

The Orchid Enthusiast

The Newsletter of the Central New York Orchid Society

Affiliated with the American Orchid Society and Orchid Digest

Page 1 Volume 12: Issue 2 October 2009

**Come to the
CNYOS
Show and
Sale and
Bring Your
Friends !!**

Next Meeting: No Formal Meeting on Sunday October 4. Meeting Date Coincides with CNYOS Fall Show and Sale

CNYOS Fall Show and Sale is October 3th and 4th at Beaver Lake Nature Center in Baldwinsville. Set up is Friday, October 2, from noon to 7 PM. Take down is 4 PM on Sunday.

Prepare your blooming orchids as recommended in the article "How to Win Ribbons" on pages 2 & 3; register them with Iris Cohen as soon as possible by phone: 315-461-9226, e-mail: iriscohen@aol.com, mail: 6 Beve Lane, N. Syracuse 13212, or fax : same as the phone number, but call first.

Editor's Note:

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@twcny.rr.com

Arrangements for plant drop-off will be finalized soon, and we will send out additional e-mail to inform you how your plants can get to Beaver Lake. Beaver Lake Nature Center is at 8477 E. Mud Lake Rd, Baldwinsville. For directions go to the Beaver Lake website or to Google Maps.

Beyond that, please come to the show, buy orchids and supplies from our vendors, and just enjoy the pulchritude!!!

President's Message

The September meeting was put together on the fly. Turned out that through series of missed communications Jim Marlow was unable to do the compot clinic for us. It would likely have been disappointing for Jim to come all the way from Rochester, as there was a relatively small member turnout.

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We went over what was needed to be ready for the October show. In particular everyone needs to start registering their plants with Iris. This prevents last minute flood of registrations. When in doubt as to whether an orchid will be ready for the show or not, register it anyway. It's easier to take it off an early list then squeezing it in at the last minute. Jan and Dolores are setting up our exhibit area. If you want to help make the show a success, first make sure your blooming orchids are there. Jan will be sending out an email blast to figure out ways you can get your plants to Beaver Lake. Remember the basics of putting a plant in the show; clean, healthy, and properly staked as needed. And don't

forget the label. Keep the stick in label at home, but put a taped label on the the pot with the plant name and the parents. Don't forget your name somewhere on that label. Have questions? Ask a seasoned member for guidance.

Secondly, there will be things to help with Friday afternoon as our booth is set up. The vendors and the other clubs show up and need help with bringing in their plants. You'll get a first look at what will be for sale! So if you've got the time please come and be a part of the set-up. That will begin around 2PM. Participate, that's the fun of it.

As a program for the meeting, Charles was kind enough to pick up the slack and gave an excellent in depth slide presentation on Native Wild Orchids of New York. Thanks for that, Charles. David showed us the beautiful color waterproof show signs he had made up. One will be on an A-frame out front to let hikers etc. who are there know that they can come in and enjoy the show. Great job Dave!

Nancy created the poster in the email sent to all of us to print off and put up. Please help by spreading the posters out wherever you can. Every little bit helps.

Please read any emails reminders we send out in the next two weeks to keep abreast of what's going on.

Well, I hope you can all come at some point on October 2nd, 3rd, or 4th.

See you there!
Tom Daily

Phone Volunteers Needed

There are 12 members who don't have e-mail, and therefore miss out on the various announcements and notices that are distributed to members via e-mail. I would like to have two volunteers to notify these members by phone. Each volunteer would only have to call 4 other people. If you can do this important job to keep everyone informed, please call or e-mail me at: 446-0224 or egalson@twcny.rr.com

To get us all ready for the show, here is a reprint of an article by Iris:

Show Preparation; How to Win Ribbons

Even if you are a small under-lights or windowsill grower, your blooming orchids will enhance the orchid show and add to your enjoyment of the hobby. Don't hesitate to enter them. Here's

how to exhibit them at their best.

Make sure there are no insects or diseases lurking about. Spray your plants with a broad spectrum pesticide-fungicide well before the buds open. Since we have a fall show, you can safely do this outdoors before you bring them in for the winter. Carefully examine under the leaves and remove all signs of scale or other stationary pests. Remove moss or weeds from the potting medium.

For the Cattleya alliance and similar orchids, wet the pseudobulbs under a faucet and remove all dead bulb sheaths and other dead tissue. Remove yellow or dead leaves or leaf tips. Also remove any flowers that are starting to go by, or probably will not last through the show. Use a separate new, disposable razor blade for each plant.

If your plant shows salt residue from hard water, go over it with a solution of detergent and water with 10% household bleach. Thick leaved orchids like Phals and Cattleyas can take some scrubbing with a washcloth. Rinse with plain water and dry immediately with a soft cloth.

Staking is extremely important. Don't expect the show committee to do this for you. If you don't have a stake, make one from a piece of fence wire or a coat hanger. Long inflorescences, such as on Phalaenopsis, should not be staked in a rigid upright position, nor should they be allowed to flop down. They should be staked just below the first blossom, and the upper stem should be allowed to curve gracefully. Do this as soon as the first buds reach a noticeable size. Keep the buds facing the light until they open. On a plant with multiple flower stems, arrange them in an orderly way. They should radiate outward as naturally as possible, not all facing front.

Buds in the Cattleya alliance often need some help. There is much controversy over what is ethically permissible, but this doesn't enter into ribbon judging, as long as all the helps are removed before the show. If the buds tend to crowd together, push them apart with spacers made from Styrofoam peanuts. Cotton or florist's wax paper can be used to protect flowers on the way to the show.

Make sure the plant is identified and labeled accurately. If you don't have the plant's name, it can still be in your club's exhibit, but it will not be entered. A beautiful unnamed orchid can help your club win an exhibit award. If you have at least part of the name, or only the parents, consult the entry clerk for the correct name.

When you bring your plants to the show, remove the plant label or stick it way down in the pot so it is not visible. Put your name and the plant's name directly on the pot with indelible pen. Also put your name on your box, so it can be retrieved after the show. Have a list in the box with your name and the names of your plants. All this will make life much easier for the setup people and the show committee, as well as those taking down the show.

Iris Cohen

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SEPTEMBER SHOW TABLE

Please note all names and abbreviations in boldface. Kindly update your records with registered names or parents.

Cypripedium Alliance

Phrag. Grande (*caudatum* × *longifolium*) Galson

Cattleya Alliance

Bc. Rustic Spots (Richard Mueller × *C. Landate*) Cohen

Epi. peperomia Burritt

Vandaceous

Phal. Maysang Black Boy (Sunrise Red Peoker × Timothy Christopher) Cohen

Phal. unknown Burritt

Phal. Patsy Green (Be Tris × Brother Little) Woodworth

Phal. Ho's Dreamy Jade (Su-An Cricket × **Yungho** Gelb Canary) "

Phal. Chromium Emperor (Chromium Flame × Motorhead) "

Miscellaneous

Coel. Massangeana Finger

Den. laevifolium Daily

Max. sp. Weller

Sngl. Longifolia Galson

Iris Cohen If you have any questions, you can always call 461-9226 or e-mail iriscohen@aol.com.

Monthly Checklist for September and October

Cattleya

Despite the shortening days and lowering angle of the sun, September can still be one of the hottest months. Water and fertilizer need to be in balance with heat and light. The alert grower will notice, however, that his or her plants are beginning to slow down a bit. Growths are maturing, and the sheaths are giving the promise of the next six-months' bloom.

Check plants for potting needs for the last time this season. Any in dire need should be potted, even some that may be on the cusp, as there is just enough of the growing season left to allow the plants to establish before the days start to get really short and cold.

This is the month for purples derived from *Cattleya labiata* breeding to flower. If you are short on flowers, look into this group. There is nothing that can quite match this type for beauty and fragrance. They are easy to grow, too.

Plants summered outdoors should begin to be prepared to be brought back into the winter growing area. Clean the plants up and be on the lookout for any pests they may have picked up during the summer. Treat as necessary.

Cycnoches

This little-known and under-appreciated genus, which can have male or female flowers, is at its best in the autumn. Two of the spectacular varieties are *Cycnoches loddigesii*, with its large brown flowers resembling a prehistoric bird, and *Cycnoches ventricosum*, the swan orchid. This last one has large, fragrant green flowers. The biggest problem, culturally, will be red spider mite infestations that require immediate attention. Plants are quite seasonal, requiring heavy watering in the growing season and then a drier dormant winter season.

Cymbidium

Through diligent modern breeding programs, the cymbidium season gets stretched longer and longer. Now we can expect to have flowers open as early as September and October. Stake inflorescences and move the plants to a shadier location to help the flowers develop successfully. Because the plants will have warmth tolerance "built in" genetically, keeping the plants as cool as possible will help prevent bud curl. For the midseason varieties, inflorescences should be initiated by now. Feed plants on a regular schedule with a balanced fertilizer (20-20-20) and shade the plants lightly.

Dendrobium

This is a good season for hybrids of the *Dendrobium phalaenopsis* and *Dendrobium canaliculatum* types. Both are capable of putting on tremendous shows of long-lasting flowers. Fertilize with a low-nitrogen formula to promote the best flowers. *Dendrobium phalaenopsis* can get tall and top heavy, suggesting an attractive and heavy container would be appropriate for this type.

Lemboglossum biconiense

Both *Lemboglossum* (syn. *Odontoglossum*) *biconiense* and its hybrids bloom in this season. *Lemboglossum biconiense* is a showy species from Mexico that has three different color forms:

sulphureum (green with white lip), album (brown with white lip) and roseum (brown with a pink lip). It is a vigorous grower with tall inflorescences of many flowers, and imparts to its progeny (as seen in Odcdm. Bittersweet and Odm. bicross) ease of culture, warmth tolerance and eye-catching patterns. They make a prime candidate for odontoglossum beginners and advanced alike.

Paphiopedilum

Standard, green-leaved paphiopedilums begin to show their bloom sheaths this month. Late-season heat waves can blast these early sheaths, so be observant about proper cooling and air circulation. As with the rest of your plants that may have been summered outdoors, it is time to prepare for their move inside. Clean each plant and implement pest-control practices. Repotting, if necessary, is appropriate.

Phalaenopsis

The bulk of this season's growth is being ripened this month, with growers in cooler climates seeing the first emerging inflorescences. Some night heating may be necessary in the cooler areas. Begin to watch watering more carefully, and reduce feeding proportionately with reduced watering needs. An extra dose of phosphorus and potassium, such as a bloom-booster or high-acid-type fertilizer, is beneficial.

Rossioglossum grande

Once known as *Odontoglossum grande*, this is a spectacular orchid with six to eight flowers up to 8 inches across. Often known as the tiger orchid, it has bright golden yellow flowers heavily marked with chestnut brown barring. The plants are beautiful with a grey-green cast to the foliage, which is borne on succulent pseudobulbs. It prefers hot and wet summers with cooler, even down to 40 F, dry winters. Grow under filtered light. Watch for snails and slugs that eat the flowers, pseudobulbs and leaves.

The AOS thanks Ned Nash and James Rose for this essay .

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Five of the Ten "Uncommonest" Questions Asked About Phalaenopsis

Q.

I seem to get a lot of crown rot in my Phalaenopsis. What can I do?

A.

Prevention is the best answer. Always water your plants before noon, or so the plants are dry before the falling temperature in the evening. Keeping your plants slanted or at an angle make help keep water drained out of the crown. A regular spray program - especially in hot, humid areas - with a good fungicide will pay off.

Q.

The buds on my phalaenopsis spikes open at funny angles, spoiling the spray arrangement for show and award purposes. Why?

A.

Once the buds start to form on the spike, and after staking up the spike, leave the plant absolutely alone in that position. Phalaenopsis spikes (as with most flowers) tend to draw toward the light; the buds will twist and turn back toward the light each time the plant is moved, thus spoiling the arrangement.

Q.

I'm having trouble getting "takes" when trying to make Phalaenopsis hybrids. Many times the ovary stays green, star

to swell, then turns yellow and falls off. Or, I may get a seed pod, but when I sow the seed, get no germination. Can you help?

A.

Many of today's so-called "novelty crosses" are triploids, or have very unusual or dissimilar chromosome numbers. After pollination, hormones produced when pollen is introduced onto the stigmatic surface may start the ovary ripen. However, when fertilization fails to occur, the hormone process stops, and the ovary (old flower stem) turns yellow and falls off. We've found too, when crossing a small flower with a large one, pollen tubes produced by pollen from the small flower just aren't able to grow long enough to reach the ovules in the large flower. We always use pollen from the larger flower onto the smaller flower. Another interesting point: after almost giving up trying to hybridize with certain plants over a long period of time, all of a sudden they seem to breed with almost anything - a kind of "puberty" some have suggested. We, and others, have used triploids successfully in breeding, so don't give up, although it may take many, many attempts. Dr. Sagawa has suggested that in certain complex hybrids many or most of the embryos may be dead by the time the seed pod matures. For this reason we use only green-pod or embryo culture methods, and take the pods about 120 days after pollination.

Q.

I've heard that there's a lot of unexplored territory in breeding phalaenopsis, especially with some of the species. Where should I start?

A.

First you might start by looking in Sander's List of Orchid Hybrids ([AQ plus](#), [RHS New Orchid Hybrids](#)) to see what species have been used, and what ones have not. Once you find a little used species you would like to breed with, make certain you are, in fact, using that species... You'll probably have to grow 100 or more seedlings along in order to see a fairly accurate cross-section, but with good care, you should see most bloom within three years. You might also check catalogs, Orchids magazine articles, and contact hybridizers...to get more information on what has been done, and get some tips as to where to proceed.

Q.

How can we assure a good phalaenopsis crop for a certain holiday or show?

A.

Dr. Rotor, in Withner's book *The Orchids*, reports that short days and/or low temperatures induce flower initiation. I used *Phal. amabilis*, *Phal. schilleriana* and *Phal. schilleriana* hybrids with short days (black cloth) and a low temperature of 65° F. Long days (artificial lighting) delayed flowering. We've never experimented with black cloth or lights, but continuous, year round spike initiation, we believe because of our cool (60°-62°F) night-time greenhouse temperature. We are currently running a series of tests to determine the optimum low temperatures for spike initiation and how long it takes a plant to initiate a spike at that temperature. We feel that by using black cloth to delay flowering until a specific time - if for an extended time - would be detrimental to the plant's vigor, and possibly cut down on subsequent flowering.

George P. Woodward, Jr. (Santa Cruz, CA) reprinted from the American Orchid Society Bulletin - March 1968

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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.

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