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Opportunity

THE KEIKI



Nature Coast Orchid Society

Annual Orchid Show & Sale

Presents

"Picture Perfect"

Saturday and Sunday
March 30th & 31st, 2019
10:00 AM till 4:00 PM

Location: VFW Post 8681 corner of Drayton St. & County Line Rd., Spring Hill
(Pasco County Rd 578 2.7 miles west of 589 Parkway or 6.3 miles east from US 19.

Website: www.naturecoastorchidsociety.com

Orchids & Supplies will be available for purchase

Vendors:	Joy Orchids	Hicks Orchid Supply
	Phelps Farm Orchids Inc.	Accent Orchids
	Orchids in Bloom	Bredren Orchids

AOS Sanctioned Show
(call Marita for more info. 732-673-1179)

Potting & Repotting Services on Sunday for nominal fee.
Sunday Lectures at 11:00am and 1:00pm

Entrance Fee is \$3.00 and includes 1 free raffle ticket.

Extra raffle tickets available for purchase.

We hold hourly raffle drawings and you **must** be present to win.

Don't forget that March is our BIG event, called Picture Perfect. The theme sounds very interesting, Bring your orchids for the Society display. Your orchids could win a ribbon or special status from AOS.

EXECUTIVE BOARD**OFFICERS**

<u>President</u>	Steve Mattana
<u>Past President</u>	Jeff Rundell
<u>1st Vice President</u>	Matt Riesz
<u>2nd Vice President</u>	A volunteer ???
<u>Treasurer</u>	Pat Baig
<u>Executive Secretary</u>	Pat Dupke
<u>Advisory Capacity</u>	Helen Battistrada
<u>Recording Secretary for meetings</u> (not an elected position)	Kara Ramsey

COMMITTEES

<u>Bulletin (The Keiki)</u>	Ken & Delia Dunn
<u>Mailing the Keiki</u>	Ken Dunn
<u>E-mail Co-ordinator</u>	Tim Smith
<u>Historian</u>	Mary Lou Mattana
<u>Librarian</u>	Celeste Ogden
<u>Membership</u>	Arlene Appelbaum, Carol VanderLaan
<u>Publicity</u>	Mary Lou Mattana
<u>Refreshment Table</u>	HELP NEEDED HELP NEEDED
<u>Refreshment Reminders</u>	HELP NEEDED in January
<u>Show Chair</u>	Marita Riesz
<u>Show Table Report</u>	Matt Riesz
<u>Speaker Segment Writer</u>	Kara Ramsey
<u>Trips</u>	Sonia Terrelonge
<u>Webmaster</u> (Website set up by Ken Dunn)	Bob East

**Mary Lou Mattana**

Thanks to our volunteers for help and for food for the kitchen for our upcoming show. We will be serving, vendors, volunteers and judges.

**TREASURER'S REPORT****By Pat Baig**

<u>Balance</u>	\$ 9,813.78
<u>Receipts</u>	\$ 1,385.00
<u>Disbursements</u>	\$ 508.18
Balance 2/5/2019	\$ 10,690.60



FROM THE DESK OF

Steve Mattana

Good day everyone.

Here we are already in March! Plans are underway for our big event on March 30 & 31. Marita

Reisz has done a wonderful job in getting it all put together. This will be our first American Orchid Society sanctioned show in quite some time. There will be AOS judges that will be conducting all the judging for the show. We need all members to bring in plants, on Thursday or Friday (3/28-3/29), for our "Picture Perfect" display. The AOS judges might just give your orchid an AOS award and/or a NCOS award. I am looking forward to seeing everyone's beautiful orchids in our display and wishing everyone good luck on receiving an award! It will also be an interesting experience watching the AOS judges. What they look at when judging will give you a good idea on what to look for when purchasing orchids.

Mary – Lou Mattana has made steps to get more free advertising, saving us a huge amount of advertising funds. These new outlets also give us a wider array of coverage for our Society. I have talked to some of the new members and was informed that they saw our announcement in a free mailer, newspaper announcement/calendar or on Bay News 9's calendar. Good job Mary – Lou.

Don't forget if you would like to be on the Board of Directors now is the time to start thinking about it. Nominations need to be announced in April, so get your name in there, or nominate someone. If you nominate someone they must have agreed to that nomination. We are currently looking for: 1st vice president and 2nd vice president. You may also present a nominee for any of the other positions. We also have a few chairperson positions that need

to be filled, the two most important are for the annual auction and our show chair. Remember anyone is welcome to attend one of our board meetings that are held at the library on Cortez and Blackbird Ave. Our next board meeting is March 14 at 11:30am.

The vendors at our show this year will be:

Bret and Ruth Ulrey from Accent Orchids

Phillip Hamilton from Brendren Orchids

Paul and Trisha Phelps from Phelps Farm

Hicks Orchid Supply

David and Joyce Fowler from Joy Orchids

Pam Waters from Orchids in Bloom

Eric Olson from Pottery by Eric Olson Pottery

And our two artists: Susan Strawbridge and Nancy Fisher

We have an impressive list of volunteers for upcoming show on March 30th and 31st.



They all deserve a mention for their "Want To". If your name has been left off, it was not intentional, this is the list as it was known on 2/27. Thank you to everyone listed, you are what keep this

society a fun group to belong to:

Arlene Applebaum, Arty Appelbaum, Bobbie LeMay, Bruce Baright, Carol Vanderlaan, Celeste Ogden, Debra Haley, Delia Dunn, Diane Musser, Geary Harris, Javon & Joe Parker, Jeff Rundell, Julie Appleget, Julie Smolka, Kara Ramsey, Ken Dunn, Lois Jensen

Marge Waig, Marie Tanaka, Marita Riesz, Matt Riesz, Mary Lou Mattana, Pat Carter, Pat Dupke, Regina Epple, Sandy Rundell, Sonia Terrelonge, Steve Epple, Sue Capability-Taylor, Tim & Judy Smith, Tricia Auffhammer, Virginia Hall, Wen Ogden and myself (wherever I am needed at the moment)

See you at the board meeting and at our "Picture Perfect" show.

Our February speaker, Bill Nunez says "A book that should be in your library if you plan on growing seedlings, which Bill affectionately refers to as his Bible for seedling care, is *Orchid Seedling Care (With Special Emphasis on Water Quality)* by Bob Gordon."

Guess What, we have this book in our Society Library—Just go to this Keiki page 12 and you can order the book.



**Thanks to those who have volunteered.
Don't forget you are needed too.**



Membership Notes for March

By Arlene Appelbaum

February's monthly meeting was very well attended by 50 members and 7 guests. We welcomed 3 new orchid lovers to our society. Please welcome the following people:

Deborah Trovat

Gerry Waig

Nelda Terry

Our roster now stands at 107. although not all are active members.

I would welcome any suggestions, short of phone calls, to help me cull the list. 60 members have paid their 2019 dues. Thank you to those folks.

I have received new name badge orders from 8 members. The price of a badge is \$13.50. I will have them for distribution at our show on the 30th. Please make a check payable to NCOS or exact cash for the amount due. Remember, , it's never to late to order yours. A big thanks goes to Pat Baig for doing the leg work to locate a vendor.

Here's hoping that we have a great turnout at our Show. Be sure to mark it on your calendars, March 30 and 31st. (setup on the 29th)

MEMBERS:

Arlene has graciously taken over sending get-well cards and sympathy cards to members. If you know of any members who are ill or grieving, please send her an email to let her know at fluffy2cats@gmail.com

THANK YOU!



NCOC ORCHID QUIZ

One Definition of "Botanical" is:

1. *Orchid species that grows exclusively in rainforests*
2. *Orchid species that are not usually-grown commercially.*
3. *Orchid species whose roots grow above the bedding.*

Orchids Compose What Percentage of the Worlds Flowering Plants?

1. 3% 2. 8% 3. 14% 4. 27%

Which Fictional Detective Was Known For Growing Orchids?

1. *Nero Wolfe*
2. *Agatha Christie*
3. *Sherlock Holmes*
4. *Philip Marlowe*

Answers on the Library page, Page # 12

Dues were Due in January—You can still pay them at the upcoming show. Please be aware of our new dues structure which is **\$20.00 for a single and \$25.00 for a family membership.** To expedite the process, please try to have exact cash or a check payable to NCOS, our new name Nature Coast Orchid Society. Thank you so much.



February 25, 2019

Orchid Society

INVITATION
Redland International Orchid Festival 2019

Dear Orchid Society Representative,

It's that time of year again (REDLAND INTERNATIONAL ORCHID FESTIVAL TIME!) and I hope that your Society is planning a bus trip to the Festival. (If I am not contacting the right person with this message, kindly forward this to the appropriate member, or just let me know to whom it should be addressed.)

To encourage your Society to attend, we are offering the same incentives as we did last year: namely, free admission, a \$5.00 discount coupon toward any purchase from an orchid vendor, and a 50 cent per mile travel allowance on your round-trip mileage. (The mileage allowance is available only if there are 35 or more passengers on your bus, and is subject to a cap of \$400.00. If your Society is smaller, you might combine with a neighboring small Society to combine resources toward a single bus.) When you have a final number for your bus, I'll need an address to send admission tickets and coupons. Please let me know by April 15, 2019.

This year we expect 65 orchid vendors from 14 countries and the United States. There will also be supply vendors and a nice variety of food and craft vendors. You can visit our website, www.redlandorchidfest.org, for up-to-date information on the vendors as they sign up. Also see the list of lectures scheduled to take place over the three days of the Festival, and a pretty video of our vendors' tents in the Park at the 2017 Festival. You can *like* us on our Facebook page.

If you need any further information, please let me know. It is probably easiest to reach me by email at whimsyorchids@gmail.com. We are looking forward to seeing you at the 2019 Redland International Orchid Festival!

Sincerely,

REDLAND ORCHID FESTIVAL

Bill Peters

One of the hallmarks of the Redland International Orchid Festival is the week-end-long lecture series. Here, in the comfort of the air conditioned lecture room at the Fruit & Spice Park, you can learn how to grow that difficult species or how to control a pesky pest invasion. Speakers are hand picked from visiting growers and local academics.

You'll be surprised at what you can learn!

The American Orchid Society Webinars

Webinars are online video presentations. You can register for an upcoming webinar or watch the recorded webinars any time at your convenience.

Upcoming Webinars



Greenhouse Chat March 2019

Ron McHatton

Tuesday, March 26th, 2019

8:30 PM - 9:30 PM EST

Choosing the best plants

Lois Cinert,

Tuesday, March 12th, 2019

8:30 PM - 9:30 PM EST

Just click on: <http://www.aos.org/orchids/webinars.aspx>
and you can watch these videos at your convenience

Unique Vandaceous Hybrids www.MotesOrchids.com



All orchid hobbyists and photographers are invited to submit digital images for the "Photo of the Week" to be featured on the Homepage of the American Orchid Society's webpage.

You don't need to be a member to participate. This would also be a great time to post your great orchid picture on our "Nature Coast Orchid Society" Facebook page.

For AOS instructions just click here:

<http://www.aos.org/all-about-orchids/photo-of-the-week.aspx>

FEBRUARY MEETING MINUES

Ken Dunn opened our meeting by requesting that we approve the minutes for last month's meeting held on January 19, 2019. This motion to approve the minutes was seconded by Matt Riesz.

Steve Mattana discussed our annual show to be held next month, which is fast approaching. We are still in need of some volunteers for our show especially with the set up ahead of the show on Friday, March 29th. Please contact Marita Riesz regarding volunteer positions still in need of sign up. Club member Julie Appleget was gracious enough to volunteer her time to help out with the kitchen duties during our show. Thanks to Julie's assistance the club will be able to provide food for the vendors as well as the volunteers who work the show this year. As stated previously, this year's show, 'Picture Perfect', will be an AOS sanctioned show. The AOS will be providing trained judges to come and conduct the ribbon judging for the plants featured in our show. If there are any plants present that the judges feel are worthy of an AOS award, than those plants will be pulled aside and judged per AOS standards. There are several club members that have volunteered their time to act as clerks and assist the AOS judges on Saturday, March 30th with the task of judging all the plants. If your orchid is awarded by the AOS you will be able to assign it a clonal name, which will follow any divisions or clones of the original plant. Please note that for any orchid awarded there is a small fee for registering the awarded plant with the AOS.

Steve announced that there are going to be some changes coming to the board line up for our club. We will be in need of a 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, and of some assistance with our treasury position. Marita will be stepping down as our Show

Chair after this year's show in March. Therefore, we will be in need of a volunteer to take over the duties associated with the organization of our annual show for next year.

Ken Dunn mentioned that there is an opportunity available for an individual(s) to take over as the next Editor of the club's newsletter, the Keiki. Ken and Delia Dunn, who currently volunteer their time to publish the Keiki monthly, plan to start traveling and spending more time with their family. They will assist in explaining to the new Editor how to utilize Microsoft Publisher, our software program used to compile all of the articles for the newsletter. Please get in touch with Ken, Delia, or Steve if you have any interest in this opportunity.

We want to emphasize that volunteers are the lifeblood of our organization. We would not exist as an organization without those willing to devote an hour or two of their time each month towards tasks in need. If you have the 'WANT TO' to volunteer to run for any of the upcoming positions available for the board, volunteer for 2020's Show Chair, or take over as editor of the Keiki, please see Steve for further details.

We want to emphasize that volunteers are the lifeblood of our organization. We would not exist as an organization without those willing to devote an hour or two of their time each month towards tasks in need. If you have the 'WANT TO' to volunteer to run for any of the upcoming positions available for the board, volunteer for 2020's Show Chair, or take over as editor of the Keiki, please see Steve for further details.

Due to our show being held next month we will NOT hold our monthly meeting for March. However, the monthly board meeting for March will be held as scheduled for those that are

Are members of the board. Our next club meeting will be a repotting seminar, which will be held on April 20, 2019. For the April repotting seminar club members should bring: their orchid in need of repotting, a new pot (preferably 1" in diameter larger than the old pot), potting media, cutting tools, a few sheets of newspaper, a 5 gallon bucket (if available), and a dish tub (if available). The club will be providing Hick's #5 potting media for this event, but if you desire some other potting media (i.e. sphagnum moss) than you will be responsible for bring that material with you. Pat Dupke mentioned that she will bring in several clay pots that she has available. These clay pots will be available for sale (inexpensive) to those in need of a new pot for this repotting seminar. We will plan to break up into small groups in order to discuss repotting and have a demonstration on how to repot an orchid from those club members who are more experienced.

Pat Baig presented our treasury report:

Arlene Appelbaum provided a membership update for the club. As of today the club now stands at 107 registered members. We had 3 new members join our organization at this month's meeting. At our meeting we had 50 members in attendance. As a reminder yearly dues are due – the current fee is \$20 for an individual and \$25 for a couple. Arlene is searching for a vendor to produce our club name tags featuring our new logo. She is currently taking down a list of names of those interested in purchasing a new name tag.

Matt Riesz discussed the beautiful orchids featured on our show table for this month.

The club enjoyed a presentation by Bill Nunez on how to grow orchids from seed.

The raffle was drawn and the meeting adjourned.



SPEAKER SEGMENT

by Kara Warnock

Our speaker for this month was Bill Nunez who was here with us today from Seminole, Florida. For those of you who don't remember Bill spoke with our club last March on *Encyclia tampensis* and other *Encyclia spp.* and their hybrids. He was nice enough to fill in for Paul Phelps of Phelps Orchids who was supposed to be our speaker this month, but due to receiving heart surgery last month could not make it here with us today. Thus, for all of the little things that Bill Nunez has done and continues to do in service of our organization Steve Mattana extended him an honorary lifetime membership to our club. Today our discussion was on "*Growing Orchid Seedlings and Basic Seedling Care*".

Why would you want to grow orchid seedlings? There are a lot of different reasons one might grow orchids from seed. Personal satisfaction being one. It can be challenging at first especially if you are unfamiliar with the task of raising orchids from seed. However, the very first time you present your own hybrids for judging and they are awarded it can be ten times more rewarding knowing that you had a hand in raising them from infancy. That you were the one responsible for the pollination, flasking, re-plating, and growth of the orchid to bloom size. Growing orchids from seed is one way to go about improving the quality of your orchid collection. Creating hybrids utilizing seed pod propagation generates seedlings that are like members of a family – related and similar in appearance yet different from one another. . Over the years you are able to cull plants from your collection by choosing to keep only the very best plants.

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from prior page)

Some individuals may grow and hybridize orchids for experimentation. You imagine in your head the results you might achieve by crossing two particular orchids together. Sometimes these experiments work out for the best and sometimes you look at your newly bloomed orchids and wonder “What the heck was I thinking?” You try to learn from your missteps and conduct a little more research prior to making your next hybrid. Finally, some grow orchids from seed for recognition. If you are the first person to create a cross between two orchids you will have the opportunity to register the name of the cross (whatever name you like) with Kew Botanical Gardens in London after the plant has bloomed.

The start of every orchid hybrid is the flasking stage where the young orchid seedlings begin to grow as little protocorms suspended in an agar solution. As the seedlings grow larger they are replated (or transferred) onto a new agar solution until the time comes when they have achieved sufficient growth and are ready to be deflasked. Growing orchids from seed can seem like a daunting task, but there are some simple steps that you can follow that will drastically reduce your failure rate. Prior to deflasking your orchid seedlings you want to take precautions to ensure their survival and get them prepared for life in the real world. You have to remember that the seedlings have been living in the protection of their mother’s womb this whole time inside the sterile environment provided by the flask. To prepare the seedlings for deflasking, Bill soaks them (while still inside the flask) in a ¼ strength solution of RD-20 (Physan 20). This helps to protect them against infection from fungus and bacteria present in the harsh environment outside the flask. The best way to remove the seedlings from the Erlenmeyer flask is to wrap the entire

the entire flask inside a towel and tap about mid-way up the flask with a hammer to break the glass. The easiest way to pot out your seedlings from the flask is to create a large, community pot in which the seedlings can grow together. Once removed from the flask you will notice that all of the seedlings are growing with their roots firmly planted inside the dense agar solution, which should be formed into the shape of a hockey puck. To create your community pot you should select a plastic or clay pot that is 1” larger in size than the diameter of the puck of agar containing the plantlets. Fill your pot about half way full with your desired potting media. Gently break off some but not all of the agar from around the roots of the seedlings and place the puck on top of the media inside the pot. Then begin to rotate the pot and backfill the pot with the remainder of your potting media. When you are done remember to add your plant tag with the appropriate identification regarding the hybrid cross and lightly water your seedlings.

Once potted out it is best to move your community pot and/or small seedlings to a designated area of your greenhouse that is separate from your mature plants. You do not want to have any of your mature plants hanging directly over top of your seedlings, as the seedlings will require different treatment from that of your mature plants. You do not want what you are treating your mature plants with to wash down onto your seedlings since the seedlings absorb things at a different rate than the mature plants. For your growing seedlings you want to try to maintain temperatures in your growing area between 73-80°F. They prefer 40-50% light coverage and 50% shaded conditions.

The seedlings prefer good water quality and will require more frequent waterings than your mature plants, as they cannot afford to dry out for very long.

For watering your seedlings Bill recommends using the Wonder Waterer, a watering wand that creates a soft, uniform spray of water that won't disturb your young plants. To feed your seedlings you can use the same fertilizer that you are using for your mature plants just apply at $\frac{1}{4}$ the normal solution. For seedlings it is important that your fertilizer be balanced as studies have shown that too much of one nutrient can prevent uptake of another. If you can remember only one thing on how to care for your orchid seedlings, than remember this phrase, "How much beer does it take to get a 3 year old child drunk compared to Jeff Rundell?" The point being that we have to do everything for our seedlings on a much lower scale than our mature plants until we get them to reach blooming size.

For seedling plants it is extremely important to inspect them for the presence of pest and disease daily. For young seedlings infections and/or pest infestations can be significant enough to kill the plant. Even if the infection and/or infestation isn't enough to kill the plant it can lead to poor growth habit that will cause seedlings to take longer to reach blooming size. There are several products that can be used to combat pests on your orchids that are mild enough for use on seedlings. Insecticidal soaps are mild yet effective against pests such as mites and scale. Bill prefers to make his own insecticidal soap using a concoction of the capsaicin from Carolina Reaper peppers mixed with Dr. Bronner's peppermint soap for use on his plants. Isopropyl alcohol is another good product that is safe to use for pests on seedlings. It will kill most insects on contact including scale, thrips, and aphids. For treating mites he suggests using Avid or Lucid (generic) to effectively control infestations. For preventing snail and slug damage to plants you can scatter bait in your pots and throughout your growing area. Also, as a preventative against snails and slugs you can spray a concentrated solution of

copper sulfate on the surfaces throughout your greenhouse. It is very important that when spraying copper sulfate that you do not directly spray any of your orchids, as it is an herbicide at higher concentrated doses. To create an effective barrier against snails and slugs it is necessary to reapply the copper sulfate to surfaces every 3-4 months. There are a number of different fungicides and bactericides that can be used on seedlings. Phyton 35 and Kocide are two good products that are often utilized, however, these products are copper based and should always be mixed according to the labeled instructions or they could turn into plant killers. Other popular bactericide/fungicides are Banrot, RD-20, Captan, Aliette, Cleary's 3336F, Subdue, and Zyban. Probably the best broad spectrum fungicides available at the moment is one called Heritage, but it can be a little pricey for some to use. In order to protect plants post removal from the flask Bill recommends utilizing a bactericide/fungicide product at $\frac{1}{4}$ strength to treat your community pot or individual seedlings once a week for the first month.

Cultivating orchids from flask to bloom can be a labor of love, but it can also be extremely rewarding for those that pursue it. A book that should be in your library if you plan on growing seedlings, which Bill affectionately refers to as his Bible for seedling care, is *Orchid Seedling Care (With Special Emphasis on Water Quality)* by Bob Gordon. Providing orchid seedlings with the exact conditions that they need in order to grow past the critical stage (achieving a height of 5-6") and to thrive might be challenging at times but the payoff potential is huge. You never really know until you bloom your seedlings what unique beauties you might discover and that makes growing orchids from seed an interesting journey.



GREAT PLANTS, but not that many to show. Hope this is not a prelude to the number of plants that will arrive for our show on March 30th.

To see the stunning plants from the February Show Table in all their colorful splendor, click here:

<http://www.naturecoastorchidsociety.com/beauty-from-the-show-table-1192019.html>

OLCOSH Show Table 2-16-2019

Plant Name	Grower
B. nodosa	Thomas Govin
Blc. Hsinying Willette	Julie Smolka
Blc. Young Min Orange	Jeff Rundell
Cattleya Hybrid	Jeff Rundell
Cleisostoma arietinum	Jeff Rundell
Cym. devonianum	Pat Dupke
Ludisia Discolor ("Jewel Orchid")	Matt Riesz
Rl. Aristocrat	Matt Riesz
Rl. glauca	Jeff Rundell
Rl. glauca	Matt Riesz
Rlc. Pastoral 'Innocence' AM/AOS	Matt Riesz





YOUR ORCHID LIBRARY

By Celeste Ogden

Bill Nunez, our speaker in February said his Orchid Bible was “Orchid Seedling Care”. That is one of our Library Books (200-102), why don’t you give it a try? See page 8 for Bill’s Speaker Segment written by Kara Warnock

<http://www.naturecoastorchidsociety.com/library-checkout-books.html>

How do I get a book from the Club’s Library?

1. Just Click on: www.naturecoastorchidsociety.com/library-alphabetical-list-books.html

2. Select Books or CD’s you think would be useful and order right on the web page.

Select any number(s) that you would like to spend some time with and then you can sign them out at the next Members’ Meeting Keep them for 1 month and return them at the following meeting and remove your name from the list.

If you have any questions about our Library Books, my email address is:

c1948ogden@gmail.com

BOOK OF THE MONTH

Taylor’s Guide To Orchids

Book# 200-036

More than 300 orchid, photographed and described for growers of every level of experience from beginners to collectors. With complete instructions on selecting and caring for each variety. Includes chapters on potting, fertilizing, watering, and maintenance, as well as on organic controls of pests and diseases.

NCOS ORCHID QUIZ ANSWERS FROM PAGE 4

One Definition of “Botanical” is: 1. Orchid species that grows exclusively in rainforests

Orchids Compose What Percentage of the Worlds Flowering Plants? There are about 26,000 orchid species which make up approximately #2. 8% of the worlds flowering plants.

Which Fictional Detective Was Known For Growing Orchids? Nero Wolfe, #1 is a fictional character, a brilliant, oversized, eccentric armchair detective created in 1934 by American mystery writer Rex Stout.

Copied and pasted from Orchids Made Easy...

Good info for Newbies!

“When orchids are grown in the wild, they are able to acquire nutrients in their environment from whatever crosses their path of growth. They can gain nutrients from a number of things, including but not limited to, animal feces; decomposing animals, leaves, and vegetation; or minerals provided to them through the rain. Since your orchid is going to be growing indoors, it is important to be able to provide those much needed nutrients for healthy and productive orchid growth. You can help take care of orchids by feeding them fertilizers.

It is important to note that if your orchid is in poor health, applying fertilizers won't help the problem, but will just make it worse. If the plant isn't functioning properly then the fertilizer will just build-up in the potting material. Fertilizer that becomes built-up can dehydrate the plant and further harm the orchid.

NPK

Care of Orchids

You should only use only fertilizer that is specifically made for orchids. Commercial orchid fertilizer is made up of nitrogen - N), phosphorus (P), and potassium (K), along with small amounts of other elements such as iron, sodium, and copper. Potassium is responsible for the overall growth of the plant. If you orchid does not get enough potassium then this could stunt the growth of your orchid and it will never reach its full potential. Phosphorous is responsible for the flower production and the growth of the roots. If your orchid does not receive enough phosphorous then it could affect the roots and stunt their growth. Other signs of a lack of phosphorus are leaves that turn a dark green color and an absence of flowers being produced from your orchid. Nitrogen is responsible for healthy stem and leaf growth. If you orchid receives too much nitrogen then this could cause your orchid to grow too large and can also delay the flowering process.

Potting Medium

The ingredients in orchid fertilizer are mixed with different combinations depending on the variety of orchid you have as well as the type of potting medium you have used. For example, if you have used bark as a potting medium, over time the bark begins to be decayed by bacteria that use a great deal of nitrogen in the break-down process, so ultimately this will leave less nitrogen for the plant to absorb. This means that an orchid with bark as a potting medium would need a fertilizer with extra nitrogen as opposed to an orchid with a different type of potting medium. The combinations are reflective of the three main ingredients as mentioned above. The combination, for example, might be 10-20-20 which would reflect the percentage of nitrogen - N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) in the fertilizer. The most important thing to remember when picking out a fertilizer is to keep in mind your potting medium so that you can identify the correct combination of fertilizer ingredients.

Types of Fertilizers

There are an abundant number of orchid fertilizers on the market in different forms such as granule, slow-release, and also water-soluble. Granule fertilizer and slow-release fertilizer are both applied directly on the potting medium, although you have to be careful with these because both can burn roots. Slow-release is a little more pricey than the granule, although it will last a little longer. Water-soluble fertilizer must be diluted in water according to the directions on the label. It is an affordable option and also very easy to apply.

Orchids can grow with just regular watering, but for the best results and blooms, regular fertilizing can make all the difference. Taking care of orchids with regular fertilizing is an important step in maintaining a healthy and vibrant orchid.”



This is your opportunity to be the next editor of the Nature Coast Society's newsletter, The Keiki.

Delia and I need to be reducing some of our activities and want to do some traveling and will be needing someone to take over as editor.

If you presently do a little computer work it would not be a really difficult job. We use Microsoft Publisher that does a lot of the work in making the newsletter attractive.

Articles are sent by the Officers and members by e-mail each month. There is a deadline, the end of each month, by which all articles have to be received and for the most part, the editor just compiles the information and a lot of it is repetitive each month as far as setting up the pages.

At some point we will be giving firm notice of our retirement but it would be good to have someone step forward now to familiarize themselves with the process and get a good understanding before we give it up. It's quite an enjoyable job and especially if you like working with color.

Please get in touch with us at 352-341-3711 or by e-mail at kendunn@tampabay.rr.com

Ken and Delia Dunn

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