

**APRIL 2005: SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER HOWARD GINSBERG,  
"GOLDEN PEOKER, GOLDEN PARENT"**

The next meeting of the Central NY Orchid Society will be on Sunday, April 3<sup>RD</sup>, 12:30<sup>PM</sup>, at the Parish Hall of St. Augustine's Church (across the parking lot). **Please note the time and place, for this meeting only to accommodate those who must drive to Rochester to break down our display at the GROS Show.**

Our guest speaker for April is Howard Ginsberg of Bedford Orchids, and his presentation is entitled "Golden Peoker, Golden Parent." His talk will focus on the influence that the incredible *Phalaenopsis* Golden Peoker has had in hybrid *Phalaenopsis* breeding; Golden Peoker is the forbearer to all of those wonderful blotch and spotted-petal hybrids. Howard is an accredited American Orchid Society (AOS) judge in the Northeast Judging Center (the first accredited judge north of Albany, NY and east of Toronto, Ontario). He began growing orchids in 1977, at which time he tried growing many genera. Since then, his focus has narrowed to growing and breeding *Phalaenopsis* exclusively, although his interests remain larger. He has spoken to orchid societies across North America, throughout New Zealand and in Australia, and has been a featured speaker in AOS judges' training at several centers. Howard has also been a featured speaker at AOS Trustees meetings and was a featured speaker at the 18<sup>TH</sup> WOC in Dijon, France. In addition to learning Mandarin, visiting Taiwan on a regular basis and speaking around the world, he finds time for his law practice in Montreal. He created and maintains his own web site—<http://www.bedfordorchids.com> and is now creating web sites for others. He is also in the process

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**MARCH MEETING: DENNIS D'ALLESANDRO,  
GYPSY GLEN ORCHIDS**

The CNYOS March meeting featured Dennis D'Allesandro of Gypsy Glen Orchids, who gave a very enjoyable talk on the orchids of Ecuador and Bolivia. Dennis lived in Ecuador for several years before returning to the US, and still maintains orchid-growing facilities there. His talk focussed on the diversity of orchids found in Ecuador & Bolivia, especially many that he had some part in discovering and describing. Dennis had a good selection of plants to sell at the meeting, consisting of a mixture of novel Paphiopedilum hybrids, as well as a number of New and Old World species. After the meeting a small group of members took Dennis and his wife out to dinner.

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**SUNDAY, APRIL 3: HOWARD GINSBERG OF  
BEDFORD ORCHIDS**

*Continued from Page 1*

of creating a special site: <http://www.orchid-porn.com>.

In addition to his talks and the articles that appear on the web site, Howard has had articles published in Orchids (the magazine of the American Orchid Society), Orchid Digest, the IPA Newsletter, Orchids Australia and the Canadian Bar Review (no, it wasn't about orchids).

Howard is proudest of selling so many award winners, particularly those of his breeding, including a recent Award of Quality to *Phal.* Rong Guan Amah (Timothy Christopher 'Bedford' x *amabilis* 'Bedford Beauty', AM/AOS). Some of those with award potential will be for sale at our meeting! Hope to see you there. *And don't forget the earlier meeting time and alternative location.*



1. Volunteers are need to assist with set-up and break-down at the Rochester GROS Show.
2. Break-down for the GROS show conflicts with our April meeting. In order to accommodate those who are scheduled to break the display down, we will hold the meeting earlier in the day (12:30, in the Parish Hall across on the opposite side of the parking lot from our regular meeting place). This way the break-down committee and other interested members can attend the meeting and still make it to the show.
3. Dues are really due. *No more exceptions.*
4. Treasurer's Report: Proceeds from the Silent Auction: \$850.
5. Web site: Jeff Stuart reported on changing the name of our web site. The name should be short and simple. The club voted on CNYOS.org.
6. Potential new sites for our show: Bev Costello looked into the Rt. 57 Fire Barn, who will vote on our request on Monday (3/7). They have a selection of round and rectangular tables available. Other options include May Memorial (questionable), Pennsebenee's Casa Grande, and the Raddison-Aspen House. St. Augustines rents out the Parish Hall only to Church-related events.

**Many Volunteers will be needed for the Fall Show!**

7. Iris Cohen is working on a new club membership list.
8. AOS is looking for donations as financial assist after the hurricanes.
9. Judging Center donations: Judges from several centers joined us for our fall show, and donations need to be made to each center, including the North Eastern, Toronto, and Mid-Atlantic. Kim will check with Carol Haskell.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Barbara Weller and the Easter Bunny**

**Cover Photo & Graphics Credits:** *Phal.* Golden Peoker © Howard Ginsberg, Bedford Orchids. Digital manipulation © Jeff Stuart, 2005.

- April 1-3**      **Genesee Region Orchid Society Show**, Eisenhart Auditorium, Rochester Museum & Science Center, 657 East Ave., Rochester, NY. Contact: Ron Uhlig, 26 Mandalay Ridge, Pittsford, NY 14534; (585) 387-9940; [www.genesee-orchid.org](http://www.genesee-orchid.org).
- April 3**      **CNYOS Monthly Meeting:** Howard Ginsberg of Bedford Orchids
- April 12-17**      **The 25<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary New York International Orchid Show** at Rockefeller Center, sponsored by the Greater New York Orchid Society, <http://www.gnyos.org>
- April 22-25**      **Southern Tier Orchid Society Show**, Oakdale Mall, 601-635 Harry L. Drive, Johnson City, NY. Contact: Gail Kirch, 1099 Powderhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850; [gkirch@stny.rr.com](mailto:gkirch@stny.rr.com).
- May 1**      **Annual CNYOS Orchid Auction!**
- June 25**      **Oriskany Herb & Flower Fest:** Parker Scripture Botanical Gardens, Farm & Home Center, 121 Second Street, Oriskany, NY

Photo of *Epi. stanfordianum* © Greg Allikas 1997 (orchidworks.com). Digital editing by Jeff Stuart

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## *April 22 – 25: Southern Tier Orchid Society Show & Sale*

**T**he Southern Tier Orchid Society (STOS) Show is coming up fast, and as in past years, CNYOS will be participating. STOS always puts on a good show, with lots of displays and several vendors, and is one of the two shows at which CNYOS regularly exhibits. And STOS is a regular at our Fall Show & Sale, so it's important for us to reciprocate! As in past years, it will be held in the Oakdale Mall, in Johnson City. Details can be found at the STOS website, <http://www.geocities.com/orchidovation/>. This year the club's display will be set up by Kim Boronczyk and Bob Milner. BUT we are still looking for able and willing volunteers to help with set up and break-down (more than two people are usually needed). ***And we will certainly need your blooming orchids for the display!*** Set up is scheduled for Thursday, April 21, followed by judging on April 22<sup>ND</sup>. If you have orchids that you'd like to send to the show, please contact Kim (315-455-7587, [ortizkim@msn.com](mailto:ortizkim@msn.com)) by **Saturday, April 16<sup>TH</sup>** both to make arrangements to get your plants to her during the following week, and to tell her what plants you plan to send. We are hoping to pre-register all of the orchids for our display; contact Iris Cohen (461-9226, [IrisCohen@aol.com](mailto:IrisCohen@aol.com)) with the name of the orchid and its parents, if a hybrid. When you drop plants off for the exhibit, please **label the pot with your name and the name of the plant, label your box with your name, and include a complete list of all the plants you're sending—this way there will be no confusion with respect to which plant is which and whose plant is whose!** You would be surprised how difficult it can be to identify and label plants once they are in the display—it's very hard to tell the difference between some of the more complex hybrids. **Don't forget to prepare your orchids for the show; remove any dead or damaged foliage, and stake inflorescences so that the flowers are nicely displayed (and please, don't use the popular dragon-fly clips, which distract from both the plant and display).** The plant should be disease & pest free, and well-watered (malls can be very dry). Even if you have never sent an orchid to a show before, please don't hesitate if you've got something nice in bloom—you just may be surprised with a ribbon, or even more! CNYOS members Judi Witkin and Charles Ufford have volunteered to break down the display on the 24<sup>TH</sup>, *but they would appreciate extra help.* E-mail reminders about the show will be sent in April.

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**Please note especially all names and abbreviations in boldface, and correct or complete your records.**

### Cypripedium Alliance

<i>Paph.</i> Charles Sladden ( <i>bellatulum</i> x <i>glaucophyllum</i> )	Ditz
<i>Paph.</i> <i>sukhakulii</i>	DiStefano
<i>Phrag.</i> Schroederæ ( <i>caudatum</i> x <b>Sedenii</b> )	Witkin
<i>Paph.</i> <i>villosum</i>	Coleman
<i>Paph.</i> Angela ( <i>fairrieantum</i> x <i>niveum</i> )	Lloyd
<i>Phrag.</i> Carol Kanzer ( <i>pearcei</i> x <i>schlimii</i> )	“

### Cattleya Alliance

<i>Slc.</i> Golden Spots x <i>Sc.</i> Beaufort	Bordoni
<i>Pot.</i> Valley Isle Rainbow ( <i>Slc.</i> <b>Sutter</b> Creek x <i>Blc.</i> Momilani Rainbow)	“
<i>Slc.</i> Ken Dream ( <i>Lc.</i> Persepolis x <i>Sc.</i> Beaufort)	Capella
<i>Hksa.</i> Koolau Sunset ( <i>Slc.</i> Mae Hawkins x <i>Ctna.</i> Keith Roth)	“
<i>Sl.</i> Pole Star ( <i>L.</i> <i>briegeri</i> x <i>S.</i> <i>coccinea</i> )	“
<i>S.</i> <i>cernua</i>	Witkin
<i>Slc.</i> Exotic Mini Treat ( <i>Lc.</i> Trick or Treat x Seagulls Mini-Cat Heaven)	Mini-Braue
<i>Lc.</i> Haw Yuan Angel (Orglade's Glow x Janet)	“
<i>Pot.</i> Heavenly Jewel ( <i>Slc.</i> Tangerine Jewel x <i>Blc.</i> Meditation)	“
<i>Pot.</i> Hoku Gem ( <i>Slc.</i> Tangerine Jewel x <i>Bl.</i> Richard Mueller)	“
<i>Epi.</i> <i>pseudepidendrum</i>	Erickson
<i>Lc.</i> <b>El</b> Cerrito x <i>Bc.</i> Daffodil	Weller
<i>C.</i> Helen Jarzab ( <i>Gur.</i> <i>aurantiaca</i> x <i>luteola</i> )	“
<i>Pot.</i> Cherub ( <i>Low.</i> Trinket x <i>Gur.</i> <i>aurantiaca</i> )	Cohen

### Vandaceous

<i>Ascda.</i> Princess Mikasa (Royal Sapphire x <i>V.</i> <i>coerulea</i> )	Lloyd
<i>Phal.</i> <i>taenialis</i>	Ufford
<i>Phal.</i> <i>stuartiana</i>	“
<i>Phal.</i> Orchid World (Malibu Imp x Deventeriana)	Bordoni
<i>Phal.</i> <b>Nobby's</b> Amy (Be Glad x Rothschildiana)	“
<i>Phal.</i> <b>Mystik</b> Golden Leopard (Golden Amboin x <i>philip-pinensis</i> )	“
<i>Sarco.</i> Mavis ( <i>hartmannii</i> x <i>falcatus</i> )	Churchill
<i>Dar.</i> Charm ( <i>Neof.</i> <i>falcata</i> x <i>Vasco.</i> Tham Yuen Hae)	Cohen
<i>Phal.</i> <i>violacea</i>	Kessler
<i>V.</i> unknown	Erickson
<i>Dtps.</i> Taisuco Jewel x <b>Phal.</b> Sunstate's Ambrosia	“
<i>Phal.</i> Timothy Christopher (Cassandra x <i>aphrodite</i> )	Coleman

<i>Tblm.</i> <i>kotoense</i>	“
<i>Dtps.</i> Long Pride Pony (Long Pride Rose x Minho Princess)	Tupper
<b><i>Dtps.</i> Brother</b> Fire Coral (Coral Gleam x <i>Phal.</i> Cassandra)	“

### Oncidium Alliance

<i>Mcm.</i> <i>bicolor</i>	Cohen
<i>Hwra.</i> Lava Burst (Mini-Primi x <i>Rdza.</i> <b><i>lanceolata</i></b> )	Milner
<i>Onc.</i> <i>cheirophorum</i>	Kessler
<b><i>Odcdm.</i> Wildcat</b> (Rustic Bridge x Crowborough)	Erickson
<i>Posadaara</i> ( <i>Pad.</i> ) Orchidom <b>Magic Wine</b> (Orchidom Magician x <i>Rdza.</i> <b>Burgundy</b> )	Coleman
<i>Onc.</i> Twinkle ( <i>cheirophorum</i> x <i>ornithorhynchum</i> )	“

### Dendrobium Alliance

<i>Den.</i> <i>falcorostrum</i>	Ufford
<b><i>Den.</i> kingianum</b>	Lloyd
<i>Den.</i> <i>atroviolaceum</i>	Erickson
<i>Den.</i> <i>atroviolaceum</i>	Coleman
<i>Den.</i> unknown	Tupper
<i>Den.</i> Memoria Margery Ummer (Nagasaki x Yukidaruma)	Cohen
<i>Den.</i> Super Ise (Super Star x Ise)	“

### Pleurothallid Alliance

<i>Masd.</i> <i>tovarensis</i>	Churchill
<i>Spe.</i> <i>grobyi</i>	Witkin
<i>Pths.</i> <i>eumecocaulon</i>	“
<b><i>Masd.</i> zahlbruckneri</b>	Milner
<i>Masd.</i> Peach Fuzz ( <i>constricta</i> x <i>veitchiana</i> )	Cohen

### Miscellaneous

<i>Ddc.</i> <i>wenzelii</i>	Witkin
<i>Phaius</i> Dan Rosenberg ( <i>tankervilleae</i> x <i>tuberculosis</i> )	Churchill
<i>Gga.</i> <i>graveolens</i>	“
<i>Gal.</i> sp. Coleman	“

### Corrections from February Show Table:

<i>Phal.</i> Black Sentra (Sentra x Black Eagle)	Rossler
<i>Sgm.</i> <i>picta</i>	Cohen
	Iris Cohen

## CLUB REMINDERS

The **CNYOS Club Library** is now located at St. Augustine's church. Make arrangements with Judi Witkin (422-0869) if you want to borrow an item from the Library.

*DON'T FORGET TO BRING YOUR BLOOMING ORCHIDS FOR THE MONTHLY SHOW TABLE!!!*

A limited supply of Coconut Husk Chips is still available from Jeff Stuart. The medium grade is sold out, but there is still a supply of small/fine. If there is interest, a group order for general supplies might be possible. Contact Jeff Stuart (471-1404)



*Phalaenopsis bellina (violacea)*, photograph by Vagisha Sharma, with digital enhancement by J. Stuart.

**I**NTIMIDATED BY THE THOUGHT OF SETTING UP AN ORCHID DISPLAY FOR A REGIONAL SHOW???

DON'T BE! SEE THE ARTICLE ON PAGE 7 FOR VALUABLE TIPS & IDEAS!

## **REFRESHMENT SCHEDULE**

*Winter-Spring, 2005*

April	Donna Coleman & Maxine Weibel
May	Bev Costello, Lu Prokopiw & Jeanne Kurtz

## **GROS NEWS: NEWS FROM THE GENESEE REGION ORCHID SOCIETY**

Howard Ginsberg is an accredited American Orchid Society (AOS) judge in the Northeast Judging Centre (the first accredited judge north of Albany, N.Y. and east of Toronto, Ontario). He began growing orchids in 1977, at which time he tried growing many genera. Since then, his focus has narrowed to growing and breeding Phalaenopsis exclusively, although his interests remain larger. He has spoken to orchid societies across North America, throughout New Zealand and in Australia and has been a featured speaker in AOS judges' training at several centers. Howard has also been a featured speaker at AOS Trustees meetings and will be a featured speaker at the 18th WOC in Dijon, France. In addition to learning Mandarin, visiting Taiwan on a regular basis and speaking around the world, he finds time for his law practice in Montreal. He created and maintains his own web site - <http://www.bedfordorchids.com> and is now creating web sites for others. He is in the process of creating a special site: <http://www.orchidporn.com>. In addition to his talks and the articles that appear on the web site, Howard has had articles published in Orchids (the magazine of the American Orchid Society), Orchid Digest, the IPA Newsletter, Orchids Australia and the Canadian Bar Review (no, it wasn't about orchids).

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Taken with permission from *The Orchid Collection*, Newsletter of the Genesee Region Orchid Society, Vol. 27, No. 6, April 2005, Phil Matt, Newsletter Editor (716) 288-7025. More Info: <http://www.geneseeorchid.org/>

## PHALAEENOPSIS SPECIES STUARTIANA &amp; BELLINA

Spring is the season for *Phalaenopsis*, and this month the Spot Light highlights two species, both of which have been valuable in *Phal.* hybridization.

*Phalaenopsis stuartiana* is one of the few of this genus to feature remarkably attractive foliage, in combination with profuse flowering. While most *Phals* have medium green foliage, *stuartiana* and its kin (*schilleriana*, *sanderiana*, & *philippinensis*) have green foliage attractively mottled with silver-grey. *Phal. stuartiana* is found around the Philippines, usually near water. The daytime temps average between 81 – 87°F, with nighttime average lows between 70 – 73°F. Winter days are slightly cooler, although the lows are constant year-round. Plants thrive in light shade with relative humidity levels in the 80 – 90% range. As such, the plants should be kept constantly moist, and using warm water is recommended. In the native habitat, rainfall is higher in winter. In cultivation, however, moisture shouldn't be increased unless the plants are kept warm & in bright light. *Phal. stuartiana* can be adapted to lower winter temperatures, provided that air movement is excellent and the foliage and crown are kept dry; again, warm water is recommended. Light is slightly lower in the winter due to heavy rains. When potting, use 1/2-5/8" fir bark with moisture-retentive additives, or sphagnum with perlite or charcoal for added drainage. Like many *Phals*, it is best repotted after blooming while roots are in active growth.

*Phalaenopsis bellina* (formerly *violacia* var. Borneo) is one of the few fragrant orchids in this genus, with sturdy, long-lasting flowers of waxy substance. The inflorescence is typically only a few inches long, and sports only 2 – 3 flowers. This species is from Malasia & Borneo, & enjoys conditions much light *stuartiana*: intermediate to warm temperatures (more tolerant of lower temperatures) & fairly moist. However, this species is susceptible to crown rot; it is best to grow it at an angle so the crown can drain naturally. The plant photographed is from the author's collection & is a reliable fall bloomer.



PHAL. STUARTIANA MAKES FOR A WINNING COMBINATION, WITH BOTH ATTRACTIVE FOLIAGE AND AN ABUNDANCE OF FLOWERS.



THE APPLE GREEN FLOWERS OF PHALAEENOPSIS BELLINA, CENTRALLY FLUSHED WITH FUCHSIA, CAN BE INTENSELY FRAGRANT.

*by Bill Mather (edited for Central NY by Jeff Stuart)*

*This article reproduced with permission of the Orchid Societies Council of Victoria, Inc.  
<http://www.oscov.asn.au>*

**W**hile the quality of the flowers in your exhibit weighs heavily with the judges, their decision is also influenced by seemingly trivial factors, such as cleanliness of the plant's foliage and its container, freedom from insect pests such as scale and aphids, and the manner in which the inflorescences are staked. Preliminaries such as these can make the difference between first or second prize, even Champion and Reserve Champion orchid or display! Here are some tips for preparing your orchids for a show.

**P**reparing Your Plants. On the day before show set-up, give all your plants a good soaking and top dress their pots with moss if the show is to be held in an air-conditioned shopping centre, where the atmosphere is very dry. Clean each pot thoroughly, or place it in a slightly larger new pot. Some exhibitors place a layer of damp moss in the outer pot; this helps to prevent the exhibit becoming dry during the show. Clean the foliage with a clean tissue dampened with water or with diluted milk, which leaves a slight gloss on the leaves. Don't use white oil, which makes the leaves unnaturally glossy. Trim burnt or damaged leaf tips; however, don't cut them straight across but shape them to match the undamaged tips.

**C**heck that your inflorescences are staked and tied to display their blooms to best advantage. Make sure that all the stakes are of the same diameter and colour (preferably an inconspicuous green), and that the ties also match each other and are as inconspicuous as possible. Never use more ties than necessary.

**P**repare your plant labels carefully. Check the schedule to ensure that you use the specified size and colour. If no colour is specified, then you may choose your own. Many exhibitors use white card and a black pen but green card is less conspicuous, while black is even less so, although then you will need to buy a silver or white pen. Print the correct name neatly, making sure that it can be read from a distance of two meters. Your label may also

need to show your exhibitor number, a plant number and also a colored disc if you need to nominate your plant as, for example, a novice exhibit or a seedling flowering for the first time. Finally, make sure that your label is placed on the plant in such a position that it clearly indicates the flowers to which it applies. Often this aim is better achieved by fastening the label to a separate stake than to the foliage – labels attached to the foliage sometimes 'disappear' beneath other leaves.

**T**ransporting Your Plants. Before loading your plants in the car, pack the inflorescences with soft tissue paper or florist's wrapping paper to minimize chafing by leaves etc. Use temporary stakes to support arching or pendulous spikes and wedge the pots into foam fruit boxes to prevent



**AWARD-WINNING CNYOS DISPLAY BY JUDI WITKIN ENTERED IN THE 2003 STOS SHOW: THE DISPLAY WAS AWARDED THE AOS TROPHY.**

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them falling over when you 'hit the brakes'. On arrival at the venue, don't forget to remove all temporary stakes, tissue paper and other grooming materials. Then label all your plants, especially if you are building a display (the back row can be very hard to reach after the display is built!).

**B**uilding a Display. Aside from expressing yourself creatively and artistically, building your own display allows you to display your plants to their best advantage, often providing you with a distinct advantage over orchids placed on the club stand. However, you need to use forethought - row upon row of supermarket shelving filled with crowded plants lacks imagination and will not impress the judges. Make sure that your best plants stand out from their neighbors. Relate the size of each exhibit to the optimum level for viewing it. Small orchids such as *masdevallias* or slippers should never be placed on the floor - judges on their knees are not a pretty sight (especially from the rear) and the extent of their grovelling may be reflected in your level of success!

**T**he show schedule may allow for theme displays. Use your

wit and ingenuity. Props such as ladders, wheelbarrows, hat racks and pipes standing on end are sometimes used to advantage. Carefully plan the best location and height for your feature plants and give thought to their most suitable neighbors.

**P**refabricated shelving and supplies of foam boxes and empty pots of various sizes are useful to adjust the height of various exhibits. Neutralize the background with a drape in green, black or earth colors. Cloth, paper, hessian moss, wood chips, plastic sheeting, foliage plants or ferns are often used for this purpose. Finally, consider the use of a formal boundary to frame your display. Some exhibitors use a low fence, which also serves to protect their plants from members of the public. A well designed and cleverly constructed display will add another dimension to your orchid hobby.

**J**udging Your Display. In assessing your display, the judges assign points for floral quality (35), design (general arrangement, technique, & finish), creativity and color (35), variety (20) and labeling (10). Quality is

not necessarily determined by the total number of prize ribbons, as any 'dogs' (inferior orchids) present will detract from the prize winners. Aim for overall high quality. Design refers to the form and artistic arrangement of the display, creativity to the aesthetic expression of this concept and color to the placement of plants for the most pleasing overall effect (balance, contrast, dominance, proportion, scale, and rhythm). Technique refers to the mechanics of construction and plant placement, finish to the overall completeness of the display and labeling to the neatness, legibility and accuracy of the labels. Variety has replaced the old genus count. A display of standard, intermediate and miniature cymbidiums, including arching and pendulous as well as upright inflorescences, may score as well as one with seven or eight different genera.

**A**lways take a photograph of your display when it is complete - in the future it will recall fond memories, as well as helping you to plan an even better display next year. Good Luck at your next show.



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR GROS SHOW: APRIL 1 - 3

**The Genesee Region Orchid Show** is the largest show in the area, and will be held the first weekend in April. Details can be found on page 11 & the GROS website, and at present at least four societies and nine vendors are scheduled to participate. Judi Witkin, Cheryl Lloyd, Cynthia Busic-Snyder, and Jeff Stuart are scheduled to set-up, and if you're reading this before March 31<sup>ST</sup>, please consider donating plants for the display (see guidelines on page 3). *At present, we have only two people scheduled to help break down the display, and we definitely need more! As is, we don't have enough volunteers to bring plants & display materials back to Syracuse. Break-down is on April 3<sup>RD</sup> after 4<sup>PM</sup>.* Please contact CNYOS President Kim Boronczyk ASAP if you can help out.

# GROWING PHALAENOPSIS

by Howard Ginsberg  
<http://www.bedfordorchids.com>

Nothing in the history of orchids has given rise to as much debate as culture. Good growers all know what works for them and won't change a thing. They abide by the old maxim, "If it's not broken, don't fix it."

But there is one thing that each expert grower has in common: like Frank Sinatra, they do it their way. There is not one special way to grow Phalaenopsis. There are, in fact, several, but finding out which way is best for your plants is not always an easy task.

If you want to read what is probably the best book on the subject of orchids (not only Phalaenopsis, despite the title), it is Bob Gordon's book, *Culture of the Phalaenopsis Orchid*, Revised Edition. His worldwide survey book is the second best book on the subject.

Bob's book is a must-have and a must-read. It can, and should, be read and re-read. There is always something to learn. That does NOT mean that we agree with everything Bob says, but we do agree with most of it.

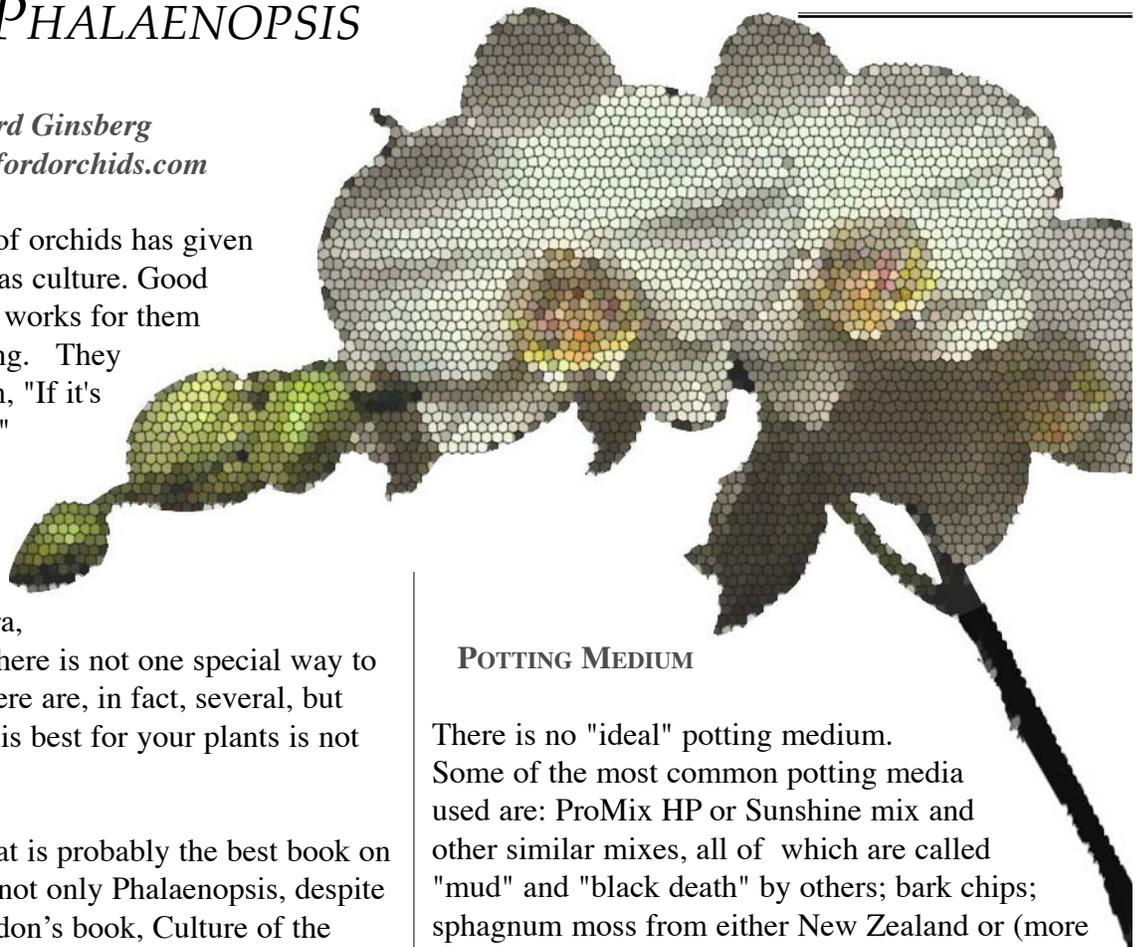
Listed below are some general comments. At the end is how we grow. It works for us, in our conditions.

## POTTING

First of all, there is the question of clay versus plastic pots.

**CLAY:** Dries out quicker; are typically round; get salt build-up on pots; weight gives greater stability.

**PLASTIC:** Dries out slower; comes in round and square pots which can be placed close together; little salt build-up; large plants do tip over.



## POTTING MEDIUM

There is no "ideal" potting medium. Some of the most common potting media used are: ProMix HP or Sunshine mix and other similar mixes, all of which are called "mud" and "black death" by others; bark chips; sphagnum moss from either New Zealand or (more commonly) Chile; and the ever-popular customized mixes which often have perlite, charcoal and other ingredients.

The important thing is to find out what works for you and, if you find it, you can improve on it, but do it with just a few plants in small increments. Don't change everything all at once because you think that you may have found something a little bit better. You could also find something a whole lot worse.

## WATER & WATERING

Know your water. What is the pH? Dissolved solids? Plants need a medium that is slightly acidic for the best absorption of fertilizers, including micronutrients. How often you water will depend on where your plants are grown, the type of medium, the ambient humidity, etc. But a basic rule of thumb is to let the plant dry out and then water. How dry? Many people say that, if you are unsure, you should wait the extra day. (N.B. Be careful about this if your plants are in spike or in bud.)

### FERTILIZER

Everyone who has ever seen a container of fertilizer knows that all fertilizer comes with three numbers: the first number represents nitrogen content, the second represents the phosphorus content and the third number represents the potassium content. In addition to those three components, some (but not all) fertilizers contain micro-nutrients, or trace elements, i.e. elements in minute amounts. These elements include iron, sulfur, boron, etc. Most fertilizers have minute amounts of these micro-nutrients, but the specific trace elements and the amounts will vary from manufacturer to manufacturer and from fertilizer to fertilizer. By using several different fertilizers, you can usually get most (or all) of the micro-nutrients, assuming of course that the fertilizers you are using contain micro-nutrients.

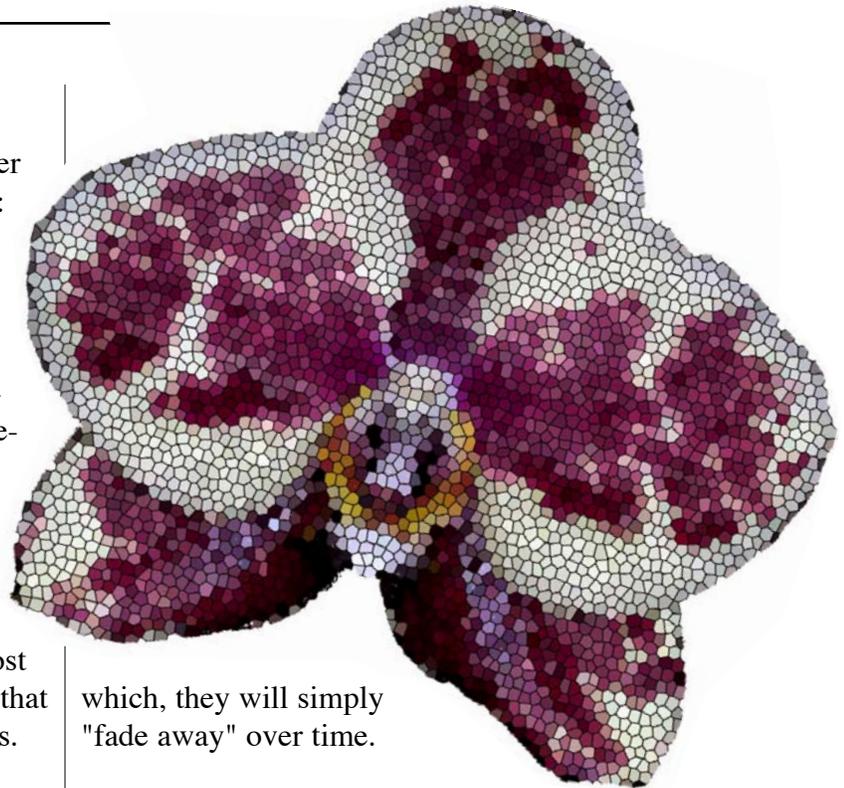
### AIR MOVEMENT

Air movement may be the most overlooked part of plant culture. Air movement can lower ambient temperature as well as reduce fungal and bacterial infection. No matter where you grow, no matter how, the importance of good air movement cannot be over-emphasized.

### LIGHT

Plants need light. This can mean anything from the light they get on a windowsill, to fluorescent light, to high intensity lights, to a greenhouse. Orchid plants, like humans, can get sunburned. However, sunburn just peels off you and me, but it remains permanently on an orchid plant. How much light do *Phalaenopsis* need? Different people will give you different answers but I say give them just enough so that they come close to but don't burn. (N.B. Flower color tends to fade in bright light.)

Someone once said to me that we baby our plants too much. They need stress. That is what causes them to bloom. Plants attempt to reproduce when they feel threatened. Whether it is the temperature, the amount of light, etc., they must have some stress, failing



which, they will simply "fade away" over time.

### TEMPERATURE

*Phalaenopsis* have certain preferred temperatures. As a rule, we can say that *Phalaenopsis* like a day temperature between 80-85°F (27-30°C) and a night temperature of about 60-65°F (15-18°C), but different species may be more specific and have different demands. For example, *Phal. lobbii* (also masquerading as *Phal. parishii* var. *lobbii*) prefers to be mounted with good air movement.

Margaret and Charles Baker wrote a book entitled *Orchid Species Culture* (Apparently, this is the first volume for an encyclopedia. The second volume is on *Dendrobiums*.) which covers the genera *Pescatorea* through *Pleione*. The book is available from Timber Press (or your local orchid society library). The Bakers have a web site with great cultural information: <http://www.orchidculture.com>

What have we learned in over 100 years of growing orchids - a lot and yet often not enough.

### POTTING

Repot often. If we compare a young seedling to a baby, we know that babies have trouble finding for

themselves. Seedlings need some TLC. They react poorly to mineral salts. Do you want your seedlings to grow quickly? Repot every 4 (yes 4!) months until the plants are adult. Once they are adult, try to repot every 10 months or so. The larger the plants, the longer they can hold out.

HOW WE GROW AT BEDFORD ORCHIDS

We grow in sphagnum moss under fluorescent lights in a home. Some of the plants are grown in a greenhouse also in sphagnum moss. All pots have styrofoam in the bottom (for drainage). However, those grown in the home have the moss packed tighter than those grown in the greenhouse. That is because the humidity in the greenhouse is higher and you have to let the plants dry out. When the moss is looser, it dries out quicker. (Editor's note: styrofoam can actu-

ally hinder drainage, and is not recommended)

Plants are fertilized two out of three waterings. The third watering is plain water to wash away the mineral salts in the fertilizer.

Fluorescent lights - what type should you use? We have tried almost every type of light. The only difference that we could see after one year was the price.

How far should the plants be under the lights? Far enough so that the plants do not get burned (Yes, they can get burned under lights.) but far enough away so that you can water easily.



Photo credits: Page 9; *Phal. aphrodite* © Greg Allikas, 1995 (<http://www.orchidworks.com>). Page 10; *Phal. Haur Jin Princess 'Bedford Best'* © Howard Ginsberg. Digital editing by Jeff Stuart

MAY MEETING:

ANNUAL SPRING AUCTION!!!

Our Annual Spring Auction is only a month away—our largest annual fund-raiser. CNYOS Newsletter Editor Jeff Stuart will be sending out donation requests to select vendors. Do you have a favorite vendor that you'd like to see added to the list? Please let Jeff know (471-1404 or [jastuart@syr.edu](mailto:jastuart@syr.edu)). A list of plants on the auction block will be available by the time of the May meeting. It's also time to look at your own collections and decide if you'd like to auction off any of your own plants. Fifty % of the proceeds from your plant(s) go right back into your pocket (unless you want to donate them back to the club, *and we love that, by the way!*). Just make sure your auction plants are in good condition (disease free, groomed)—get names and descriptions to Jeff so they can be included on the list. And remember, just because it didn't bloom well for you, does not mean it won't thrive under another member's conditions!

Genesee Region  
Orchid Society  
Orchid  
Show  
and  
Sale



April 2-3, 2005

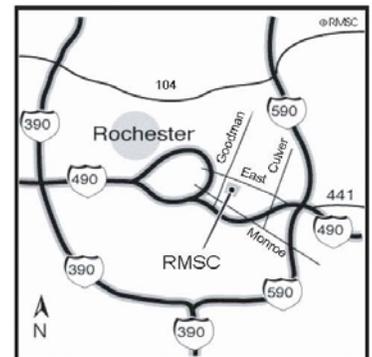
Admission \$5 Saturday 10 am - 5 pm,  
Children under 12 free Sunday 10 am - 4 pm

\$1 off admission with this card (one per family or couple)

RMSC Eisenhart Auditorium  
657 East Ave., Rochester, NY

Directions: Exit route 490 at Goodman Street, drive north to the RMSC. The entrance to the parking lot is at the corner of Goodman and East Ave. Additional parking is behind the planetarium.

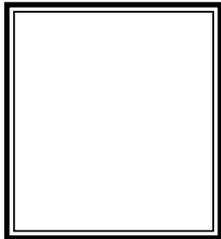
[www.geneseeorchid.org](http://www.geneseeorchid.org)



Next Meetings: Special Guest Speaker, Howard Gimberg,  
"Golden Pecker, Golden Parent"



Next Meetings: Sunday, April 3, 12:30 PM



THE CENTRAL NEW YORK ORCHID SOCIETY  
Your local AOS & Orchid Digest Affiliate  
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Syracuse, NY 13210-3309



## Central New York Orchid Society

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Cynthia Busic-Synder (315) 684-7525  
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**Secretary:** Barbara Weller (315) 468-5039  
**Newsletter Editor:** Jeff Stuart (315) 471-1404

<http://www.paphiopedilum.net>

The Central New York Orchid Society meets at St. Augustine's Church, 7333 O'Brien Rd, Baldwinsville, at 2:00<sup>PM</sup> on the first Sunday of each month from September through June. Yearly dues are \$15.00 per individual, or \$17.00 family. Dues should be paid to the CNYOS Treasurer, Carol Haskell.

## THE ORCHID ENTHUSIAST

The **CNYOS Newsletter**, *The Orchid Enthusiast*, is a publication of the Central New York Orchid Society and is distributed to the Society's members ten times per year, prior to all club meetings, events, or functions.

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