



Central Illinois Orchid Society Newsletter

September 2009

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In This Issue

- What summer heat brings
- Next meeting
- Orchid of the month 1
- Events in the area
- AOS News
- Notes and tips
- Orchid of the month 2

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.

What summer heat brings:

Boy, haven't we had crazy summer weather this year? I had to bring out the blankets a few times to cover my outside orchids. But change in temperatures and humidity can also bring about surprises. After a two week vacation, I was greeted by a pair of white, very fragrant Cattleyas in bloom. It must have been a division I obtained from somewhere since it lacked a name tag, but beautiful no less. I also noticed that Sc. Crystelle Smith is blooming again—after having bloomed in June already. It was supposed to be a winter-spring blooming orchid! Another surprise I encountered this summer was a tell-tale sign of pollination on my Brassavola flagellaris. Some one or some thing visited one of the flowers in the dark of the night, and now I have one pseudobulb with a slight bulge in the middle. Until now, I did not know exactly where the leaf ended and the pseudobulb began.

It is almost sad to see orchids blooming outside because they are competing for our attention amidst vibrant annuals and ever-present hostas and daylilies. Not to mention, these special plants that we nurtured with utmost care through the cold seasons are now exposed to such drastic elements at times, like the thunder storms with hail we had a while back.

But, they seem to thrive outside, and reward us with good growth and blooms. That rain water must also do some tricks, and I was glad we did not have rain last for more than a few days at a time.

Fall/Winter blooming Cattleyas may be showing the sheaths—a flat vertical leaf like growth at the top of the newest pseudobulb. Take good care of them because the flowers are hidden deep inside. Insects, such as praying mantis particularly seem to enjoy nibbling on the sheaths. A very light netting can protect the plants from bud-eating insects.

While on vacation in June, I was able to visit an Art Museum in Japan which holds a beautiful collection of woodblock prints. I also visited an orchid show there and brought back a curious growing 'pot'. In the U.S., I checked out Orchids Limited in Plymouth MN and Oak Hill Gardens in Dundee, IL. I will be looking forward to hearing about your orchid adventures at the September meeting.

Mitzi Williams

October auction:

We will be joining the Illini Orchid Group again for orchid auction on October 6 at 6:30 pm. The auction will take place on campus at the Plant Sciences Lab, 1201 S. Dorner Dr. Urbana. Our Society needs your donation of plants and orchid growing supplies for this event. If you have made divisions of orchids, please consider donating them.

Next meeting:

- The next meeting is on September 21, at 6:30 p.m. at the Urbana Free Library Conference Room. The program is a slide show from AOS entitled: Brassavola Hybrids—the New Look in Cattleyas.
- **SAVE the DATE:** We have Leo Schordje and Sam Tsui on the schedule for our October 19 and November 16 meetings, respectively. They are both well known growers/speakers in Illinois. Leo will have some plants for sale as well, most likely held on October 18 or 19 before the meeting at 3208 S. First St. because no sale is allowed at the Library. Details will be included in the next issue of the Newsletter.
- The Urbana Free Library Conference Room has been booked for the 2009-2010 year, except for January 18 (MLK's birthday) and February 15 (Presidents' Day) as the Library is closed. We will hold our show in February (either 20 or 27) so that will take place of the February meeting. We will have to find an alternate meeting location for January. Any suggestions?

Orchid of the month 1:



Cindy Westfall sent the picture at left of Tolumnia Genting 'Leopard.' It bloomed in late June.

She just obtained this plant earlier this year, though she didn't know much about it. Good for you Cindy! Judging from the numerous robust flowers and a new fan of leaves, she is doing quite well with it. She grows it on her orchid table with a little extra light.

Tolumnia is a new genus name for a group of plants that used to be called equitant Oncidium. For more information about this miniature orchid, see www.bellaonline.com/articles/art30279.asp.

Events in the area:

- September 19-20, 2009, 9 am to 5 pm. Wisconsin Orchid Society Show. Mitchell Park Conservatory, 524 S. Layton Blvd. Milwaukee WI 53215. For more info, see www.wisconsinorchidsociety.com/
- Sept 25 (Fri.) – Sept. 27 (Sun.) www.chicagolandorchidfestival.com/ Chicagoland Orchid Festival features four orchid nurseries in the region, and offers free lectures, prizes, and festival specials from various vendors.

AOS News:

- AOS sent a letter acknowledging the receipt of our contribution.
- The 2010 Calendar is available:
Share the magic and joy of growing orchids with a gift of the AOS 2010 Calendar. The 12 superbly grown orchids pictured show the diversity in color, size, shape and fragrance found in the orchid family.

In addition to month after month of beautiful photography, the gift giver can feel good about supporting the American Orchid Society's mission of promoting and supporting the passion for orchids through education, conservation and research.

Price: \$12.95 plus shipping and handling. \$2 from each calendar sold benefits orchid conservation. AOS members receive a 10% discount. Order No. CL919M

- AOS continues to deal with its financial crises. According to a recent letter from the President, Carlos F. Fighetti, the Board decided to stop borrowing from the restricted funds. This decision resulted in the termination of the positions of Executive Director and Director of Technology. The Finance Committee will immediately undertake a complete financial review of the organization and report back to the Board by the first of August our financial position and a new budget for the fiscal year.

Notes and tips:

- It is time to begin treating your outside orchids with insecticides. Because of life cycles of some insect pests, it is important to repeat treatment weekly for at least for 5 weeks. Dry air seems to encourage the spread of scales, and you find your plants covered with nasty white stuff overnight. Moisture under the lower leaves attracts slugs, too. For detailed information, check out the AOS website for "Pests and Diseases".
- *Brassavola nodosa*, Lady of the Night orchid, is a compact plant with greenish white flowers that are most fragrant in late afternoon to early evening. It tolerates a wide range of temperatures from 65 - 80 °F during the day and 10 °F lower at night. Grown well, it can bloom several times a year.

- Fertilizer choice:

Many, if not all, fertilizers labeled as for orchids say it does not contain “Urea”. What does this mean? Urea is a type of nitrogen used for fertilizing plants. It breaks down slowly so it is safer for plants in the ground, and keeps them supplied with nutrients over a long period of time. These features work against orchids because orchids are often planted in bark mix or mounted on sticks or boards, the nutrients are washed away before they are used by the plants. Urea can also concentrate in the bark mix, and without flushing, the roots of the plants can burn.

The basic components of fertilizers are Nitrogen, Phosphorus, and Pottasium (usually referred to as NPK). Fertilizers made specifically for orchids also contain larger amount of additional nutrients (also called as micro nutrients or trace elements) such as Iron, Magnesium, Boron, Zinc, Molybdenum, etc.

One of many urea-less fertilizers are available from Dyna-Gro (www.dyna-gro.com/, then click on Growing Info). In Illinois, Dyna-Gro products are sold by Oak Hill Gardens in Dundee (847- 428-8500), and International Greenhouse Company in Danville (888-281-9337)

Orchid of the month 2:

Anguloa dubia belongs to a small genus which include both terrestrial and epiphytic plants. They are known to be found in Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. Due to its habitat at high elevation, it prefers cooler and humid growing conditions. This plant is commonly called tulip orchid. I think it looks more like a parrot beak, especially because the column inside rocks back and forth resembling a tongue.



Editor's note:

This issue follows the April-May, 2009 (vol. 3 no. 4-5) issue. No issues were published for the months of June-August, 2009.