



# MHOS NEWSLETTER

[www.mhos.us.com](http://www.mhos.us.com)

May 2010

## Meetings

The Mid-Hudson Orchid Society meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

## 2010 Meeting Dates

**May 2** (meeting changed due to Mothers Day)

**June 13**

**July** Æ no meeting

**August** Æ no meeting

**September 12**

**October 16 (Saturday)**  
Æ Fall Show and Sale

**November 14**

**December 12** Æ Pot Luck  
Holiday Dinner

## Next MHOS Meeting is May 2<sup>nd</sup>

Remember that our May meeting is on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, the first Sunday of the month, to avoid a conflict with Mother's Day.

*Here is a new article by MHOS member and journalist Deborah Medenbach*

## Orchids in time

Orchids and men's health seem to be woven together through history. The earliest written accounts about orchids come from the Chinese Emperor Sheng Nung, who wrote about the medicinal uses of Dendrobiums. Confucius, around 500 BC, was so entranced by the scent of a cymbidium orchid that he wrote about its perfume. When cymbidiums made their way to Japan, it was with the legend that the barren wife of an emperor gave birth to 13 children after deeply inhaling its scent.

The name "orchid" is rooted in the Greek word "orchis" which means "testicle." The legend of Orchis is about the son of a satyr and a nymph whose unbridled lust after a temple priestess during a Bacchanal brings him to a bad end. The Fates condemn Orchis to be torn apart by wild beasts, but where he was slain, a delicate flower grew, with root tubers that bore a striking resemblance to the generative organs of his undoing.

Paphiopedilum orchids are named for the Greek island of Paphos, the birthplace of Aphrodite, goddess of love and beauty.

Romans did not miss out on the mystique of orchids. Writer Pliny the Elder frequently referred to the playful sexuality associated with the orchids of the plains around Rome and their role in fertility.

The Aztec legend of vanilla orchids strongly mirrors the Greek fable, with a virgin priestess who is lured away from her devotion to the fertility goddess Tonacayohua by a handsome prince. The lovers are killed and where they died, a vanilla orchid grew. The sweet scent of the flowers and seed pods caused the village elders to declare the plant sacred of the cult of love.

The Doctrine of Signatures of the 1600s continued the orchid's association with male reproductive organs, indicating that parts of the body could be healed by plants that resembled them.

Orchids were introduced to Europe in the late 1700s and took hold with wealthy British and Dutch collectors, starting decades of tropical plant raid expeditions to bring home more and more exotic varieties, driving some into extinction through overharvesting.

The Duke of Devonshire's blooming oncidium orchids in 1823 captured popular imagination when it was discovered that insects did not come to merely sip the flower's nectar. The butterflies attempted to mate with the blossoms, futile for breeding, but perfect for flower pollination.



*Chinese cymbidiums are prized for their fragrant blooms and graceful foliage.*

*(continued on next page)*

## MHOS Officers & Volunteers 2010

### President

Dennis Sandberg  
914-954-7132

### Vice President

Ruth Nattras  
845-343-2901

### Membership Secretary

Ruth Nattras  
845-343-2901

### Corresponding Secretary

Holly Read  
845-855-1842

### Program Secretary

Carolyn Sanders  
917-774-1018

### Recording Secretary

Lois Brennan  
845-255-7931

### Treasurer

Bob Phillips  
518-784-9403

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Lois Brennan  
845-255-7931

### Librarian

Ruth Nattras  
845-343-2901

### Supplies

Carolyn Sanders  
917-774-1018

### Newsletter and Website

Elisabeth Mansfield  
845-294-1000  
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Here is this month's contribution by MHOS member **John J. Rashak**:

On most flowers, the reproductive parts are called the stigma and the stamens. The latter contain the pollen, which get to the stigma with the help of insects or wind. The pollen fertilize the seed embryos which are found behind the flower. However, in orchids, the pollen is a solid mass and the reproductive parts are called the stigma and the pollinia. Some orchids, such as the *Catasetum* and *Cycnoches* species, produce separate flowers that contain only male or female organs.



*Catasetum pileatum*

When *catasetums* were initially introduced, plants with different flowers were identified as different species. However, as knowledge of this genus increased, scientists realized that *catasetums* could produce only female flowers one year and switch to producing only male flowers the following year. Furthermore, on rare occasions, a *catasetum* could produce male and female flowers on separate spikes at the same time.

Depending on the genus of an orchid, there may be two, four or six pollen masses, with each mass containing millions of microscopic pollen grains. Each pollen mass is hidden beneath a protective cap called the anther, which keeps the pollen fresh. When an insect visits a *catasetum* or a *cycnoches*, for example, it triggers a pollen-releasing mechanism. The pollen

The world of orchids has unending surprises. For example, an orchid with an uneven number of chromosomes can be transformed to one with an even number by treating that orchid at an early stage of life with an extract from the crocus plant called colchicine. The new chromosome count will appear in both seed- and tissue-cultured orchids. However, success in this endeavor requires laboratory experience in handling minute amounts of plant material. Currently, mericlone, a scientific method of mass-producing one clone to produce identical plants, has replaced seed-raising as the most popular commercial method of reproducing orchids.

## Orchids in Time (continued)

by Deborah Medenbach

Charles Darwin was mocked by his peers when he suggested in 1862 that there must exist a moth with a 12-inch long tongue to sip the nectar of a night blooming orchid from Madagascar with a long nectar pouch. It took 150 years for researchers to confirm his theory with the discovery of the Madagascar Comet Moth and its behavior with Darwin's orchid.

The Rothschild family of European financiers did much to advance the scientific study of orchids and probably equally as much to plunder fragile orchid habitats. Since the special methods of pollinating and seeding orchids were not understood in the 19th century, horticulturists could not readily grow them. An industry of adventurers rose up, whose whole careers were spent collecting specimens from the exotic locations around the globe. Baron Edmond de Rothschild of France employed 300 men to manage the extensive orchid plantation with which he decorated his estates and carriages. Ferdinand de Rothschild is the Austrian family member the famed Rothschild orchids are named after. Walter Rothschild is the orchid lover of the 1890s who purchased epiphytic dendrobiums that were found in a New Guinea cemetery, growing on the skulls of shallowly interred villagers. Rothschild bought the plants, still attached to the skulls, for his collection.

The environmental salvation of orchid habitats came in 1922 with American biologist Lewis Knudson's discovery of a sterile seed germinating formula and growing technique that is still used today for hybrid orchid plants. Cloning methods developed in the 1960s brought cheap, uniform orchid varieties to the home market. The orchid was now within reach of the average plant hobbyist.

## Other Area Societies

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday

Central NY Ę Syracuse  
[www.cnyos.org](http://www.cnyos.org)

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday-1 pm

Northeastern Pennsylvania  
 Society Ę Lakeville, PA

1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday Ę 7:30pm

Pinelands Orchid Society Ę  
 Medford, NJ  
[pinelandsorchidsociety.org](http://pinelandsorchidsociety.org)

1<sup>st</sup> Saturday

North Eastern New York Ę  
 Albany/Colonie, NY  
[www.nenyos.org](http://www.nenyos.org)

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday

Greater Westchester Ę  
 White Plains, NY

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday

Deep Cut Ę Tinton Falls, NJ  
<http://deepcutorchids.googlepages.com/>

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday

Manhattan, NY  
[www.manhattanorchid.com](http://www.manhattanorchid.com)

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday

Connecticut Ę Hartford or  
 New Haven  
[www.ctorchids.org](http://www.ctorchids.org)

2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday

North Jersey Ę East Hanover  
[www.njorchids.org](http://www.njorchids.org)

2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday

Long Island Ę Valley Stream

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday

Southern Tier Ę  
 Binghamton, NY  
[www.storchidsociety.com](http://www.storchidsociety.com)

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday

Staten Island, NY

3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday

Matinecock - Oyster Bay, NY

3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday

Greater NY Ę Bronx, NY  
[www.gnyos.org](http://www.gnyos.org)

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday

Ramapo, NJ  
[www.ramapoorchid.org](http://www.ramapoorchid.org)

Announcing the first annual  
**SHORE ORCHID  
 FESTIVAL**

Friday, July 23 - Sunday, July 25, 2010 • 10:00a.m. - 5:00p.m.

Held at Silva Orchids

*Guests:*

Andy's Orchids	Main Street Orchids
Arcadia Glass House	Oakhill Gardens
Blue Moon Pottery	Orchid Phile
Brennan Orchids	Parkside Orchids
Cal-Orchid	Piping Rock
Canaima Orchids	Silva Orchids
Celebrate Orchids	Stony Brook Orchids
Fishing Creek Orchids	Suwada Orchid Nursery
J & I Orchids	Waldor Orchids
Just Pat Orchids	Woodstream Orchids
Little Brook Orchids	

**Food Vendors:** Allenwood General Store  
 Pierre Chocolates & Ice Cream

Free orchid workshops on Saturday & Sunday for beginners & experienced growers  
 Great food on site • Free admission • Free parking • Rain or shine • All activities tented

635 Wayside Road • Neptune, NJ • 732-922-2635 • Easy access from major highways  
 Visit our web site for more information [www.silvaorchids.com](http://www.silvaorchids.com)

*Come for a day or enjoy a "Jersey Shore Weekend"*



## INTERNATIONAL PHALAENOPSIS ALLIANCE

### 2010 SPRING FOCUS ON PHALS DAY

Saturday, May 22, 2010

A&P Orchid Nursery  
 110 Peters Road  
 Swansea, MA 02777  
 (508) 675-1717  
[www.aandporchids.com](http://www.aandporchids.com)

Registration, by mail or phone, is extremely important. Contact NY Regional Rep Marilyn Shapiro at [mlshap2@juno.com](mailto:mlshap2@juno.com) or 212-831-3076

Additional information is available on the IPA Website at [www.phal.org](http://www.phal.org)

## Orchid Items for Sale

Al Rutel, a longtime orchid friend of GNYOS and MHOS, has many orchid items available for sale: books, orchid magazines, greenhouse accessories, outdoor furniture, garden sculptures including Buddhas. Everything must go.

Call Al at 914-949-4335 (he is located in White Plains, NY).

## Events in the Northeast

**April 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> Ę Southern Tier Orchid Society Show**, Oakdale Mall Center Court, Reynolds Rd & Harry L Dr, Johnson City, NY. Dee Janis (607) 217-5889 [deejanis@yahoo.com](mailto:deejanis@yahoo.com).

**May 1<sup>st</sup> Ę Deep Cut Orchid Society Plant Sale**, St. Mary's Church, Rt 34 & Phalanx Rd, Colts Neck, NJ. For info: [deepcutorchids@gmail.com](mailto:deepcutorchids@gmail.com)

**May 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Ę Staten Island Orchid Society Fest**, Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden, Staten Island, NY. Patrick Cammarano (718) 948-6439; [murudy@aol.com](mailto:murudy@aol.com).

**May 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Ę Central Pennsylvania Orchid Society Show**, Ag Arena, Penn State Campus, State College, PA. Cathy Riemer (814) 353-8741.

**May 8<sup>th</sup> Ę Northeast Judging Center Symposium**, St. Andrews Episcopal Church, 232 Durham Rd., Madison, CT. Robert Winkley (617) 282-7351, [rwinkley@aol.com](mailto:rwinkley@aol.com).

**May 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> Ę Orchid Society of Northwestern Pennsylvania Show**, JMC Arena, 423 W. 38th St., Erie, PA. Marion Morton (814) 838-2522.

**May 22<sup>nd</sup> Ę "Exploring Native Flora with Uli Lorimer"**, Glynwood, Cold Spring, NY. Anita Barber (845) 265-3338, [www.glynwood.org](http://www.glynwood.org)

These events and others around the country can be found online at: [www.aos.org/aos/events](http://www.aos.org/aos/events) courtesy of the AOS. Check this website before traveling to see if there may be a local orchid event at your destination. Everything published in *Orchids* magazine is also on the web page.

## **AOS Judging**

The Northeast Judging Center holds two monthly orchid judging sessions:

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

**3<sup>rd</sup> 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](mailto: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, refer to the Members section of our web site. Supplies purchased through MHOS are at very reasonable prices, with no shipping charges. For prices, check with Carolyn or see the MHOS website at [www.mhos.us.com/supplies.html](http://www.mhos.us.com/supplies.html).



Goshen, NY 10924  
218 Greenwich Avenue  
c/o Elisabeth Mansfield  
**Mid-Hudson Orchid Society**

### **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 E Cross Westchester Expressway (Route 287 East). Take 287 East to first exit on your right E 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 E 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 E 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.