



MHOS NEWSLETTER

MHOS is an Affiliated Organization of the American Orchid Society

www.mhos.us.com

June 2011

Meetings

The Mid-Hudson Orchid Society meets the 2nd Sunday of each month at 1:30 pm at the Union Presbyterian Church at the corner of Balmville Road and Beech Street in Newburgh (Balmville), NY

Bring your blooming orchids for the show table.

2011 Meeting Dates

June 12 - Wayne Roberts of Robert's Flower Supply, speaking on cyripediums and native orchids that can be grown here in our northeast gardens.

July – no meeting

August – no meeting

September 11 – speaker Elle Ronis on Miltoniopsis

October 15 (Saturday) – Show and Sale

November 13 – speaker Connie Ballado of Ballado Orchids “Mounting Orchids and What Types”

December 11 – Pot Luck Holiday Dinner

Wayne Roberts on Cyripediums at June meeting – Members asked to Pre-Order Plants by June 9th

Wayne Roberts, owner of Roberts Flower Supply from Columbia Station, Ohio, will be speaking at our June meeting on cyripediums that are native to the United States, in addition to many Asian and other cyp hybrids. He will also be bringing plants for sale that are hardy in our New York gardens. Some cyps are in short supply so if you wish to purchase specific plants, please order them in advance by calling Wayne at 440-236-5571 or emailing him at rfs@orchidmix.com. A link to the list of plants he carries is on the MHOS website, on the Calendar page under the June 12th meeting information. Orders need to be received by Wayne no later than June 9th so he can bring them to the meeting.



Cypripedium Regina

Wayne Roberts has been growing orchids for over 36 years, and he and his wife, Nancy, started Roberts Flower Supply over 20 years ago. Wayne's interest in native species of orchids and lilies has been almost as long-lived, as he has been growing them for 30 years. Much of the information on growing these plants in the 70's and 80's was incorrect. He observed nature to determine how best to grow these plants, and with careful follow-up he has grown every North American cyp. His collection includes all the American cyps plus 15 other natives and over 20 hardy Asian orchids. He has grown hundreds from seed. Wayne believes the best way to protect the wild plants is to breed cyps for what we humans love in them, making the seed-grown selections more desirable than plants dug from the wild. This year for the first time some other non-cyp natives are also being offered as he strives to learn how to grow these also. He is a member of the Native Orchid Society and is passionate about conserving and propagating endangered native plants of all kinds, especially orchids. Every few years he leads a strenuous hike to a protected wildlife preserve for a magnificent viewing and photo session featuring hundreds of Cyp. Regina.

International Phalaenopsis Alliance Meeting Invitation

At our May meeting, speaker Carri Raven-Riemann, the OrchidPhile, invited MHOS members to the International Phalaenopsis Alliance (IPA) meeting, cohosted by the Northeastern New York Orchid Society, to be held in Balston Spa, NY on Sunday, September 11th. The program will begin at 8:30 am with featured speakers Norman Fang of Norman's Orchids, Carlos Fighetti, immediate Past President of the AOS, and Carri Raven-Riemann. After the IPA meeting, attendees are invited to drive a short distance to Glen Decker's Piping Rock Orchids for an open house and plant sales.

Please see the attached registration form for details. MHOS will not be chartering a bus for this event, but members are encouraged to carpool with one another. Deadline for registration and payment of the \$18 fee is September 2nd. If you are interested in carpooling, please notify Elisabeth Mansfield via email at Elisabeth@mansfieldcommercial.com or by phone at (845) 294-1000, and we will try to match up those who are interested.

Vote to be taken June 12th whether to cancel September MHOS meeting

The IPA meeting conflicts with our MHOS September 11th meeting. Since many members expressed interest in attending the IPA function, we will take a vote at the June meeting on whether the MHOS September 11th meeting should be cancelled. If cancelled, we will seek to reschedule Elle Ronis for 2012.

MHOS Officers & Volunteers 2011

President *

Elisabeth Mansfield
845-294-1000

Vice President *

Ruth Natras
845-343-2901

Membership Secretary *

Ruth Natras
845-343-2901

Corresponding Secretary *

Dennis Sandberg
914-954-7132

Program Secretary *

Carolyn Sanders
917-774-1018

Recording Secretary *

Lois Brennan
845-255-7931

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Bob Phillips
518-784-9403

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845-255-7931

Librarian

Ruth Natras
845-343-2901

Supplies

Carolyn Sanders
917-774-1018

Newsletter and Website

Elisabeth Mansfield
845-294-1000
Elisabeth@MansfieldCommercial.com

* MHOS Officers

Other positions
are volunteer

Here is this month's contribution by MHOS member **John J. Rashak**:



Sophronitis cernua

Cattleya is an orchid genus with a complex alliance of hybrids. Most fragrant species of orchids lose their scent in the hybridizing process. However, cattleyas are somewhat unique in retaining scent in most hybrids.

During most of the 1800s, cattleyas were bred to produce ever larger flowers, which were worn by fashionable ladies. The large flowers required staking to prevent the stems from bending. By the late 1800s, smaller flowers resulting from "sophronitis" crosses became popular because of their brighter colors.

There are thousands of cattleya hybrids with long names such as sophrolaeliocattleya and brassolaeliocattleya. This makes it easy to identify the underlying genera which, for these two hybrids, would be brassavola, laelia, sophronitis and cattleya. However, if either of the above hybrids had more than three genera involved, the name given to the hybrid is that of a single individual. For example, "potinara" is a hybrid resulting from crossing brassavola, laelia, sophronitis and cattleya.

Despite the complex alliance of cattleya hybrids, two distinct groups of species can be identified. One group is the unifoliate with a single leaf and the other group is the bifoliate with two leaves. Both groups are evergreens, although a rear leaf is shedded at times. The unifoliate are known for their large, beautiful blooms with frilly lips, while the bifoliate sometimes have waxy petals and sepals and generally have smaller, speckled flowers with less frilly lips. Bifoliate flowers, unlike unifoliate, sometimes have green and brown colors.

The pseudobulbs of cattleyas, often sheathed while young, are mostly elongated or club-shaped with stiff, dark green leaves. The flower buds come from the apex of the pseudobulb and are usually encased in a protective sheath. This sheath eventually dries and splits and the developing buds emerge, most of which produce their blooms on short spikes. However, hybrids containing the Mexican species called laelia, such as *L. anseps*, have longer flower spikes.



Potinara burana "Beauty"

MHOS Summer Break

Reminder: There is no meeting in July or August, so the next newsletter will be for the September meeting.

Have a great summer!

MHOS Classifieds

Downsizing Greenhouse. Greenhouse benches, orchids, and large aluminized greenhouse covers for sale. Located in New Paltz, Ulster County.

Contact John & Rita Rashak, (845) 256-3868
johnrashak@aol.com; ritarashak@aol.com.

A Couple of Cheap Tricks Smart Ideas for Growing Orchids More Efficiently

By Phil Jesup

Published in *Orchids* January 2011

My wife, Ann, should be writing this because the orchid culture innovations I'll be describing were both her ideas. However, as of this writing in late September 2010, I've finished processing my plants (ours is a "his and hers" collection) back into the greenhouse after their outdoor summer vacation, and she hasn't completed hers; therefore, only I have a bit of time on my hands.

STAYING UPRIGHT Have you ever become frustrated trying to stabilize a sympodial orchid (one with rhizomes) in a wood-slat basket, particularly if it doesn't have much in the way of roots? Metal pot clips, normally the solution to the "wobble," can be used only with pots. I used to tie the growths to the wire basket hanger with fishing line, but that involved more time and effort than it was worth, and often didn't do the job well enough to stabilize the plant. I had to pull it in several different directions with the ties, in effect a tug of war.

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Other Area Societies

1st Sunday

Central NY – Syracuse

www.cnyos.org

1st Sunday-1 pm

Northeastern PA – Lakeville

www.nepaorchidsociety.org

1st Tuesday – 7:30pm

Pinelands – Medford, NJ

pinelandsorchidsociety.org

1st Saturday

North Eastern New York –
Albany/Colonie, NY

www.nenyos.org

2nd Tuesday

Greater Westchester –
White Plains, NY

2nd Tuesday

Deep Cut – Tinton Falls, NJ

www.deepcutorchids.com

2nd Wednesday

Manhattan, NY

www.manhattanorchid.com

2nd Wednesday

Connecticut – Farmington or
Cheshire

www.ctorchids.org

2nd Thursday

North Jersey – East Hanover

www.njorchids.org

2nd Thursday

Long Island – Lynbrook

longislandorchidsociety.org

3rd Sunday

Western PA, Pittsburgh, PA

www.oswp.org

3rd Sunday

Southern Tier – Binghamton

www.storchidsociety.com

3rd Tuesday

Staten Island, NY

www.siosonline.com

3rd Wednesday

Matinecock - Oyster Bay, NY

3rd Wednesday

Greater NY – Bronx, NY

www.gnyos.org

3rd Thursday

Ramapo, NJ

www.ramapoorchid.org

4th Tuesday

Jersey Highlands - Augusta, NJ

jheydel@optonline.net

Check for date changes. Many
do not meet in July or August.

...Cheap Tricks

(Continued from page 2)

The solution devised by Ann: insert one or more bamboo shish kebab sticks (about \$1.99 for a package of many sticks at a supermarket) between the top two slats of the basket, running the stick over the rhizome and pressing it firmly against the medium. The ends of the sticks may protrude in unsightly fashion, but can be clipped off flush with the basket. By the time the stick has rotted, the plant is usually well-established and rooted in and on the basket. We've been doing this for some years now, and found it fail-safe.

MOISTURE RETENTION A few years ago, we purchased a roll of ½" (1.25 cm) thick rug padding. Normally used under rugs in one's home, our purpose was to spread it on the wire and wood-frame greenhouse benches to divert the dry heat rising in the winter from the finned tubing under the benches. It was porous, but stayed damp for awhile after watering, and therefore was an aid to keeping up the humidity as well. After awhile, we noticed that, in some cases, roots had ventured through the pot drainage holes and traveled through and into the padding so that when one picked up a pot it was attached to the pad. That gave Ann the idea of using a small swatch of padding tied just below mounted plants to provide more moisture to exposed roots. In the past, we had used a pad of sphagnum moss, but it tended to dry too fast and ultimately disintegrate. The padding was inorganic, and seemed to remain moist a little longer.

It worked. The first plant Ann experimented with, an *Encyclia candollei*, was long established on cork; after two years with its rug padding it needs watering less often, and has produced noticeably longer and more heavily branched inflorescences. New roots grew under, through, into, out of and back into the padding with abandon. And roots, to us, are often more exciting than flowers. We have subsequently used this technique on other mounted orchids of all sorts, with excellent results.

Despite my misgivings, Ann then began experimenting with using tightly packed rug padding shards as a potting medium in relatively small (so far) clay pots. The shards are inserted vertically, as were chunks of osmunda fiber in the old days. So far, so good – the roots seem to benefit from it, and because it is inorganic, it does not rot. Nevertheless, as with any potting medium, it seems wise to repot such plants periodically to prevent salt buildup.

We're now lining baskets with padding so that standard mixes don't fall through, and the latest trick is to use chunks of it as the medium itself in baskets.

Clearly the cost isn't as cheap as shish kebab sticks, because you have to buy a rug-sized roll, but perhaps one could cadge a free supply of scraps from retail rug sellers, not an illogical concept. A 6 x 9-foot (1.8 x 2.7-m) roll costs 61 cents a foot locally, which is about \$32 per roll. The padding is easy to cut with scissors, or you can simply pull off pieces or little chunks; it tears readily. Some padding has a backing on one side of a network of thin plastic film, and if so it's easily removed before use with orchids. Another trick of this new trade: the padding is manufactured of a conglomerate of rather garish mottled colors, but if you spread it out in strong sunshine for about three days, it bleaches to an acceptable greenish background color; if you don't bleach it before use, algae will eventually do the same job.

While the padding appears extremely useful, we're not going whole hog yet, particularly with using it as a potting mix. It always pays to take it slow and experiment over time.

Events in the Northeast

June 4th – NENYOS Event at Piping Rock Orchids, Galway, NY. Tom Hoodack, (518) 753-6614 thoodack@nycap.rr.com (Had requested RSVP by 5/13. Please – no calls after 9pm!)

June 10th to 12th – Shore Orchid Festival, Silva Orchids, 635 Wayside Rd., Neptune, NJ.
Contact: (732) 922-2635; basilva@optonline.net; www.silvaorchids.com

September 10th – International Phalaenopsis Alliance “Focus on Phals” Days, Bedford, New Hampshire. Contact: Adrienne Giovino, (781) 326-8921, ipa.adrienne@gmail.com

September 11th – International Phalaenopsis Alliance “Focus on Phals” Days, Ballston Spa, NY. Contact: Adrienne Giovino, (781) 326-8921, ipa.adrienne@gmail.com

Orchid events around the country can be found in the AOS magazine *Orchids* or on the AOS website at www.aos.org/aos/events. Check before traveling to see if there may be a local orchid event at your destination. For Hudson Valley gardening events, see www.HVgardencalendar.com.

AOS Judging

The Northeast Judging Center holds two monthly orchid judging sessions:

1st Saturday of each month at Tower Hill Botanic Garden, Boylston, MA. New contact for directions: Robert Winkley (617) 282-7351.

3rd Saturday of each month at Hampton Inn, 200 Tarrytown-White Plains Rd (Rt. 119), Elmsford, NY (at I-287, exit 1). Slides or presentations at 10am, judging begins around 12pm; bring your lunch.

For further information, contact Rita Cohen at 516-374-6426 or orchart@optonline.net

Supplies

If you would like supplies brought to an MHOS meeting, please call Carolyn Sanders before Friday preceding the meeting at 917-774-1018.

For a list of supplies and prices, refer to the Members section of our web site:

www.mhos.us.com/supplies.html.

Supplies purchased through MHOS are at very reasonable prices.

Mid-Hudson Orchid Society

6624 Goshen, NY 10914
218 Greenwich Avenue
c/o Elisabeth Mansfield



Directions to AOS Judging at the Hampton Inn in Elmsford

FROM ORANGE, ULSTER COUNTIES, NEWBURGH, KINGSTON:

South on the NYS Thruway, to I-287 East (toward White Plains), go over the Tappan Zee Bridge. Continue on Thruway to second exit: Exit 8 – Cross Westchester Expressway (Route 287 East). Take 287 East to first exit on your right – Exit 1. Take the fork on your right to Elmsford. At the end of the ramp, turn right on Route 119. Hampton Inn is on your left.

FROM NORTHERN WESTCHESTER, PUTNAM, DUTCHESS COUNTIES: South on I-684, to Cross Westchester Expressway Route I-287 West. Stay on 287 West to Exit 1, make left turn at light – Hampton Inn is a short distance on right. OR South on Taconic Parkway to South/West Sawmill to I-287 West to Exit 1, make left turn at light – Hampton Inn is a short distance on right. OR South on Route 9 to 9A to Route 119 Elmsford, NY, turn right on Route 119, go about 2-3 long blocks. See Hampton Inn on left.