grower</u>	<u>How Long Owned</u>	<u>Years Growing Orchids</u>
C. Everything Nice	Dan Grant	3yrs	
Blc. Hawaii Stars 'Paradise'	Connie Chase		
Potinara Satoru Toshima	Connie Chase		
Den. NOID (purple)	Connie Chase		
V. Pachara Delight	Caitlin DiCristofalo	2.5 yrs	8
Pot. Burana Beauty 'Burana'	Delia Dunn	5 yrs	22

We'd like to ask everyone to please list on their Show Table Entry Sheet how long each orchid has been owned. Just a reminder, unless the owner has had a plant for more than 6 months, such plants can be exhibited but will not be eligible for ribbons. We want to reward members for their orchid growing ability. Thank you.



Here is a mystery, can you solve it?
Two lips are better than one. Find the name of this lost tag orchid I brought from the north and I'll give you a piece.
Jeff Rundell

Answer to Orchid Quiz from page 4

'Mericloning'

Is how you spell it and of course the correct answer

Cloning is a good thing when it comes to sparing the orchid fancier's wallet.

Club Trip to Marie Selby Botanical Gardens and Tropiflora

What a trip! Three carloads of members traveled to Sarasota on October 1 to check out Tropiflora's annual plant festival and then visit Marie Selby botanical gardens.

Tropiflora had over 20 vendors selling all sorts of tropical plants including plenty of orchids. Members were spotted with some great new plants.

At Selby we saw an incredible display of orchids and other unusual tropicals. We also got a tour of a display of rare historical books, prints and preserved specimens. We had lunch at Selby, packed up our treasures and headed for home after a great day with friends, orchids and maybe even a little education.



Break Time!



Got what I want



Don't need more vendors!



A tiskit, a taskit, I got baskets!



Lost in the Jungle

ORCHID LOVERS' CLUB OF SPRING HILL

**WILL BE HOLDING AN ORCHID PLANT
AUCTION**

WHEN: SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2016

TIME: 1:00 P.M. (DOORS OPEN AT 12:30)

WHERE: FIRST UNITED METHODIST

CHURCH,

9344 SPRING HILL DR.,

SPRING HILL, FL

**A WIDE VARIETY OF ORCHIDS: Cattayas, Dendrobiums,
Oncidiums, Phalaenopsis, Species & Vandas & ORCHID
RELATED MATERIALS WILL BE AUCTIONED OFF**

CHECKS & CASH ACCEPTED; NO CREDIT CARDS

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL: 352-503-7858 OR
727-856-0222**

A RARE ORCHID THRIVES AFTER PRESCRIBED BURNS

Along forest road 123 near Sumatra, Florida, in mid-June, you can see this miraculous flower as notified by friends in the Florida Native Plant Society. This fragile orchid, each bloom about an inch wide on a spike about 8 inches to a foot high, is *Calopogon multiflorus* which had not been seen since they began taking pictures of flowers almost 20 years ago.

It is a miniature tuberosus sharing the same form, but many more blooms. Perhaps more than a hundred plants grew in earth blackened by a recent prescribed burn. The soil chemistry conspired with the seeds and a wet season to inspire one of many terrestrial orchids we have seen in North Florida over the years.

Nearby, early in June, Calopogon pallidus can be found, the equally small but ubiquitous 'pale grass pink,' growing in the savannas in Liberty County.



Miltonia including Miltoniopsis Culture Sheet

American Orchid Society
at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden
10901 Old Cutler Road
Coral Gables, FL 33156

These striking orchids, which are also known as pansy orchids, owing to their similarity to garden pansies, are enjoying popularity. Miltoniopsis are cool-growing orchids that originate in the higher elevations of the Andes in Columbia, Panama and Ecuador.

The warmer-growing species, properly called Miltonias, originate from Minas Gerais area of Brazil and more closely resemble large-flowered Oncidiums. Their flowers can be brilliantly patterned.



Miltoniopsis Andrea West

(Culture information on next page)

(Continued from prior page)

9/29/2016

Miltonia including Miltoniopsis Culture Sheet

Light should be relatively shaded. Direct sunlight burns the thin leaves within a short period of time. However, the warmer growing types prefer more light than their cooler-growing relatives. The cool-growing species need approximately 1,200 foot-candles, while the warmer-growing species require closer to 2,000 foot-candles.

Temperature is critical for the cool-growing plants. Unless temperatures are kept under 80 F, they may not flower. The minimum temperature is 50 to 55 F. Thus, these are really better thought of as intermediate growers because they need intermediate temperatures throughout the year - not too hot, not too cold. The warmer growers will take temperatures over 90 F as long as humidity levels of 70 to 75 percent, or higher, are maintained. The minimum temperature is 60 F.

Water must be plentiful and the medium must drain perfectly. In their native habitat, the plants are drenched almost daily and, because of this, they are intolerant of salt buildup, so leaching every fourth or fifth watering is important when growing in pots. When they are not getting enough water or humidity, the leaves have a tendency to grow with accordion-like pleats. The warmer-growing miltonias should be grown like cattleyas; allow them to approach dryness between waterings. They also tend to be slightly more tolerant of salt buildup than their Colombian cousins so they can dry more between waterings.

Humidity must be at least 70 percent because of the plants' need for abundant water. Less humidity will stress the plants and can lead to susceptibility to disease, though too much humidity is worse than too little.

Fertilize at the same level as other orchids: half-strength, balanced fertilizer every two weeks. This can be reduced by half during overcast weather or in winter. A 10-30-20 blossom-booster formulation is beneficial in early spring when plants approach their flowering period.

Potting should be done after flowering when the new growth is starting. Miltoniopsis should be repotted every year as they are intolerant of stale conditions. The cool growers (miltoniopsis) do well in small pots. The warmer growers (miltonias) tend to have a relatively elongated creeping habit and, therefore, do better mounted. 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. Mounts may be cork, tree fern or other hard wood. They should be longer than wide. For some reason, shallow pans work better than deep pots.

Cattleya Culture Sheet

(KAT-lee-ah)

American Orchid Society
at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden
10901 Old Cutler Road
Coral Gables, FL 33156

Cattleyas are among the most beautiful of orchid flowers. Often used in corsages and wedding bouquets their blooms can last several weeks to a month or more. Miniature cattleyas have increased in popularity because of their ease in growing on windowsills in the home.

Water

Cattleyas store water in both their pseudobulbs and their roots. Miniature catts and seedlings need more frequent watering than the larger standard Catts because they store less water. Potted in a bark mix (finer bark for the smaller catts and seedlings) the mix should be allowed to dry out before re-watering. Summer months and active growth periods will require more frequent watering. After a few watering, you will be able to tell by the weight of the pot whether or not it is time to water again. If in doubt, wait a day. Generally, watering once a week to ten days is sufficient for large cattleyas; seedlings and miniatures need water every five to seven days.

When watering, place the plant in the sink and use tepid water. Do not use salt-softened or distilled water. Let the water run through the plant for a minute or so. Be sure to let the plant drain completely.

This is a good time to look closely at your plant for any sign of insects or disease.

Light

Catts belong to the 'high' light group of orchids. The bright light of an east or west window is ideal; south windows can also be used if shaded with a sheer curtain. The leaves should be medium green. If your plant is not blooming for you try increasing the light. Without sufficient light a cattleya will not bloom.

(Continued From Prior Page)

Temperature

Catts generally enjoy warm temperatures; ideally, 55-60F at night and 70-85F during the day. Mature plants do well with a 15-20 degree difference in day and night temperatures. Keep in mind that temperatures close to the window on a windowsill will be colder or hotter than your general house temperature.

Fertilizer

Any balanced orchid fertilizer (look at the numbers on the container, 20-20-20, etc.) can be used to fertilize your orchid. Feed weakly (¼ strength) weekly works well for catts. Once a month use clear water to flush any accumulated salts from the potting mix. Increase the fertilizer to ½ strength when the plants are in active growth.

Tips

Use a shallow tray of pebbles filled with water to increase humidity around your plants. Be sure the pot does not sit in water as this will rot the roots.

Give your plants room for air to circulate around them. Crowding of plants can lead to problems with insect infestations and fungus. A small fan will help provide good air circulation around your plants.

When the blooms are finished, remove them from the plant. Continue watering and fertilizing and within a year it will begin the blooming cycle again! Cattleyas should generally be repotted every two to three years either after flowering or in the spring.



Cattleya labiata rubra

