

special part of her orchid collection.

Fellow club member and professional orchid grower, Joyce Fowler of Joy Orchids, gave a talk on how to deal with the dreaded pest, scale. Her discussion outlined a three-pronged attack on how to completely eradicate this pest from our orchid collections. Typically when scale is present you may notice that your plant all of a

sudden does not look as happy anymore. Upon closer inspection you might notice indentations, yellowing, veining, and/or bumps present on your plant. The bumps, which are the scale themselves, may appear white, light brown, or black in color and can have a cottony appearance. The first step once you detect scale among your orchids is *Removal*. First pull the plant from your collection and keep it separate from all of your other plants. Next, wipe down the entire plant with a cotton ball heavily saturated with rubbing alcohol to manually re-move the adult scale. According to Joyce you want to treat the plant the way you would when changing a baby's diaper, "you wipe everything."

You wipe down the pseudobulbs, the upper and lower surfaces of the leaves, you even dig just a little into the medium to wipe near the roots – targeting every nook and crevice. Step two is a *Treatment* to kill any scale eggs that may still be present that can potentially re-infect your plants. At her nursery they use Ultra-Pure Oil Horticultural Insecticide, Miticide and Fungicide by BASF. Since they typically treat thousands of plants regularly at their nursery, she purchases the large 2.5-gallon jug from the distributors in Apopka. She mixes 2 ounces of the Ultra-Pure Oil with one gallon of water and applies the product to her orchids using a fine mist sprayer. When spraying your plants you really should abide by Joyce's mantra: "Do not bother to spray if you are not going to do it thoroughly." You should spray your plants from the top, to the sides, and from the bottom moving upward. Thoroughly coating every surface of the plant. The Ultra-Pure Oil that Joyce uses is a product that is 98% petroleum oil. The oil is lightweight, highly filtered to remove impurities, and acts as a product that is 98% petroleum oil. The oil is lightweight, highly filtered to remove impurities, and acts as a natural miticide and insecticide. Unfortunately, she could not find any commercial preparations of the Ultra-Pure Oil available in smaller quantities for at home orchid growers. Her suggestion was to use a similar product, Neem Oil, which can be readily purchased in small quantities from the home improvement stores. In order to avoid leaf burn it is important not to expose your orchids to direct sunlight after applying an oil based product. Joyce even suggests applying a product such as the Ultra-Pure Oil to plants on a seasonal basis