

An Affiliate of the American Orchid Society

# FORT LAUDERDALE ORCHID SOCIETY

N • E • W • S • L • E • T • T • E • R February, 2011

## February 14<sup>th</sup> Program

### Celebrate Valentines Night With Sandi and Tom

Our speaker will be Sandi Jones and Tom Wells, co-owners of Broward Orchid Supply. They are also the Bonnet House's Orchid Curators and hobbyists with about 400 orchids of their own. Together they have over 30 years of growing experience which makes them able to understand the goals of fellow hobby orchid growers.

In turn the goal of Broward Orchid Supply is to cater to the hobbyist by providing a wide variety of growing supplies and to provide education on how to use them.

The program will include selecting the correct type of orchid for your growing area, information on water, light, fertilizer, and temperature requirements for helping orchids grow and flower beautifully. Basic repotting will be demonstrated as well as how to pick the right pot, or basket. Potting media will be covered as well as the options available for mounting orchids.

Orchid supplies will be available for sale at the meeting, but of course there is not room to bring some of everything they sell. You can call or email ahead to place specific orders:

954-925-2021 or [browardorchidsupply@compast.net](mailto:browardorchidsupply@compast.net).



## We Did IT!

### Our Show Was Wonderful



Thanks to Chris and John, our co-show chairs, and to all of the work from many of us, the show was back on track. Attendance was back up by about 1,000 people, the vendors were almost all delighted with their sales and will want to come back next year. The preview party was elegant and the food was better than usual. The judges thought their meals was great. Many people commented positively on the revised show layout. The individual plant entries were enough and beautiful, and we had fun working together to make the show a booming success. **Thank you all for what you did to bring about this happy time.**

### A Honey of a Cure or Prevention

The February *Prevention Magazine* reports that a spoonful of honey in a cup of tea will kill bacteria and send stomach flu on its way more quickly.

Don't remember where I read it, but honey made within 50 miles of where you live, has agents in it to protect the bees from local toxins in the environment. It couldn't hurt for the bees to pass their protection on to you.

## The Pleasant and Informative Program by Fred Clarke

### **Cycnoches:**

These easy to grow plants with swan shaped male or female flowers are divided into two groups. The heteranthes group has flowers that look different. Males have long columns with a hook, and females have short columns. The Eu *Cycnoches* have male and female flowers which appear similar. Sex is controlled by the environment in which the plant grows. Robust plants produce female flowers since nourishing seed pods requires more stamina than producing pollinia. Male plants are less robust and have been growing in more shade or without perfect fertilizer or watering.

Hybrid plants have more vigor than pure species and one of the crosses Fred showed us had flowers going in a disheveled order and its name was Cyc. Mass Confusion.

### **Mormodes:**

A common name for this genus is Goblin orchids and the Latin translation of 'mormodes' is 'terrible thing' Unlike their close relatives the flowers are perfect in that each flower contains both male and female parts. The pure species here are 'challenging to grow' but the hybrids with easy growing *Cycnoches* grow easily and the hybrids which are called *Cycnodes* (Cycd.) have the better color found in *Mormodes* and the better shaped flowers of *Cycnoches*.

### **Catasetums:**

Here the male flowers are beautiful but live only 5-7 days, while the plain bonnet shaped female flowers last for 5-10 weeks.

Through some sort of cellular tension males shoot their pollinia at the speed of 200 feet per second and as far away as 9 feet. The pollinia stick to a target which may or may not be a pollinator bee. Often the force of the pollinia shot will knock the bee off the flower. The dislodged bee will fly off then and perhaps later visit a female flower from a different population. This is thought to be the most advanced method in orchids of producing diversity of offspring.

South American is the natural habitat of this genus, but it can be crossed with some of it's distant African relatives, such as *Ansilia*, *Gramatophylums*, and *Cymbidiums*. After all, they once lived in Pangea before continental drift.

### **Fredclarkia:**

This new genus is comprised of *Catasetums*, *Mormodes* and *Cloweia*. The flowers are perfect and the famous Fredclarkia After Dark is easy growing, highly awarded, and the nearest to black of any orchid known. The flowers can last for 7 or more weeks.

### **Culture for these groups: (The topic dear to us.)**

**\*Dormancy is a must.** By Thanksgiving hold the fertilizer and water much less. By Christmas stop watering. For about 4 months you should not water. Even when new growths appear, wait until new roots are about 3-4 inches long. Then **fertilize** and water big time. They can be **potted** and divided in a well drained mix when the new roots are an inch or two long. They can bloom on bare pseudo bulbs and can take temperatures as low as 40 if they are bone-dry.

Spider mites are a problem and the mites should be attacked at the first sign of them. Fred suggested using Safer Soap at 4-5 day intervals and repeating the soap treatments at least 2-3 times. Of course the entire plant needs to be coated with the soap or other mite spray.

I have only partially covered this informative evening. Terry Glancy brought in some Pine Ridge plants including several of Fred's After Darks. If you want more information on this special group of plants go to the Glancy's website; [pineridgeorchids.com](http://pineridgeorchids.com) D.H.

## January Ribbon Awards

Michael Bryant /CULTURE/ Brassavola Little Stars /blue/ Blc. Manalini Rainbow x *C. intermedia*  
Bonnie Bonneau /blue/ *C. labiata* var. *lindl* 'Lavender Ice'  
T. Allen Cogar /red/ *Paph. spicerianum* x self  
Terry Glancy\* /blue/ Phal. Haur Jin Fancy 'Pine Ridge 18',  
Paph. Barbara Glancy 'Pine Ridge 4', Fdk. After Dark 'PR. 24', /red/ Fdk. After Dark 'PR 25', Phal Haur Jin Diamond x Brother World Class 'Pine Ridge 13'  
Vicki Hallock /blue/ *Dend. rigidum*  
Chuck Nicholls /blue/ *Ang. veichii*  
Gary Pierce /blue/ Onc. Tsiku Margurite  
Ray Ratliff /blue/ *Taeniophyllum bioccelate*

Note: \*Ribbon judging is for members only, but the judges were so pleased that Terry brought in *Fredclarkias* and his new phals that he became an honorary member for the night. Thank you Terry.

## Appreciated Refreshments From:

Danielle Bejar, Bonnie Bonneau, Chris Crepage,  
Nora Dyke, Gigi Granger, Janett McMillan,  
Allen and Jan Mink, Gary Pierce,  
Petra Thomas, and Connie Walker

## Orchid Roots Speak To You

You knew that roots have to breathe (aka carry on respiration), but did you know that they can communicate? Live roots are usually white and glistening and often have green tips, but orchids with dark flowers often have brown or dark red tips. Another clue is that live roots are firm to the touch. Dead roots are gray, brown, or black, and soft or mushy to the touch. Decaying roots can have some of the dead symptoms.

If the center part of a root ball is dead and roots at the edge of the pot seem fine, probably too much water is staying in the mix. Either the potting medium holds too much water, maybe it is too old and becoming compressed, or you are watering too much. If the old roots are shriveled they may not be getting enough water, and you can fix that by adding a bit of moss or watering more often.

Since you've taken the orchid out of its pot to see what the roots are telling you, you might as well repot the plant. First shake-off /pull-off/ tease-off the old medium and rinse the roots with a spray of water. A robust plant like a Catt can take a hard spray blast, a dainty Phal can not. Now remove the dead roots, and it is natural for some roots to be dead. If you are not sure, gently tug at the root and if the outer portion comes off leaving a wiry center, the root is dead. While you are trimming off dead roots, be sure to use clean clippers just in case you nick a live root. Non-sterile clippers are a main way to transmit virus and other pathogens. If you see any sign of scale or mealy bugs on the roots, give them a good spray with an insecticide, and if you think you have cut off roots with a rot problem, not just shriveled old age, you might dip the plant in a fungicide or dust it with kitchen cinnamon before you repot it.

Now place your cleaned plant in a clean pot. Plants like Catts that grow forward need a pot that gives them 2 years of growth, and you place the old end of the plant so it touches one side of the pot. Be sure to fill the pot with a loose mix that will let your roots carry on respiration. Then clip the plant firmly to the pot so that emerging roots won't get bruised and killed if the plant wiggles in the pot. If you've removed most of the roots you might mist the plant until it grows roots to absorb water. Healthy roots are the key to healthy orchids, aren't you glad they can tell you what's going on? D.H.

*Thinking of you*

Johnny Ma  
Ron MacDonald

*for the loss of your family member*

## New Cold Night Idea

Member, Luana Tringalii, has reported good success with heating their outdoor orchid growing space with heat producing halogen lamps. Of course halogen bulbs can also burn if they are placed too near orchids or anything flammable. If the lamps are placed right they are bound to do a better job than the Christmas tree lights that some have tried.

## DNA Thoughts

I was an undergraduate when Watson and Crick came up with the structure, and there are times when I wish man has not used research so much. Half my favorite orchids are now in a new genus and I've barely learned the old ones. There are some good points, legal questions come out with the right answers, medicine is beginning to be more exact and some lives are being saved, but on the light side.... are you ready? "They" are taking genes from plants that produce the most delicious or most anti-oxidant filled chocolate and making plants that will give us better cheap chocolate! The research on chocolate's DNA began when there was about to be a world wide shortage since the land that it had been growing on was becoming scarce.

Penn State released its chocolate research information to:  
[www.sciencedaily.com/release/2010](http://www.sciencedaily.com/release/2010)

## Bare Pot Idea

This method of orchid culture will require no repotting which is more than nice. You might want to try it on a few non-favorite plants. You will need the following: a NEW clay pot, a tray that will hold 1 ½" of NON TAP WATER, and a bare root orchid.

Obviously you put the orchid in the pot and water and fertilize it to a point where water in the tray under the pot is ½ " deep. The water will keep the clay moist and roots will grow all over the pot. You would water again when the under-pot tray is empty. It is probably a good idea to use weaker than normal fertilizer and to foliar feed at least some of the time. Orchids grown this way need to be watered with rain water, RO water or distilled water since minerals in tap water will clog pores in the clay pot. The build-up of salts on a clogged clay pot may kill your orchid.

This method would add humidity around the orchids and might be especially good for those who grow inside on window sills.

Bob MacLeod described this idea in a 2010 issue of the *Arizona Orchidist*

## AOS Awards for Plants

### Carib Plants:

*Tolumnia* Jairak Rainbow 'Diana' AM 80 points

### Stelmar Gardens:

*Rlc. Mem.* Eileen Harrell 'Stelmar' HCC 78 points

*Rlc. Mem.* Eileen Harrell 'Stelmar' CCM 87 points

### Krull-Smith Orchids

*Lycaste* Abou Sunset 'Crystelle' AM 84 points

*Paphs. affine* 'Apopka' AM 80 points

*Blc.* Annie Belle 'June Simpson' AM 83 points

### June's Orchid Estate

*Clowestum* Manny Tavares 'June's Orchid Estate' AM 81 pts

*Lycaste Mem.* Helen Conglenton 'June Simpson' AM 85 pts.

### Indian River Orchids

*C.* Sierra Blanco 'Mt. Whitney' CCM 82 points

### St. Germain Orchids

*Rnst.* Alsaffoff's Princess Payton HCC 77 points

### Carmela Orchids

*Paph. (ferrieatum x Walcrest* 'Pearl' provisional HCC 79 pts.



## Show Exhibit Awards

*AOS Show Trophy and AOS Silver Certificate:*

### Carib Plants

*300 Square Feet*

1. June's Orchid Estate, 2. Quest Orchids

*200 Square Feet*

1. Carib Plants, 3. Adamson's Orchids

*150 Square Feet*

1. Krull Smith Orchids, 2. Carmela Orchids,  
3. Indian River Orchids

*100 Square Feet*

1. Gold Country Orchids, 2. Cal Orchids

*Show Case Displays*

1. Ray Ratliff, 2. Eddie Griffith and Stan Tilotson,  
3. Rubben Howe





*No wonder Johnny Ma is smiling. One of his plants won the Munson Award, and another got a 'best of class' award with a pretty glass plate.*

### Winners of the Daily Drawings for \$100 Worth of Orchids

- Shana Morris- Deerfield Beach
- Pamela Stanton- Pompano Beach
- Shandra Brown- Plantation



*There are still a few places left for the Home Ramble. You CAN get home in time for the Super Bowl.*

### Home Ramble, February 13<sup>th</sup>

We will be having a home ramble on a happy Sunday afternoon. You should bring pot-luck food for lunch at the first stop or bring \$5 to help cover what has to be bought. We will meet at the Cardinal Gibbons student parking lot at 12:30 and regroup in cars-full for parking. The first 60 members to sign up get to share in a perfect afternoon. Call or see me to get on the list. Please also let me know what you will bring for lunch D.H. bobdot@bellsouth.net

### About The Show's Central Theme

This multi-member display was born on the bus when we had the overnight ramble last summer. Some of the team started growing Spanish Moss and ferns for it way back last summer. We did look into having tall trees brought in from a company in Miami that had done central themes, and the cost would have been between \$4,000 and \$5,000. Of course we saved the money and stacked tables and cinder blocks to get the effect we wanted with smaller palms.

**Chip Jones** brought in a huge truck of his very special landscape plants to add punch to the society's rented plants. He had previously been to Texas to buy the big blue cycad in the front of the display. (I would have left it home with an armed guard!) **Carib Plants** gave us the big white phals above the cycad. **Carmela, Quest, and Gold Country** also subsidized my cost for some plants that we needed to get a "touch of color x in that bare spot". Most of the orchids belonged to members who put in the display. **John Wrench** kept his spectacular vandas under light and warmth for a week before a show. **Johnny Ma, Ken Slump, Chris Crepage** and **Peggy Knight** also contributed orchids and other items to the display even though they had other obligations while we were climbing the ladders and writing name tags for our plants.

The best part of doing the central theme was the fun we had planning ahead and actually putting the plan in action. **Wayne Musgrave** painted the iron gates and was with **Chip** a major ladder climber. **Eddie Griffith** and **Gary Pierce** lifted and wired bushes and plants, and **Mary Burtoff** and I assembled orchids and made tags. We all contributed blooming orchids to the display.

Wait until you see what we have in mind for 2012, and maybe you need to assemble some plants and some friends so that show will have even more of a touch from members. D.H.

*PS. Since I had nagged for more individual plants, those who brought them in are thanked. Those tables were beautiful and full, we did that right too.*



**Photo Appreciation:**  
**Bruce Muntz**  
**Craig Barry**  
*Too Bad War Memorial*  
*Was so dark party night.*

## About *Cattleya walkeriana*

*C. walkeriana* and its hybrids can bloom twice a year and the flowers are long lasting. Further more the plants are usually compact and require less space on your bench than many others.

Besides the genes for long lasting and twice a year blooming, *C. walkeriana* has another gene that it also passes on to its hybrids. That gene is that the roots carry on photosynthesis. This means that the plants should be potted in clear, slotted, pots or in baskets so the roots can work in the light.

Two hybrid names to look for are” C. Aloha Case and C. Pink Doll according to Alan Koch, my expert on mini-catts.

## Good News/Bad News

\* According to the local paper we are 2<sup>nd</sup> in the nation for bedbugs, but only 13 cases were reported this last year. It is still well to wash all new fabric items not made in the USA. Indonesian items are the most likely hosts for eggs.

\* It's time to save money for more orchids by stocking up on anything made of cotton. Prices are predicted to go up by 30-50%.

\* While you are stocking up, buy coffee and chocolate.



## Nitrogen Also Feeds PESTS

Nitrogen makes plants grow fast and succulent. Their tissues become rich in sugars and amino acids. Pests thrive on sugars and amino acids so university research has shown that fertilizing actually increases attack by pest insects, fungal pathogens and it decreases plants' production of defense chemicals.

Horticulturists are warning that feeding mature trees and shrubs is not wise. They recommend only mixing in small amounts of low-nitrogen slow-release fertilizer when planting. They do recommend organic fertilizer during the growing season for heavy feeding vegetables and flowering perennials when soil is low in nitrogen. *The Avant Gardener*, October, 2010. P.93.

*Note: Does this research mean we need to rethink how we fertilize orchids? Maybe orchids potted in mixes that contain tree fern, coconut, or other organic matter would benefit from a lower nitrogen fertilizer? Why not experiment with a few plants? Obviously orchids in bare baskets or all inorganic mixes will need some added nitrogen.*

*Back to not fertilizing mature woody plants, the research was done in northern universities, not here where we grow our plants in Florida sand. Again, maybe we should experiment with lower nitrogen fertilizers?*

## About Algae

(Phylum name *Rhodophyta*)

*Rhoda the red celled algae*

*Can live deeper in the sea*

*It can't have sex on a whim*

*Because its sperm lack tails to swim*

All my students had to get up and recite a poem on 'algae day'. It helped them keep the groups straight and they learned that algae produce most of the earth's oxygen, are responsible for our deposits of crude oil, their shells are in our tooth paste, and the list goes on. You are about to be subjected to the good algae news in Florida again since 2010 was a good year for development of algae and other crops for products that we need.

Agrisys near Apopka will soon be growing algae in vertical tubes on 1,000 acres where it will be processed into gasoline and other petroleum products. The algae can be the major consumer of carbon dioxide and releaser of oxygen, and the oil crop is made in less than 24 hours.

There are other Florida algae biofuel companies: Pero Algae in Melbourne, Algenol in Bonita Springs, Algae Aviation Fuel in Sarasota and Algenol in Fort Myers. Aqua Fibers in Orlando will be using algae to clean up polluted surface water and to produce pharmaceuticals, protein bars, oils such as Omega-3, and fish meal. Agrisys is another Orlando company working toward the production of vegetable oil, food mix, and fish oil.

Fast growing *Jatropha* is being planted in North Florida for biofuels and sugar cane is considered a possible source of biofuels. The downside of biofuels today is that they will be expensive to produce and process, but time and research should change that. For more information on this topic go to:

FloridaTrend.com/Links

Barnett, Cynthia. *Florida Trend* magazine. January, 2011 Pp 75-77

## Bird Seed Pesticide?

If your lawn is infected with harmful insects, spread cheap bird seed on it and the birds will eat the seeds and also the pests.

*The Avant Gardner*. Nov., 2010. P. 8

## Scale Insects, the Pests from H---

I've often read that you can control the number of scale insects in your orchid collection, but you can NOT get that number down to zero. Of course in biology 101 you learn that man has never eradicated even one of about a zillion+/- species of insects. No wonder a single grower can not eradicate one of the 27 species of scale insects that is found on cultivated orchids. (The 27 species is from the Florida Department of Agriculture)

It is easy enough to recognize an adult female. She is circular or oval in shape and her colors range from light yellowish, to greenish brown, to tan, or dark brown. The males often pass for mealy bugs, they cluster in a cottony mass, often on the underside of leaves or where leaves emerge from pseudobulbs. Unless you get out a magnifying glass you don't see young scale 'crawlers' which are worm-like pink or yellow little critters that can crawl from touching plant to touching plant, or even blow through the air to other plants. Airborne crawlers tend to aggregate where there are no air currents to carry them further along. (It should be noted that aphids, spider mites, and mealy bugs, also tend to cluster where air currents are weakest.)

Scale eggs are held under the shell of the female, and emerge into crawlers when the female dies. Often when we spot brown scale insects they are dead, as we brush them away, we release the crawlers. The crawlers shed their exoskeletons in true insect fashion in order to grow. Some males do not ever develop the typical scale armor of an adult, but develop wings to fly to less related females. It takes about a month for one cycle of scale birth and death, but generations overlap, thus the need to spray at least 3 times at weekly or 10 day intervals.

How do you control if not eliminate scale? First look for yellow spots on leaves. If you look under the spot you may find a cottony mass of males. Isolate this plant and its neighbors and begin control steps. My first control step is to blast the scale off catts with a strong blast of hose water. Then if the potting is old, I repot and discard the old medium which probably has scale insects hidden and ready to attack. Next I repeated spray with rubbing alcohol or a light summer oil, and then if I feel I have not won a temporary battle I spray with Neem oil. Every now and then I find a small plant that is almost obscured under a larger more vigorous neighbor and the small weak plant is heavily infested with scale. I send it off to the great bug-free tree in the sky, to live a better life than I have provided for it. D.H. (Google is my friend!)

## February, Think Love and The Start of Spider Mite Season

The dry months are a love potion for the rapid reproduction of these nearly microscopic orchid pests that can sometimes even kill. The season will peak in March or April, but an immediate attack on them is essential. Two sprayings, which will also kill scale and mealy bugs, are needed.

The first spraying, according to Dr. Martin Motes should be 1 ½ ounces of light summer oil in a gallon of water. Seven to 10 days later he suggests a second spraying with 2 ounces of a gentle soap per gallon of water. Coating the undersides of leaves is important. *(You need to pick a gentle soap that is not antibacterial. I use baby shampoo these days for it seems to be less likely to damage plants as it dissolves the exoskeletons of pests. I also put a dab of eucalyptus oil from Whole Foods on a cotton ball which I attach to a wire stake, cover with an empty pill vile, and stick into the medium of mite prone orchids. Joyce Skelly had this good idea a few years back and it's worked here. When I haven't protected plants well enough as shown by 'rusted' under-sides of leaves, I cut off the affected leaves and thus destroy a billion +/- mites.)*

If you chose to bring out bigger guns to control mites, these chemicals recommended by UF's IFAS may work for you: Avid 0.15 EC, Kelthane T/O, Mavarik Aquaflow, and Telstar Flowable. If you chose to use one of these please check to see that it is still recommended, and **follow the manufacturer's directions.** FLOS assumes NO RESPONSIBILITY for you or your plants if you use these relatively harsh chemicals. D.H. believer in oil, soap and eucalyptus.

## Tidbit Time

\* **Sugar:** If you spill oil on your lawn spray a gallon of Coke or Pepsi on the affected spot and water well. The sugar in the drinks will nourish microbes which will also clean up the oil. *(You can probably figure out a cheaper sugar to water ratio to encourage microbes to help clean up any toxic spill.)*

\* **Salts** pull the water out of struggling plants. Giving fertilizer to a struggling plant does more harm than good, since fertilizer is a form of salt. *(Think cold stressed orchids now, and the bare-roots you will buy this spring.)*

The Avant Gardner. Nov., 2010. P. 5



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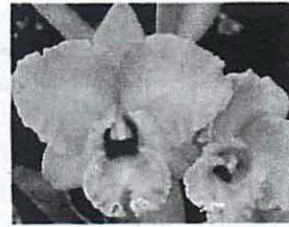
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Go East for 2.4 miles, go to the rear of the church  
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