



Central Illinois Orchid Society Newsletter

April - May 2009

Volume 3, Number 4-5

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Contact Us

http://ci_orchid_society.tripod.com

Central Illinois Orchid Society Newsletter is published irregularly. Subscription is through membership in the Society.

Membership is \$10/person with \$5 for each additional family member. Checks payable to CIOS should be sent to Jerry Steerman, 507 N. Coler, Urbana, IL 61801.

CIOS Officers for 2009

Mitzi Williams, President & News Letter Editor

Jerry Steerman, Treasurer

Nancy Steerman, Secretary

Tim Bowers, AOS rep.

Get ready for summer in the Hamptons:

As the month of May flies by, you may be getting ready to send your orchids outside. If not quite 'summering in the Hamptons,' your shaded back yard is still heaven for your plants. Once outside, your plants will respond visibly with new growths, so it is best to report them beforehand. I have been repotting my orchids several at a time, and only have 4 pots of Cymbidiums to divide and repot. Cyms are like hostas or dailies—one needs a machete and a sledge hammer to cut through the roots. Since the new growth has already started, it is a rather delicate operation. If you have a lot of patience, the old back pseudobulbs can be potted in a medium coarse bark mix for a chance to make more plants.

If you divide plants, please consider donating them for the Auction to be held on October 6 when we join the Illini Orchid Club (UI based) for the annual auction of plants and supplies. The auction is one of the few occasions for the Society to improve its fiscal status.

As the night temperature increases and become stable at near 60°F, your plants can be taken outside for the summer. Like other houseplants, gradual introduction to the outside conditions, especially the light, is critical. Begin by placing them where there is no direct sun light. After a week to 10 days, they can be placed where they receive various length of morning sun—depending on the types of plants. For example, Cattleya and Vanda types can be in brighter condition than Paphiopedilums and Phals. Even under a good shady condition, you may want to consider covering the area with a shade cloth that provides various degrees of shade (30 %, 50 % etc.) It is available from garden or greenhouse supply companies. The pots should be kept off the ground for better air circulation as well as to avoid pests and diseases.

Rain water is great for orchids, but watch out for days with heavy rain. Soggy potting medium and/or water accumulating in the crown will quickly kill the plant.

If you do keep them indoors, be vigilant for insects—a plant that was fine one week can be suddenly covered by mealy bugs the next week. Increased humidity and air flow helps to keep the spread of insects such as spider mites at bay.

Mitzi Williams

New Members:

This year, seven individuals joined our Society as new members, and one past member returned as an active member. Welcome everyone. We are looking forward to meeting you all. Please feel free to bring your questions about plants or any other matter concerning the activities of the Society to the meeting.

Next meeting:

- The next meeting is on May 18 at 6:30 p.m. at the Urbana Free Library Conference Room. The program topic is: Orchid Information Resources. This will be a sharing time among members, so please bring your favorite orchid books or website names. Please bring your blooming plants for show and tell, but also this is a good time to bring your problem orchids for diagnosis and culture suggestion. Two orchids (one in bud) will be available as raffle prizes.
 - Please mark your calendar for June 14 (Sunday) for the annual pot-luck picnic. You and your significant other are welcome. E-mail invitation and details will be sent to you soon.
 - We do not meet during July or August, but resume our regular schedule on September 21, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. at the Urbana Free Library Conference Room. Program TBA.
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Special report: Orchid fragrance

• I attended the Peoria Orchid Society meeting on May 3, 2009. The speaker was Kristin Mason, a biochemist and an AOS judge. Below is a summary of the talk by Mason entitled: orchid fragrance. According to Mason, 75% of the orchids have fragrance. The reason only a handful of orchids have detectable fragrance (including not so pleasant ones) is because the scent production is for the pollinators, not humans. In other words, the orchid's survival depends on its ability to attract pollinators. Plants, including orchids, spend enormous amount of energy producing the scent. A particular orchid (I did not take down the name) produces flowers that last only a few days, but when the lip of the orchid is removed, the flower lasts much longer because it is no longer spending the energy for scent production. The range of orchid fragrance can be described as: floral, fruity, citrus, rye bread, Vicks, cinnamon, jasmine, rose, metallic, carrion, urine, and foul, and I may have omitted some Mason mentioned. So, perhaps it is a blessing in disguise that we cannot detect all the 'fragrances' that orchids produce. The production of the scent is not limited to the flowers alone. The pollinators can smell the scent from the leaves, stems, etc. Orchids with white flowers produce scent at night with scent being the strongest around 4am, just before dawn. The same plant that produced a lot of scent one year may be almost void of it the next year. This is because the condition in which the plant is grown (amount of light, temperature, etc.) affect the plant in their scent biochemistry.

If you are into fragrant orchids like I am, *Paphiopedilum* Joyce Hasegawa reportedly has the scent of old rose. It is available from Orchids by Hausermann, \$20 for a 2.25" pot. (Mitzi Williams)

Orchid of the month 1:

This Dendrobium from a Hawaiian grower is named Dend. Blue violetta Hawaii. It was in bud in December 2006 when first obtained by Mitzi Williams. The flowers lasted until late Spring. It was sent outside during summer 2007 and, to her surprise, it bloomed again in August 2007. A second flower spike appeared before it was brought inside in September, and its flowers lasted until March 2008. For reasons unknown, it failed to spike in summer 2008. Is it possible that it exhausted its energies by blooming so often? A lot of hope is on the two new growths that appeared this spring.

Jerry Steerman has a pot of this plant also, but the color of his flowers is much more blue and unique than this one.



Notes and tips:

- Orchid Digest is an organization similar to the American Orchid Society. Its activities include a quarterly publication by the same name, and support for affiliate organizations through slide programs. Individual membership is \$34.00/year.
- Rain water is good for orchids despite all the impurities that may come with it. If you keep your orchids inside, try collecting rain water and use it in your regular watering regimen.
- Phalaenopsis with no flower? If the leaves are medium green and healthy, the lack of light may be a reason for no bloom. According to Bob Gordon (AOS Bulletin, May 1994, p. 550), Phalaenopsis “flower induction process begins around September 15” for plants grown around Kansas City, MO. located at 39° latitude. Light intensity of fluorescent bulbs is reduced by 50% in the second year, so the plants initially grown 4” under the light can be grown 2” below.
- 3 ice cubes to water orchids—the overwhelming consensus from folks who have grown orchids for some time is: DON’T. But some say that cool loving plants such as Masdevallias may enjoy them on hot days.

Supplies available:

We have available some dragon fly clips for purchase and free plastic saucers for pots. Also, a number of orchid books are being made available for a very good price by one of the past members, Don Charlton. They will be brought to the May 18th meeting.

Events in the area:

- Prairie State Orchid Society (Springfield) and Peoria Orchid Society continue to meet during the summer. Like ours, their meetings are open to non-members. Janet Jackson, Mitzi Williams and Mark Williams are members of PSOS and attend the PSOS meetings regularly. If you are interested in coming along, contact Mitzi Williams. PSOS meetings are held on the 3rd Friday of each month at 7pm while POS meetings are on the 1st Sunday of each month at 1:30 pm. Contact Barry Jones (309-383-4022)

- **September 25-27, 2009**

Chicagoland Orchid Festival. The festival takes place simultaneously at four different orchid greenhouse locations within the suburbs of Chicago. For more information including the schedule, see www.chicagolandorchidfestival.com/htm

- **October 10-11, 2009**

Illinois Orchid Society Fall show and sale
Chicago Botanic Gardens
1000 Lake Cook Road, Glencoe, IL 60022 Phone 847.835.5440

- **October 30 – November 1, 2009** 50th Anniversary Mid-America Orchid Congress show and sale hosted by the Orchid Society of Middle Tennessee. For more info, see <http://www.tnorchid.com>

Orchid of the month

Bc. Maikai 'Mayumi' HCC/AOS.

Janet Jackson reports this nice, relatively small and sturdy orchid is one of her favorites. It divides well so a number of CIOS members has this plant in their collection. It likes a lot of sun and can produce continuous blooms during the summer.

This is a cross between *Brassavola nodosa* and *Cattleya bowringiana*.

B. nodosa flowers are creamy white so the dark spots in the throat of the flowers are not always obvious, but when it's used as a parent, they always dominate like they are in this famous cross.

