



## CLUB NEWS



**Vern Bloch**

### May 1, 2018 Monthly Meeting

by Janis Croft

#### Welcome and Thanks.

Bob Schimmel opened the meeting at 7:00 pm sharp with 74 attendees. Susan Smith introduced our seven guests and new members Mary Ann Pearl, Richard Johnson, Carol White and Walter Muller. Bob thanked Dottie and Dorianna for bringing in their treats and

Jeannette Smith and Shirley Browning for organizing the refreshments. He then reminded all to drop a dollar in the basket while enjoying their refreshments. Bob next informed all that the Best of Show voting would occur after the Show Table discussion and the silent auction would end before the presentation. He encouraged all to vote for their favorite orchid.

**Club Business.** There are three orchid shows/festivals in May: Platinum Coast, Volusia County and the Redland Festival. Check SAOS website for details.

There were still a few stragglers reupping their membership dues. We have finalized our 2018 membership and email distribution lists. If you have paid and are not getting the newsletter via email, contact Linda Stewart at [info@staugorchidsociety.org](mailto:info@staugorchidsociety.org). If you have not yet paid your dues, you can use the PayPal link the SAOS website to sign up for membership.

The Ace Repotting Clinic is the first Saturday of the month; the next one will be May 5

The Keiki Club is on summer vacation, come to Ace Repotting Clinic with any questions or if you need help

Limited quantities of time-release fertilizer and potting mixes were available on the side table. Preorder your supplies by email [info@staugorchidsociety.org](mailto:info@staugorchidsociety.org) and we will deliver to you at the next meeting. A few hats and T-shirts are still available at the sales table.



Club librarian, Penny Halyburton brought in the book ORCHIDS: Kew Garden Guides by Joyce Stewart that is an excellent primer for the beginner. Send Penny ([phalyburton@comcast.net](mailto:phalyburton@comcast.net)) a request for a book or DVD you would like and she will bring the item(s) to the next meeting. The library collection is listed on our [SAOS website](#).

Our Sunshine Coordinator and Membership VP, Linda Stewart delivered free raffle tickets to the one person (Terry Bottom) with a birthday in May.

**Show Table.** Courtney Hackney had just returned from six orchid club meeting where he was the featured speaker and proudly told us that not one had a show table that could rival ours in both quantities and quality. He then started with one of his favorites on the table, a *Bulbophyllum maximum* with its delicate flowers on swinging bracts. He encouraged all to come up and take a close look at the well-grown plant. Next, he moved on to a discussion about the various *Cattleyas* on the table with the able assistance of Sue Bottom holding up the plants so all could see. *Cattleya mossiae* was well used in the cut flower industry because of its multiple blooms. He moved to the species *C. maxima* which was a *coerulea* form with over ten flowers. Then he discussed the very small hybrid between *Slc. Circle of Life*, with intense red flowers, and *Royal Emperor*. From reds to white and purple, Courtney showed the *C. violacea flammaea* that had an intense, beautiful red violet lip and column. Next, he showed one of his plants collected from the wild, the *C. dolosa coerulea* that makes its own hybrid in the wild.

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## Upcoming Orchid Events

### May

- 4-6 Platinum Coast Orchid Society Show  
Kiwani's Island Park Gymnasium
- 5 Repotting at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm  
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine
- 6 JOS Picnic, noon  
3611 Richmond St., Jax 32205
- 12-13 Volusia County Orchid Society Show  
Volusia County Fairgrounds
- 18-20 Redland International Orchid Festival  
Fruit and Spice Park, Homestead

### June

- 2 Repotting at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm  
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine
- 2-3 Central Florida Orchid Society Show  
Nat'l Guard Armory, Orlando
- 5 SAOS Meeting, 6:30 pm  
George Hausermann, EFG Orchids  
Mounting Orchids
- 12 JOS Meeting, Topic TBA, 7 pm  
Carlos Cahiz, OFE International

### July

- 3 SAOS Meeting, 6:30 pm  
Sue Bottom, SAOS  
Navigating the SAOS Website
- 7 Repotting at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm  
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine
- 10 JOS Meeting, Topic TBA, 7 pm  
Ivan Portilla, Ecuagenera

### August

- 3-4 Eighth Annual Cattleya Symposium  
Sponsored by Odom's Orchids  
Indian River Research & Education Ctr  
Fort Pierce
- 4 SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm  
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine  
Repotting and Plant Clinic

- 7 SAOS Meeting, 7 pm  
Speaker Steve Hawkins, The Orchid Specialist  
Cattleyas
- 14 JOS Meeting, Orchids from Brazil, 7 pm  
Francisco Miranda, Miranda Orchids

### September

- 1 SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm  
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine  
Repotting and Plant Clinic
- 4 SAOS Meeting, Fall Preparations, 7 pm  
SAOS Members and Sue Bottom
- 11 JOS Meeting, Topic TBA, 7 pm  
Phillip Hamilton, Bredren Orchids
- 22-23 Ridge Orchid Society Show  
Lake Mirror Center, Lakeland

## St. Augustine Orchid Society Organization

President	Bob Schimmel <a href="mailto:schimmelr55@bellsouth.net">schimmelr55@bellsouth.net</a>
Vice President Events	Dianne Batchelder <a href="mailto:ladydi9907@aol.com">ladydi9907@aol.com</a>
Vice President Membership	Linda Stewart <a href="mailto:lindstew@hotmail.com">lindstew@hotmail.com</a>
Vice President Programs	Sue Bottom <a href="mailto:sbottom15@gmail.com">sbottom15@gmail.com</a>
Secretary	Janis Croft <a href="mailto:croftie1984@gmail.com">croftie1984@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer	Bill Gourley <a href="mailto:wgourley@bellsouth.net">wgourley@bellsouth.net</a>
Directors at Large	Susan Smith <a href="mailto:2manysmiths@comcast.net">2manysmiths@comcast.net</a> Tom Sullivan <a href="mailto:tomjs91@gmail.com">tomjs91@gmail.com</a> Suzanne Susko <a href="mailto:suzsusko@bellsouth.net">suzsusko@bellsouth.net</a>
Exhibit Committee Chair	Janis Croft <a href="mailto:croftie1984@gmail.com">croftie1984@gmail.com</a>
Librarian	Penny Halyburton <a href="mailto:phalyburton@comcast.net">phalyburton@comcast.net</a>
Newsletter Editors Webmasters	Sue and Terry Bottom <a href="mailto:sbottom15@gmail.com">sbottom15@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:bottom406@gmail.com">bottom406@gmail.com</a>





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The next grouping Courtney reviewed were the encyclias and epidendrums that he was surprised so many were present because they usually flower at the very end of spring/early summer. One of his favorites was the *Epi. bractescens*, a species orchid from Central America with numerous inflorescences loaded with flowers. A very delicate appearing plant. Courtney discussed many more orchids on the table. Check out the photos of our show table examples at the end of the newsletter and on the SAOS website.

**SAOS Program.** Sue Bottom introduced our guest speaker, Vern Bloch who talked to us about *Brassavola nodosa* and its hybrids. He offered pre-orders for plants and had an amazing 160 preordered plants, which shows how much our club likes the nodosas! Vern spent 28 years in the navy and then 15 years as a commercial orchid grower. He is officially retired, but still grows and sells his orchids. His talk was very entertaining as well as educational. First he started by showing us slides of the better-known species that are used in hybrids—*Brassavola cucullata*, *B. nodosa*, *B. perrinii* and *B. subulifolia*. The easiest way to identify *B. nodosa* is to look for lavender red spotting down in the lip throat. This spotting is often expressed in the lips of its progeny.

*Nodosa's* natural habitat is from Mexico, Central America, Caribbean, Columbia and Venezuela. Vern showed a map and stated that if we connected all with a wide circle, we would see that the peninsula of Florida falls within the same climate zone. That is why nodosas are so easy to grow in Florida, particularly in the south since they are so heat tolerant, they can stay outside year round. *B. nodosa*s are vigorous growers, free blooming with long lasting flowers. He showed a slide of his *Bct. Empress Worsley 'Roman Holiday'* that has bloomed seven times this past year. The *nodosa* flowers last from 4-6 weeks and are always very

fragrant which is why so many people like to have at least one plant in their collection.

The *B. nodosa's* characteristics are pencil shaped leaves that grow in clumps with short rhizomes and multiple new growths. Their natural growing environment is trees, rocks and cliffs. They like bright light and high humidity with frequent rain. He has found that they grow best mounted on or in a medium that drains well. Dry them out between waterings. The brighter the light one provides them, the more red spotting you may get on the leaves. This is a sign that your plant is receiving plenty of light to provide you with lots of flowers. The flowers are heart shaped and grow up to 6" across. They are either white, green or pale yellow and the flower's color is determined by the color of the sepals. Even though the *Brassavola* interbreed with other members of the *Cattleya* alliance with lots of different colors, there are no blues hybrids. Another well-known feature is the fragrance of the flower that helps attract the nighttime pollinators. One moth is reputed to smell the fragrance up to 2 miles away though Vern has no idea how that fact was calculated. He ended by showing us slides of crossing various species/hybrids and the differing results.

**Meeting Conclusion.** Harry McElroy announced the Member's Choice Award as Linda Stewart's *Bulb. maximum*. Susan Smith and Linda Powell conducted the raffle. Many thanks to all the helpful hands that stayed to reset the tables and chairs and clean up the room.



Thanks to Watson Realty and Jeanette Smith for the use of their meeting space at 3505 US 1 South



# CLUB NEWS



## April Picnic and Orchid Swap

We had our third annual picnic and orchid swap at the Memorial Lutheran Church. About 30 members came to the picnic, despite the rainy weather forecast and other scheduled gardening events. Our Events Veep Dianne Batchelder organized the event, and made sure there were plenty of hamburgers and hotdogs for Bob Schimmel and Drake Batchelder to grill. Members brought the accompaniments, incredible salads, chips, iced tea and luscious desserts. We knew it was 5 o'clock somewhere, so we enjoyed our favorite toddies with our orchid buddies. We had orchids and other plants to trade, and cash worked too! There were lots of smiles and laughter at the picnic amidst the raindrops; a great time was had by all.

## Want to Hire Some Professional Help?

Steve Hawkins,

[The Orchid Specialist](#)

Steve Hawkins, the Orchid Specialist, is offering a fee based service for orchid repotting and consultations in your home. Steve operated a commercial nursery in Apopka for many years and recently relocated to our area and joined the St. Aug Orchid Society. For details, visit [orchidspecialist.com](http://orchidspecialist.com) or call Steve Hawkins at 321-279-3003 (afternoons).

## American Orchid Society Corner

### Upcoming Webinars:

May 8, 8:30-9:30 pm, Members Only

[Green with Envy](#), Ron Midgett

May 16, 8:30-9:30 pm, Everyone Invited

[Greenhouse Chat Orchid, Q&A](#) - Ron McHatton

### [Photos of Latest AOS Awards](#)

*Orchids Magazine*: [request free issue!](#)

Genus of the Month: Rhynchostele

Cypripediums: the parviflorum Complex

Paphiopedilum sanderianum

Den. biggibum: Hybrids with Section Latouria

For the Novice: Citric Acid for Water

## Keiki Club – Summer Vacation

We scheduled monthly Keiki Club meetings during the spring after our orchids roused from their winter rest. We talked about watering, fertilizing, repotting, and other growing issues. We finished up with the Picnic and Orchid Swap in April. Now it is time for our summer vacation. Keep watering and fertilizing your plants and watch for pest and disease issues. SAOS members will be available at the repotting clinics at Ace Hardware on the first Saturday of the month all summer long if you have any questions or problems. The Keiki Club will reconvene in October for a talk about fall preparations and the winter cold hardiness of different types of orchids. We'll have field trip opportunities to the Gainesville Orchid Society Show and EFG Orchoberfest. Then it will be time for our orchids to rest while we celebrate the holidays!



## June 5 Monthly SAOS Meeting

### Mounting Orchids

George 'The Toolman' Hausermann will give a program on mounting orchids, with some hands-on demonstrations on how to do it. George operates EFG Orchids in DeLand that focuses on orchids and other tropicals. He holds workshops throughout the year on orchid grower basics and mounting orchids and throws an Orchoberfest party at the nursery every year.

Bring your flowering orchids to exhibit on the Show Table. We will have our normal raffle at the end of the meeting. Friends and guests are always welcome!





# INSPIRATION

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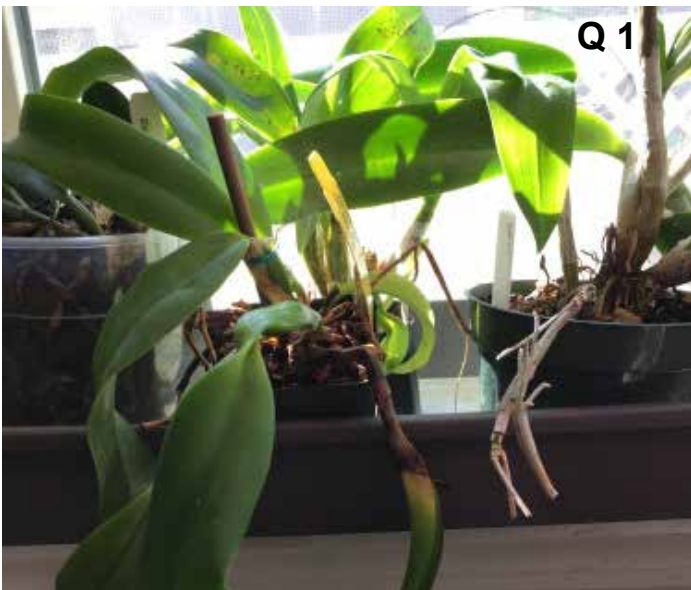
# CULTIVATION



## Orchid Questions & Answers

by Sue Bottom,  
sbottom15@gmail.com

**Q1.** Ugh, another one today. The stem gets very dark and bends. This one feels dry and dead at the bend but others have been mushy. I'd like to save it. If you have no other ideas I will unpot, treat with Banrot and mount.



**A1.** What you have is black and it is rot, but it is not the dreaded black rot caused by the water molds *Pythium* and *Phytophthora*. You have a situation where the papery sheath around the pseudobulb was pocketing water and the water sitting in this pocket was invaded by the bacteria omnipresent in the environment that attacked the tissue and rotted it. When you have that tissue pocketing, it is a recipe for disaster, so you have to watch and peel it down so it cannot hold water. Then, the problem never arises. Alternatively, you could pour hydrogen peroxide in all these little water pockets, but it's a lot easier to just peel that tissue down so water cannot pocket.

**Q2.** My friend sent me a picture of a phal that looks water logged. It currently has buds on it, but she said the leaves were soggy.

**A2.** Your friend's phal is probably history. It looks like it has the fast moving bacterial soft rot caused by *Erwinia* and it looks like it has infected the entire plant. Even with



the blooms, she should discard it to make sure the bacteria doesn't spread to other plants.

**Q3.** I bought this *L. tenebrosa* a couple weeks ago. The seller told me the yellow leaf on the old pseudobulb was just from being exposed to more light and it would "green up" if I put it in less light. It has not. Mostly I would just like to rule out a disease. The newer pseudobulbs look pretty good.



**A3.** I hope you misunderstood the vendor. If the issue was too much light, all the leaves would have had that yellowish cast and of course it is only the oldest growth that has the yellowing leaf. I suspect your plant was not fed enough magnesium and is robbing the older leaf of magnesium to supply the new growth. The yellow leaf will ultimately die and drop off. Our water tends to be very magnesium deficient, so add Epsom salts when you fertilize at the same rate that you are applying the fertilizer.





# CULTIVATION



## Layering Plants

Courtney's Orchid Growing Tips

Most orchid hobbyists can't resist a novel hybrid or really odd species. That is why we are all "out of space". Even so, we still bring home a new orchid whenever we visit an orchid nursery or orchid show. "Space, is the final frontier" for most of us. What makes growing

orchids difficult is the fact that different orchids require different growing conditions and we want to grow them all.

Those growing inside, either under lights or on windowsills, are generally used to orienting their orchids to the proper light levels. Orchids requiring high light, e.g., vandas, are placed close to the light, while phalaenopsis that prefer lower light levels are placed near the edge of the light table. There may be seasonal changes you initiate too, brought on by increasing day length or by changing light bulbs to coincide with spring. It's important to remember that the intensity of desirable wavelengths generated by grow lights decreases as bulbs age, so it is necessary to replace bulbs long before they stop working.

In greenhouses the location of orchids is important too. Besides changes in day length, the sun changes both in intensity and orientation. A perfect location for your bulbophyllums in winter may be too bright in spring and summer. This is the time of year where it may be necessary to revisit the location of some orchids.

In my new greenhouse, there are two areas where the change in season has necessitated moving some orchids. What were once cool, shady spots are now very bright.

Because space is at a premium in most greenhouses, there are many hanging plants in my greenhouse oriented in layers. Visitors are often surprised to find phalaenopsis and bulbophyllums hanging high in the greenhouse. While they are hanging, they are shaded by vandas or other high light orchids. If you decide to try "layering" in either your greenhouse or indoor growing area be aware that there are other aspects of orchid growing you must consider.

Phalaenopsis hanging under vandas would stay too wet in the typical medium used for phalaenopsis, so my hanging phals are potted in coarse lava rock. Vandas and



phalaenopsis both love high humidity and heat, but differ in their preference for light and drying tolerance. Vanda roots prefer to grow exposed and be dry by day's end, while phalaenopsis roots prefer not to dry thoroughly each day. Thus, my vandas are grown without medium and the phals hanging below them are in well-drained clay pots with lava rock. Both are watered most bright days and dry by the end of each day to an appropriate level for the individual plants.

There are also some high-light areas in the greenhouse where water is applied at infrequent intervals, especially in winter. Here, various encyclias and *C dowiana var aurea* hang in pots along with certain cattleya species that prefer to be kept on the dry side. Phalaenopsis and bulbophyllums hanging below these plants would become too dry unless they were treated differently. It is not easy to water orchids hanging below other orchids, so here moisture-loving orchids are potted in a fine bark mix or sphagnum and grown in plastic pots, which keeps them moist between weekly watering.

My system works now because I have learned how to do it by trial and error. Many orchids suffered during the learning process. The key to successful layering is to learn which areas dry fastest and which tend to stay wet longer. To practice "layering" successfully you will also have to learn about the requirements of different orchids.

*Note: Dr. Courtney Hackney wrote a monthly column of his orchid growing tips for about 20 years; we are reprinting some you might have missed, this one from May 2009.*



# CULTIVATION

## The Alluring Lady of the Night

by Eudora Thomas Sabo

courtesy of the American Orchid Society



*Its free-flowering character and alluring evening fragrance make Brassavola nodosa popular with orchidists. The purple spots deep in the throat also contribute to interesting flower patterns in its hybrids. Shown above is the cultivar 'Saltz', HCC/AOS, grown by Mr. and Mrs. Edward S. Wright and photographed by Rose Tamez.*

THE USUAL comment when a visitor gets within several feet of *Brassavola nodosa* after twilight is, "Ummm. What a delicious fragrance!" To me, it is very similar to carnations. This fresh, alluring fragrance accounts for the orchid's common name — the Lady of the Night or *Dama de la Noche* in its native Central and South America.

Easily grown and flowered, *Brassavola nodosa* abounds on tree branches as well as on the sides of cliffs in its native habitat. Even though this species is considered almost a weed in its natural locales, most orchidists can't resist growing at least one clump in their collections.

*Brassavola nodosa* can bloom anytime. But when grown outside in South Florida, it usually is most floriferous during the summer months and throughout the autumn. Large specimen plants can be in flower off and on for five or six months out of the year.

*Brassavola* (abbreviated as B.) is a genus created by Scottish physician and botanist Robert Brown in 1813. He named the genus in honor of Antonio Musa Brassavola, a Venetian nobleman and botanist and Professor of Logic, Physics and Medicine at Ferrara, Italy.

The genus includes approximately 15 species. Among the better-known species, in addition to *Brassavola nodosa*, are *Brassavola acaulis*, *Brassavola cordata*, *Brassavola cucullata*, and *Brassavola tuberculata* (which also has been called *Brassavola fragrans* and *Brassavola perrinii*). Two Central American species, *Brassavola glauca* and *Brassavola digbyana*, are included in the genus *Rhyncholaelia* by some taxonomists because of their very

different looking plant and flower structure. *Brassavola digbyana* is an ancestor of most of the large, frilly-lipped *Brassocattleya* and *Brassolaeliocattleya* hybrids, such as *Brassocattleya Deesse*, *Brassocattleya Mount Hood*, and *Brassolaeliocattleya Norman's Bay*.

*Brassavola nodosa* produces fleshy but narrow, leathery leaves that are grooved on one side and are borne atop slender, stemlike pseudobulbs. These fleshy leaves replace the almost nonexistent pseudobulbs as water storage organs to help the plants through periods of drought in their native habitats.

The flowers range from greenish to yellowish to white. Although they are 2"-3 1/2" across, the flowers have very narrow sepals and petals, giving them a spidery appearance. The most striking part of the flower is the large, glistening white, heart-shaped lip. There may be light lilac coloring or maroon spotting in the narrow, tubular throat. This spotting pattern often becomes quite evident in hybrids made with this species.

### BASIC CULTURE

**Potting:** *Brassavola nodosa* can be grown in clay orchid pots, in slatted wooden baskets, in tree fern baskets, mounted on a tree fern or cork plaque, or attached to a tree branch or trunk in warmer areas.

For clay pots or wooden baskets, the growing medium that I prefer is approximately three parts tree fern fiber to one part old-fashioned chunk charcoal (not briquettes). The charcoal pieces should be 1/2"- 1" in size. When grown in a pot, don't divide *Brassavola nodosa* very often. Permit it to become a showy, crowded specimen plant.

If a slatted wooden basket is used, line it first with a square of screen so that smaller pieces of the potting medium won't slip through. Before placing the plant in a tree fern basket, first punch several holes in the bottom to allow good drainage.

If the plant outgrows a wooden or tree fern basket or if the basket deteriorates in time, the original container can be placed intact into a larger container. Fill in any empty spaces with additional potting medium. *Brassavola nodosa* also can be mounted on a plaque or attached to a tree branch by tying on with telephone cable wire or narrow strips of sheer nylon stockings. If the plant is attached to a tree in warm areas such as South Florida, on coldest nights secure a piece of cloth around the plant to protect it from wind and/or frost.

**Watering:** Frequency of watering depends on your growing conditions and on the season of the year. Generally, potted plants of *Brassavola nodosa* should be watered every second or third day during the hottest months and approximately twice a week at other times. However, plants grown on plaques or on trees with roots exposed should be watered more often. But when in doubt, don't water! It's better to under-water than to over-water.

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*Another reason Brassavola nodosa is so popular with orchid growers is because it can produce a spectacular specimen plant, such as the cultivar 'Aphrodite', CCM/AOS, grown by Loren Batchman*

**Fertilizing:** A simple program for the beginner could consist of the all-purpose 20-20-20 soluble fertilizer applied monthly, March through November, at a rate of one tablespoon to a gallon of water. You can feed the plant more often if the solution strength is diluted. From December through February, I recommend switching to a 10-30-20 analysis fertilizer. This promotes root growth rather than leaf growth. Tender new leaves may be damaged by overnight temperatures below 40°F. Plants grown on plaques or on trees should be fertilized more often because they're watered more often.

**Light:** As a rule, Brassavola nodosa thrives on approximately 50% sun during the hottest months and up to 75% during the rest of the year. It can take full sun in the early morning and late afternoon hours. This species soon expands into a large plant when given strong light. Brassavola nodosa also will flower under fluorescent lights.

**Pests and Diseases:** I have found Brassavola nodosa to be very resistant to harmful insects and diseases. I suggest that this plant be included in your regular spraying program. Generally, spray with an insecticide only when insects are noticed — certainly no more often than every two or three weeks. A fungicide can be applied monthly (more often during the rainy season). All spraying should be done in the early morning or the late afternoon to avoid the possible damaging effects of heat plus chemicals.

The cultural methods listed above have worked beautifully for me. However, each person's growing conditions are slightly different, so experiment. And keep accurate culture records. Brassavola nodosa is usually available from growers at their nurseries and at orchid shows and shopping mall exhibits. If you don't yet own the alluring Lady of the Night, buy several divisions in order to establish a specimen plant in a shorter length of time.

*This article appeared in the American Orchid Society Bulletin, now known as Orchids, in May 1988 (Vol. 57:5, pp 469-471).*

## What I Am Potting in These Days

by Harry McElroy, cymbiduman@msn.com

Both of my grandparents lived on 80-acre farms in Arkansas. The farms provided some income from cash crops but the life had one great advantage. The food on the table was plentiful and the quality was the best I have ever had the pleasure of eating. The one essential element for feeding the thriving family of eight was the vegetable garden. One of my grandmothers coined the phrase that applies to anyone attempting to grow any plant. "Success in gardening is directly proportional to the dirt under your fingernails".

Grandma's wise observation is so very applicable to the orchid grower/lover. You may grow a new orchid for a while in whatever potting material it came in – but in time the health the orchid will depend on repotting the plant in a media that matches your growing habit and the plant's needs. You will really need to get some dirt or potting media under your fingernails if you want to be a good grower.

My latest venture in potting media centers on "Cypress Mulch". Not "Cypress Blend" but "100% Cypress Mulch" mixed with my own concoction I call the other ingredients. My tests compared seedling cymbidiums of the same size from the same flasks in different media including Orchiata. My concoction gave at least equally good results and I believe better results than anything else I have tried.

**The Other Ingredients** - are a mix of the following:

2 parts Coconut Coir

2 parts Perlite (the coarser the better)

½ part Purely Organic Fertilizer

¼ part Granular Gypsum

¼ part Crushed Sea Shells (wash well before using or skip)

Mix all five ingredients well when dry then slowly moisten to fairly wet. Place in a dry place and let dry. The mix seems to ferment and gives off a little heat. Use after it dries.

**The Cypress Mulch** - The people who make the mulch seem to have a problem getting consistency in particle size. It may be that the grinder blades that makes the mulch gets dull as it is used and the result is that some bags may be coarse and some fairly fine. Select the bags carefully, most are transparent, and you can see how coarse or fine each bag is.

If you are doing Vandas, get a really coarse looking bag, Cattleyas a fairly coarse bag, Paphs, Phrags and Cymbidiums need as fine a bag as you can find. If you find coarse pieces in a bag that looked fine when you bought it, either put the big pieces aside and save for Cats or Vandas or put the big pieces in the bottom of the pot.

After opening the bag, use the mulch as quickly as

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possible. Store unused portions in a sealed container to prevent it from drying out and dry rotting.

**Local Sources of Materials** - I use a brand of cypress mulch called "Estate Mulch" which is 99% cypress. I buy it from Prestige Mulch located at 6330 Blanding Blvd, Jacksonville Florida 32244. Lately Lowes has a 100% cypress mulch in stock. It looks good but I have not used it.

Select Coco Nut Coir that has no salt, and no heavy metals. If you use salty coir then the procedures in this article will not work. I am using coconut coir from a hydroponic store Growers Choice South, 8535 Baymeadows Rd Ste 13, Jacksonville FL. (904) 647-7156. CANA Brand CHC is acceptable but Gypsum should be added to the mix. Complete COCO was better but only because it had Gypsum already added. Complete COCO is not available in Jacksonville anymore.

**Repotting** - The mulch packs into the pot better if it is wet when placed in the pot. I soak mine at least an hour before I use it. I place a wet five gallon bucket of mulch in one end of a concrete mixing pan and the prepared "Other Ingredients" in the other end (about 3 gal of other).

- When Potting Paphs and Phrags and Cymbidium seedlings I use a lot of the other ingredients and a lot less mulch. Paph, Phrag and seedling mix looks very dirty when it goes into the pot.

- Mature Cymbidiums, Cattleyas and Phalaenopsis get potted in dirty looking mix with larger chunks for the Cattleyas and Phalaenopsis.

It seems impossible to determine exact ratios of Mulch to Other Ingredients. What particle size you buy will determine the ratio but you will find that you can use the mix suggested here after you get the feel of how to mix it. How much you water and how much fertilizer you use should also be considered.

Remember, Cypress Mulch is made is made for flower beds – not orchid pots. You can use it for Orchids, I do. You need to learn to adjust to use it. It only takes a little Common Sense to make the adjustments. If you cannot make the adjustments then go on and pay \$35 for a Bag of Orchiata, I will stick to \$2 a bag Cypress Mulch. Both should grow fine.

Thinking of another of my grandmother's sage observations about growing Bermuda grass: "The secret to getting Bermuda grass is to get a small patch started in your garden then try to kill it with a garden hoe."



## Broken Clay Pots

by Sue Bottom, sbottom15@gmail.com

If you have a pot fetish, you understand. Once you have located a supply of those shallow, wide slatted orchid pots, driven halfway across the state to collect them, and then soaked, scrubbed and baked them, you get attached to them. You cannot bring yourself to take a hammer to them to extract an overgrown orchid, so you so soak and cut until the orchid is free of the pot. Of course, accidents happen and occasionally you end up breaking a pot. Never fear, you may be able to repurpose that broken pot.

**Potting Mix Scoops.** If you end up with the side broken out of the pot, it may work well as a potting mix scoop for use when you are blending up your mixes.

**Mounts.** If the pot breaks in half, you may have a perfect clay mount for your orchids. You can set the base of the plant on what was once the bottom of the pot so the orchid can attach to and climb up the side of the pot. You can easily hang the pot using a single wire hanger. Even if the pot is not broken, you can mount your orchids on an upside down pot. Either place it on your potting bench or use an S hook to hang the pot. Wrapping a little live Spanish moss around the roots helps maintain higher humidity. Of course, it does not take much time for a little Tillandsia usneoides to become a lot of Spanish moss.

**Oddly Growing Orchids.** It happens to all orchid growers; you find an orchid that has overgrown its pot and is now growing in several directions. You know you have to remove the plant from the pot, but how in the world are you going to get it to start growing upright in a pot? With one of your broken pots, you may be able to orient the confused new growth out of the broken part of the pot while the rest of the plant and its roots can be properly situated in the pot.



*Keep your broken pots, you will find a use for them.*

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# CULTIVATION

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Your broken clay pots can be used for so many more things than just drainage shards. Sterilize the broken pot the same way you would an intact pot, and then let your imagination guide you to new alternative uses.



*If all else fails, you may have a new scoop for blending up your potting mixes.*



*Keep your broken pots, you will find a use for them.*



*Broken clay pots or upside down pots can be used to mount orchids and the clay will not rot.*



*You may find just the perfect plant to fit into that broken pot.*





# ORCHID ADVENTURES



The Deep South Orchid Society's show in Savannah, though not as large as what I have been used to while living in South Florida, was certainly a beautiful selection of orchids of all varieties. With 10 exhibitors, including regional orchid societies, vendors and one Individual amateur grower (whose display rivaled any of the "big guys", the show portion of the event was really beautiful, with varieties of orchids I had not seen before.

The sale portion was a bit disappointing with only a handful of vendors (disappointing because of my S FL experience), but I was able to feed my addiction nicely anyway. And being in Savannah, it was a win-win situation indeed! *Copy & Photos by Glo MacDonald*





# SHOW TABLE



**Grower Marv Ragan**  
**Epc. Purple Martins**



**Grower Harry & Celia McElroy**  
**Cym. Bayaka Pendant**



**Grower Steve Hawkins**  
**Den. Chocolate Antlers**



**Grower Suzanne Susko**  
**Tolumnia guianensis var. aureorubrum (L)**  
**Tolumnia pulchella (R)**



**Grower Glo MacDonald**  
**Angraecum leonis**



**Grower Tom & Dottie Sullivan**  
**C. skinneri**



**Grower Harry & Celia McElroy**  
**C. skinneri var. alba 'Cherokee'**



# SHOW TABLE



**Grower Sue Bottom**  
*Dtps. Chia E Yenlin*



**Grower Linda Stewart**  
*Bulb. maximum*



**Grower Courtney Hackney**  
*C. mossiae var. coerulea 'Hackneau'*



**Grower Mary Ann Bell**  
*C. Hawaiian Wedding Song 'Virgin' HCC/AOS*



**Grower Jack Higgins**  
*Alcra. Mem. Khun Krairit 'Stargazer'*



**Grower Sue Bottom**  
*C. violacea var. flammea*

Link to all Pictures. <https://www.flickr.com/gp/44931404@N04/65DP6m>

