

The Orchid Enthusiast

The Newsletter of the Central New York Orchid Society

Affiliated with the American Orchid Society and Orchid Digest

Page 1 Volume 11: Issue 9 November 2009

Editor's Note:

The last two issues were incorrectly numbered. September should have been Volume 11, Issue 7, and October Volume 11, issue 8. Sorry for the mixup.

Contributions to the Orchid Enthusiast by members of the CNYOS are welcome. Articles, pictures, or ideas for discussion subjects should be submitted by the first week of the month before the next meeting to:
egalson@twcnny.rr.com

In This Issue

	page
Next Meeting	1
President's Message	1
Picture of CNYOS Exhibit	2
CNYOS Winners	2,3
AOS Awards	4
Collector's Item	
Den. amboinense	5
Importance of Humidity and Air Movement	6,7

Next Meeting: Sunday November 1.

We will discuss the CNYOS Show and the show table.
(see President's Message below)

President's Message

After a successful fall show, congratulations to all!

Special thanks to our show chair Nancy, and to Tammy for getting our vendors in and out without a hitch. Thanks to Jan and everyone else that helped set up a winning club table. Congratulations to all the award winners. We had four AOS awards in our show! From what the judges told me it's very impressive for a small show like ours. A big thanks to all those who helped prepare for judging, the registration, monitoring, and working the club booth. Thanks to all the volunteers that helped with Friday set-up and the Sunday take down. It certainly leaves the vendors with a very positive feeling about our club and it's members when they have so much help setting up and taking down their booths.

At the upcoming November meeting we want to focus on the following:

The after the show meeting to answer questions like: What went right, what went wrong, what could have been done better. How did the advertising we did, work or not work? How did people find out about the show? What about the venue? Overall costs etc.

We need people to be thinking about nominations for President, Vice President, Show Chair and Vendor rep as well as coordinator of speakers for the monthly meetings.

Everyone I've spoken to is willing to help with whatever position you step into. You will not have to reinvent the wheel to know what to do. For our club to function these positions will need to be filled.

In addition I'd like to see a huge show table. It would be good to take the time to go through everyone's plants to allow enough time for others to ask culture questions. Questions like; where do you grow it, what kind of light and temps do you have as well as your watering and feeding regiment. I feel there's no better way to learn how to grow your plants better than to know the way others successfully grow theirs.

We will have a raffle table as well. So if you have divisions of plants that are healthy and you no longer have room for, bring them in for the raffle! That's in it in a nutshell. See you then.

Tom Daily

Picture of CNYOS Exhibit



All Orchid Show Photos by Charles Ufford

CNYOS Winners

Entry Name	Entry #	Show Award	Exhibitor#	Name
CNYOS Exhibit	1	First, Best orchid Society Exhibit Best Exhibit in Show	5	CNYOS
Masd. Keiko Komoda	2	Second, Clifford Rossler Award	1	Lori Hoffman
Paph. liemianum	105	First	2	David Ditz
Paph. Angel Hair	14	First	2	“
Odcdm. Mackenzie Mountains	13	Third	2	“
Phrag. longifolium	11	Second	3	Tom Lloyd
Paph. henryanum	9	Third	4	Dolores Capella
Milt.Lennart Karl Gottling	8	First	4	“
Ddc. glumaceum	7	Second	4	“

CNYOS Winners con't

Entry Name	Entry #	Show Award	Exhibitor#	Name
Phal. equestris fma.albescens	18	First, BestPhal or Dtps., Jim Rice Award, Margaret Tupper Award	6	Charles Ufford
Phal. venosa	22	Third	6	"
Phal. lindenii	154	Second	6	"
Dtps. Fangtastic Mariana Myers	33	First, JC/AOS	8	Donna Coleman
Phal. Mahagony Belle	31	Third	8	"
Odm. Geyser Gold	36	First	8	"
Cyrtionopsis Popcorn	49	Third	8	"
Css. rubra	38	Second	8	"
Macodes petola	28	First	8	"
Aergs. mystacidii	39	Second	9	Tom Daily
Aergs. mystacidii	40	Third	9	"
Den. laevifolium	41	Second	9	"
Den. laevifolium	42	First	9	"
Trias disciflora	48	First, Best Amateur Under lights, CHM/AOS	9	"
Max. uncata	43	Second	9	"
Max. uncata	44	First	9	"
Rlc. Lucky Strike'Chaimongkoltra' AM/CST	52	First	10	Eva Galson
C. Dinard 'Blue Heaven' AM/AOS	50	First, Best in Cattleya Alliance' Margery & Fred Ummer Award	10	"
Phrag. Grande	51	First, Andy Myers Award	10	"
Pyp. Mendenhall'Hildos'FCC/AOS	54	Third	10	"
Paph. Saint Genevieve	86	Second	13	Jan Woodworth
Pyp. Butterfly	87	Second	13	"
Gptm. Giant	122	Second	20	Hilda Bellman
E. tampensis	127	Third	21	Iris Cohen
C. Love Knot	123	Second	21	"
C. Love Knot	124	Second	21	"
Morm. aromatica	126	Third	21	"
C. Crystelle Smith	189	First	28	Judi Witkin
C. Crystelle Smith	190	Third	28	"
Aergs. luteoalba	186	Second	28	"
Angcm. distichum	187	First	28	"
Pyp. Mendenhall'Hildos'FCC/AOS	184	First	28	"
Rst. contorta	188	Second	28	"
Orchid Puzzle	Artistic Class	First	8	Donna Coleman

AOS Award Winners

As Tom Daily mentioned in the president's message, four AOS awards were given out at our show, two of them to our members:



**Dendrobium
fairchildiae**
'Marlow Orchids'
AM/AOS
Jim Marlow of Marlow
Orchids



Doritaenopsis Fangtastic Mariana
Myers 'Sweetheart' JC, AM/AOS
Donna Coleman of CNYOS



Paph bellatulum 'Bloomfield' HCC/AOS
Joe Kunisch of Bloomfield Orchids



Trias disciflora 'Ugly Bette' CHM/AOS
Tom Daily of CNYOS

Collector's Item: *Dendrobium amboinense* Hooker

Some orchid species are discovered, enter cultivation and remain so over long periods of time while others, either because of rarity, incorrect collection data, cultural difficulty or a combination of these factors, disappear from cultivation rather rapidly and may not ever reappear or do so after a long lapse. Such is the case with *Dendrobium amboinense*, an incredibly beautiful, although ephemeral-flowered, species.

This species, an extreme rarity, has disappeared from cultivation twice; first shortly after its discovery in Ambon around 1854 by an English naturalist. It was discovered again sometime between 1895 by a collector working for the firm of Sanders and it remained in cultivation until sometime after 1931 although in extremely limited



Photo of *Den. amboinense* showing plant habit.

numbers. A short time ago the species was reintroduced into the United States through a seedling population raised by Michael Ooi of Leng Sun Orchids of Penang, Malaysia. At least two of these seedlings; one purchased at the World Orchid Conference in Miami, Florida in 2008 and one purchased at the Santa Barbara International Orchid Show in March of this year, have reached flowering size.

The species is endemic to the island of Ambon and nearby islands in the Banda Sea and belongs to Schlechter's section *Euphlebeium* (J. J. Smith's section *Fugacia* meaning fleeting) and is the only member of the section to carry more than one or two flowers per inflorescence. Most species in the genus have angular, clavate (club-shaped) pseudobulbs (flat in the case of *Den. orbilobulatum*) with two or three leaves near the apex of the growth. Based on our flowering plant, the

pseudobulbs of *Dendrobium amboinense* reach about 50-cm (20 inches) in height with two or three leaves about 6-cm (3 inches long) and about 2.5-cm wide (1 inch). The flowers, up to four per inflorescence in *Den. amboinense*, are produced on very short racemes from a pit at the node on the side rather than at the angle of the pseudobulbs below the leaves and both leafless and well as pseudobulbs with leaves are capable of producing flowers. The flowers of *Den. amboinense* are up to 20-cm (about 8 inches) across if the ribbon-like petals are flattened although when carried naturally, the sepals and petals droop producing a distinctly wispy appearance. Flowers on our plant open shortly after midnight and, as the sectional name indicates, were completely closed by sundown. Freshly opened flowers are bone white as illustrated here but as the afternoon progresses the color undergoes a slow change to a pale shade of burnished orange before the flower collapses completely. Along with this color change is a distinct change in fragrance, beginning as a sort of musty, not really pleasant fragrance and becoming more vanilla-like before as the flowers senesce.

Little is known with regard to this species but based on its habitat and that of the other species in the section, this lowland species should be grown consistently warm with constant moisture but with excellent drainage. We grow ours in a small plastic pot of sphagnum moss under light levels slightly brighter than *Phalaenopsis* and the plants are never allowed to become completely dry.

Ron McHatton, September 2009 on the AOS website

The Importance of Humidity and Air Movement in Successful Orchid Culture

The simple secret to good orchid growing is achieving a balance between the six or so factors; light levels, temperature, humidity and air movement, watering, potting and potting media, and nutrient supply, as they relate to your plants. This isn't really difficult, but it does require knowledge, understanding and careful observation. Humidity and air movement are best handled together because they are intimately linked in both positive and negative ways. First let's look at each factor individually and then we'll take a look at their relationship to one another.

Humidity –

Virtually all orchids do best when humidity ranges from 40% to 70%. Even those that are adapted to growing under rather desert like conditions such as *Zelenkoa (Oncidium) onusta* are exposed to periods when the humidity is in this range. In this particular example, the species flourishes in coastal deserts where breezes from the pacific bring nightly dews and resultant relatively high humidity even though it may not rain for long periods.

Investing in an inexpensive humidity gauge is a necessity for all but the smallest collection if you want to grow orchids well. In virtually all parts of the United States outside of Hawaii and Puerto Rica, at some part of the year, it will be necessary to add supplemental humidity to the growing area. In some parts of the country such as the South and Southeast, humidity during the summer months will be adequate to even excessive while winter humidity levels may be too low, especially following strong cold fronts. In the Pacific Northwest, the situation may well be reversed with humid, cool winters and relatively low humidity during the warmer summer months. If you grow your plants in areas where supplemental heating is a requirement such heat sources dry out the air making humidity measurements critical. Having a simple humidity gauge takes the guesswork out of the growing area. Also keep in mind that humidity is usually highest at night and lowest during the afternoon peak of sunlight and warmth.

There are a number of ways to increase humidity in your growing area. If you only have a couple of plants, addition of some ferns or other houseplants to your growing area may be sufficient. These plants do a reasonable job of adding humidity to the air around them. For small collections grown under lights or windowsills, humidity trays may be sufficient. These trays are nothing more than a water-holding tray filled with small gravel (aquarium gravel works well). The gravel-filled trays are filled with water to a level just below the surface. To prevent plants sitting on constantly wet gravel the plants are placed on small saucers or pieces of plastic or metal grid placed on top of the trays. The next step up in the humidity game would be an ultrasonic humidifier or one of those fog-generating ultrasonic devices you see sold for terrariums. If you are fortunate enough to have a greenhouse or grow your plants outside, you might want to invest in a set of misting nozzles connected to a timer or humidstat but just simply wetting down the growing space during the mid to late afternoon may be sufficient.

Air Movement –

Orchids like air movement. Indoors, an overhead paddle fan set on the slowest speed or a small oscillating fan set to face AWAY from your plants may provide adequate air movement. Air movement at night is just as important as air movement during the daytime so fans should run continuously. One of the mistakes that new

growers make, especially those with new greenhouses, is to put their fans on a timer and shut them off at night! Don't forget that what you are trying to simulate is a buoyant atmosphere and close, humid nights are anything but buoyant. If you don't believe that, try walking on the beach in August in Miami without a breeze.

What is adequate air movement? The answer depends on humidity to a certain extent (see below), however in general enough to cause GENTLE movement of thin foliage is about right. A hurricane is a hurricane - not air movement. If the leaves of your cattleyas are moving you might have too much air movement depending on humidity levels.

How are the two factors related?

Simply put, the higher your humidity, the higher can and should be your air movement. Air movement is beneficial to your orchids but, under certain circumstances it can be detrimental as well. If you have adequate humidity, air circulation helps to carry stale air away from your plants and replace it with fresh air. This is especially important on hot humid nights. High humidity coupled with minimal air movement is a terrific recipe for the growth of fungus or physiological problems created by the buildup of moisture within the leaf tissues. Moving air keeps leaf temperature down. Some orchids close the pores that allow transpiration of air and water from their leaves during the day. The leaves of these plants can rapidly become overheated and damaged without adequate air movement to cool them. Air movement avoids the stratification of cool moist air below the growing area and warm dry air above, where the plants are and "dead spots" are minimized and, equally important, damp stagnant areas - breeding place for disease - are eliminated.

However, where natural humidity is low rapid air movement can be destructive by draining away humidity in the growing area, drying out the plants and retarding growth. Under these situations the roots of the plants simply cannot take up enough moisture to balance that lost through the foliage resulting in shriveling of the leaves and growths and, in the worst cases death of the plant.

When balance of humidity and air movement is achieved, coupled with adequate water at the roots, your orchid plants will thrive and their physical appearance will clearly be healthy. That look is hard to explain but it's one of those things that once you've seen it you will recognize it. Many orchids have growth cycles that involve the formation of pseudobulbs that are full and smooth in their early stages followed by the formation of features like angular edges or furrows at maturity but outright wrinkling isn't normal. Even the pseudobulbs of *Dendrobium sulcatum* that are curious, flattened canes that look like they've been pressed are still smooth and firm when these factors are balanced. Many orchids have thick, fleshy leaves but their surfaces should be smooth and their texture should be firm. Leaves that appear to be wrinkled or crumpled aren't normal. Lastly, the roots of plants grown in an environment with balanced humidity and air movement will be plump and their tips will remain green and active throughout the growing season.

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The CNYOS Newsletter, 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 and functions.

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The Central NY Orchid Society usually meets at St. Augustine's Church 7333 O'Brien Rd, Baldwinsville on the first Sunday of each month at 2:00 pm, with beginner's session at 1:30 pm, right before the regular meeting.

The Central New York Orchid Society
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***November 09 Issue – CNYOS Orchid Meeting November 1
Discussion of Orchid Show and Show Table***