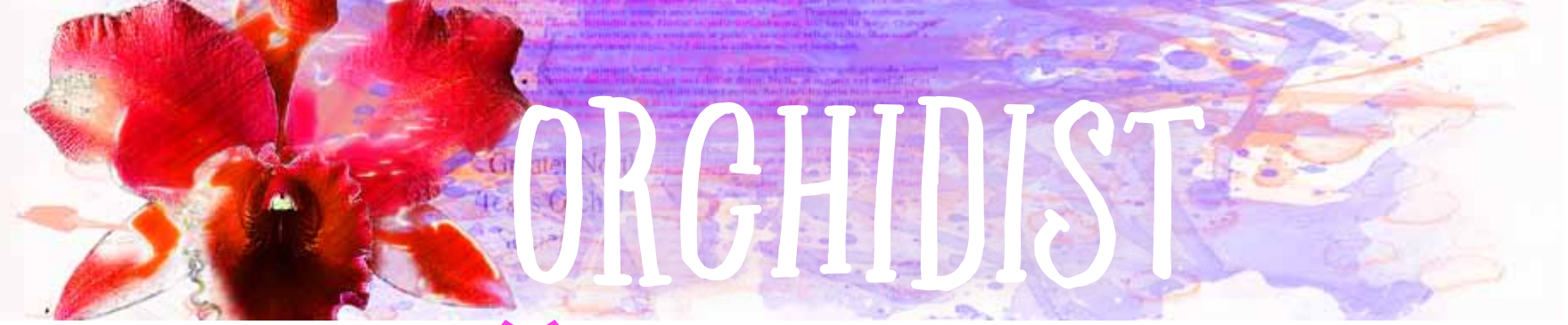


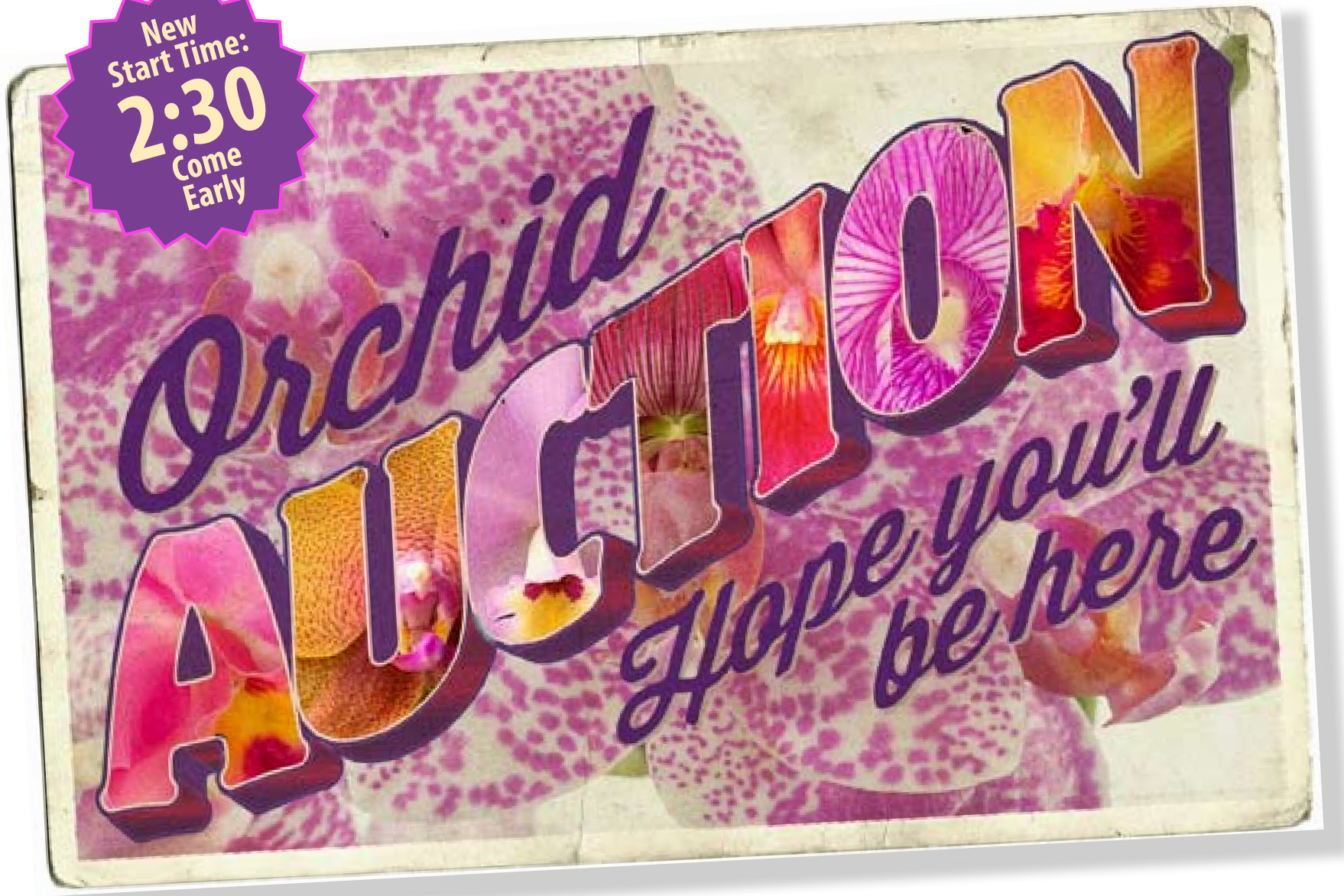
# ORCHIDIST

GREATER NORTH TEXAS
ORCHID
SOCIETY

JUNE

Next Meeting:
**June 4th**

New Start Time: 2:30 Come Early




This month we well have our Semiannual Auction. There isn't a speaker or plant judging, just bidding on plants and eating food. Bring finger food or the dessert of your choice to share.

Please bring plants or divisions for the auction, as well as collectibles or any orchid related item.

This is the event that we do to raise funds for the society, so bring your bidding spirit and get ready to bid to help support the GNTOS.

# OFFICERS

**PRESIDENT**
*Judy Cook*

**VICE PRESIDENT**
*Barbara McNamee*

**SECRETARY**
*Kathi McKenzie*

**TREASURER**
*Kathy Halverson*

**SWROGA DIRECTORS**
*Brandenburgs*

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR**
*David Gould*

**GNTOS WEBMASTER**
*Manuel Aybar*

**PAST PRESIDENT**
*Mike Beber*

# PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

What a great meeting we had in May. Probably the first thing to discuss is that we WILL go back to being able to have our meeting a bit earlier, which will give us a bit more relaxed schedule. We will now have our meetings from 2:30 – 4:30 with Orchids 101 at 2:00. The June meeting will be our semi-annual plant auction with Charlie Hess as our intrepid auctioneer. We will NOT have Orchids 101 at that meeting and it will be a pot luck meal with everyone bringing something to share. We also will NOT do 'show and tell', as you wouldn't want one of your beautiful plants to 'accidentally' get auctioned off! Please be generous both in bringing plants to share and in your bidding, as these monies go to help support the society in issues like expenses for speakers, awards for the plant table, securing space for our orchid shows and many other routine expenses. It is also a GREAT way to enhance your collection and get rid of some of those duplicate plants that you have.

We have also clarified that our next Orchid Show will be the second weekend in March. At this point we are not sure whether it will be just Friday and Saturday, or whether we might be able to get Sunday as well. Manny Aybar (who will be making more appearances at the meetings) will chair the show and Linda Horton will assist him. Vinh has also volunteered in order to learn how to run shows for in the future. All of you start thinking about what part you would want to play in helping with the show. It doesn't take a village, but it does take the whole society to really make it work, and it really is a fun process. I still love going to orchid shows after about 35 years of attending them and helping with them.

Our meeting had an abundance of beautiful flowers – enough for a show display to be sure – so thrilled to see how well so many of you are doing with your plants.

Tim Carr's presentation on his two judging trips to Columbia was filled with beautiful photos of a lot of plants we rarely see here, and some engaging tales about his adventures. Having gone to one in Medellin a few years ago, and some shows in Ecuador, I strongly encourage anyone who can to go and see plants in their native environment and how well they grow and learn more about them. You will see things you have never seen before, and see specimen plants of things we are lucky to grow in a 5 inch pot here! Our hosts in other countries, and especially Ecuador, have always been warm, gracious, welcoming, and eager to show off not only their flowers, but their country. Keep in mind that the *World Orchid Conference* will occur in Guayaquil, Ecuador November 8 – 12, and if you get there a day early you can also watch things being set up – an amazing adventure all by itself.


In July we will have a panel for a Q & A session, so please prepare to either volunteer for the Panel or come with questions you want to ask about growing, showing, judging, or anything else you may have about this wonderful, diverse, exciting cadre of plants.

Regards, Judy

New Start Time: 2:30 Come Early

# ORCHIDS 101

*Kathi McKenzie*
*& Lorna Kissling*

Orchids 101 classes are tailored to the beginning orchid grower. It will be an informal discussion so come and bring your questions.

This month, because of the auction there is no Orchids 101. It returns in July.

# MINUTES

*Kathi McKenzie*

Judy started the meeting at 3:00 p.m. with 32 people in attendance, including several visitors. Our speaker was Tim Carr, who presented a program on international orchid shows. Thanks Tim for an excellent program and some gorgeous, gorgeous images!

A vote was held regarding moving the summer Auction to June. This passed; the auction will be in June. In addition, members voted to move the meeting time to 2:30, pending agreement by North Haven Gardens. Next step will be to obtain their approval.

Judy announced that our 2018 show will be in March, and that we need a show chair, and if possible a "chair in training" to assist the chair. Nancy announced the plant table winners – we had many plants this month, and a beautiful display. Judy conducted the plant raffle. The meeting was adjourned at 4:40.

V. Mem. Ardith Mauger

# PLANT TABLE

*Nancy Cropp*

May 7, 2017, Plant Table Judging Results

Judges: Rhonda Whitson
& M. Forest Shipps

**CATTLEYA ALLIANCE** (15 entries)
Blue – Laelia purpurata vinicolor – Kathy Halverson
Red – C. Apache Sunrise (Apache Gold x B. nodosa) – Judy Cook
White – C. Barbantiae 'Seagull' – Gerry Darver

**DENDROBIUMS & OTHERS** (12 entries)
Blue – Bulb. falcatum 'Standing Tall' AM/AOS – Linda Horton
Red – Max. tenufolium – Mike Beber
White – Mystacidium braybonae – Barb McNamee

**ONCIDIUMS** (8 entries)
Blue – Miltoniopsis unknown – Kathy Halverson
Red – Brassia Rex – Judy Cook
White – Catatante 'Pumpkin Patch' – Kathi McKenzie

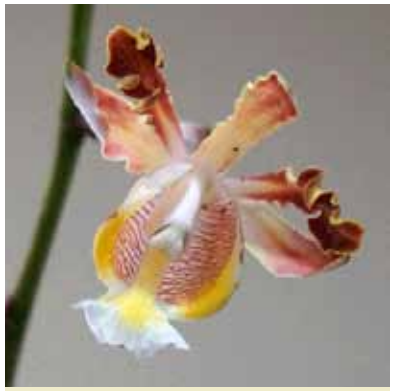
**PAPHS & PHRAGS** (10 entries)
Blue – Phrag. Bel Croute – Linda Horton
Red – Paph. (Liemianum 'Compact' x Johanna Burkhart '15–3') – Vinh Du
White – Paph. Magically Wood (Magic Pops x Wood Wonder) – Vinh Du

**VANDAS & PHALS** (11 entries)
Blue – (Vanda Fuchs Galaxy x Gus Chia Long) – Karl Varian
Red – Ascda. garayii – Judy Cook
White – Phal. unknown – Gerry Darver

**SPECIES OF THE MONTH**
Encyclia cordigera semi–alba – Judy Cook
Milt. spectabalis – Judy Cook
Ascda. garayii – Judy Cook

**PEOPLES CHOICE**
Cattleya luteola – Ashley Nguyen

56 Total Plants!! Super job!



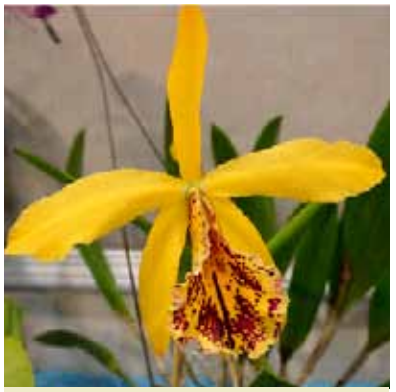
Schomburgkia tibicinis

Phal. Young Home New York

Catt. Intermedia

Photos by Forest Shipps

Phrag. Belcroute



Catt. Apache Sunrise

Miltoniopsis unknown

# DALLAS JUDGING CENTER

Nancy Cropp

AOS Dallas Judging Center May. 13, 2017

Eight plants entered for consideration, no awards given.

AOS Dallas Judging Center May 6, 2017
at the Fort Worth Show.

Eight plants entered for consideration, one award given:

**Bulb. Stella Mizuta**
'Jackson'
(Bulb lobii x Bulb macranthum)
HCC 79 points
Owner: Linda Horton, Garland

The Dallas Judging Center meets on the second Saturday of every month.

The next meeting is June, 10th at the
Garland Senior Activity Center
600 West Avenue A
Garland, TX 75040

11am. Everyone is welcome to bring plants or to just watch and learn.

# BRINGING HOME NEW ORCHIDS

*by Sue Bottom*

St. Augustine
Orchid Society

www.staugorchid-society.org

I love bringing home new orchids. Sometimes I buy large plants in bloom but more often than not I bring home seedlings that I can watch grow up and bloom for me the first time.

**Selecting Blooming Plants.** You buy plants for any number of reasons; because you like the flower, you like the plant growth habit or you like the parentage and have great hopes for the future flower. If you are buying a plant in bloom, be sure to look beyond that gorgeous flower and take a careful look at the plant itself.

*Healthy Root System.* You know a healthy root system is the key to a plant that will bloom well for you. Any plant you buy should be fully established in the pot. Pick it up by its vegetation and the pot should lift with the plant. If the plant is wobbly in the pot, it is either newly repotted and thus not established or there is a problem with the roots and you will have to nurse it back to health.

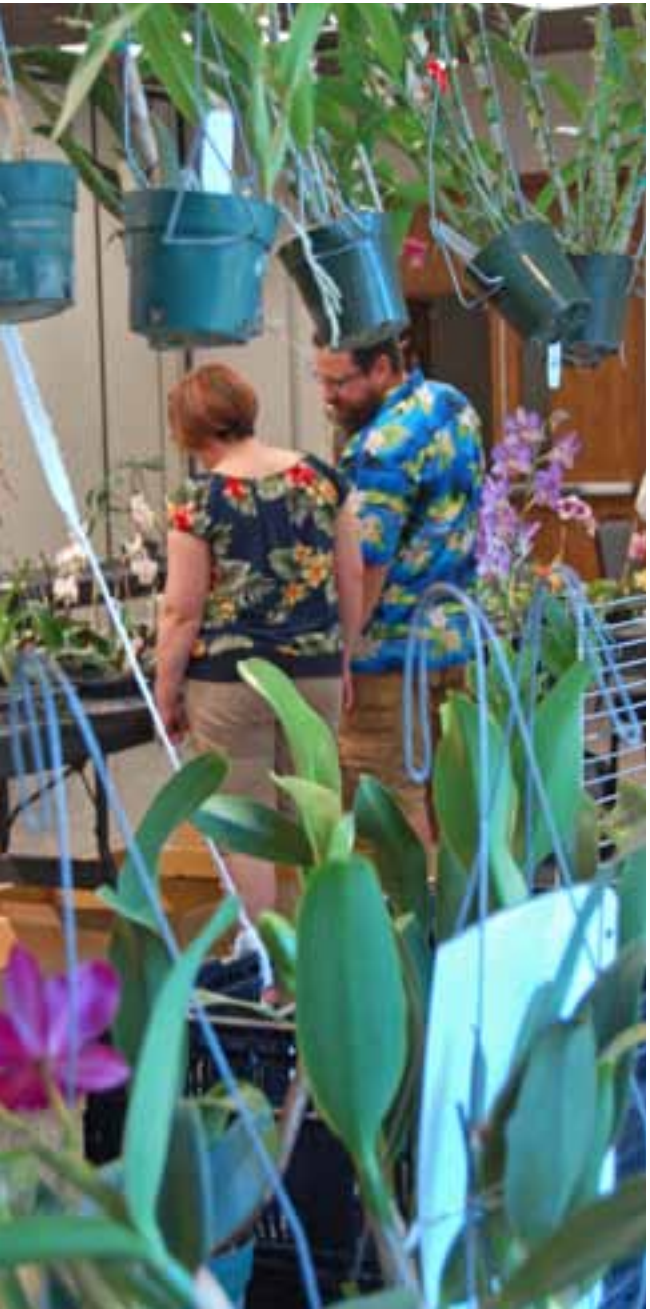
*Fat and Happy Bulbs and Canes.* You'll get the best blooms from plants that are vigorous growers. Look at the pseudobulbs or canes to see if they are plump, hard and full. If the bulbs are shriveled or wrinkled, the plant could be dehydrated from root problems or suffering from a disease like fusarium.

*Turgid and Unmarked Leaves.* Leaves should be full and hold themselves upright. Fleshy leaved phal leaves should be thick and turgid, with no droopiness or other sign of dehydration. Mature cattleya leaves should be hard with the texture of cardboard. Thin leaved orchids like the Oncidiinae should be unwrinkled. The leaves should be a healthy green with no markings, except possibly for the reddish pigmentation that happens when orchids are grown in very bright light. Yellow, brown or black markings or edges may be indicative of a bacterial or fungal disease. Do not be overly concerned if there is an occasional blemish on the plant if it otherwise looks happy and healthy.

*Absence of Pests and Diseases.* You want a plant this is pest free. Check the base of the plant, in leaf axils and other hidden spots and make sure there are no scale, mealybugs or other crawling insects present. A diseased orchid may have yellow or black spotting, shriveling, soft spots, etc., all of which should flash a warning sign to you when you are selecting a plant to bring home. If in flower, make sure there is no color break in the flower that can be a sign of virus.

*Seedlings and Near Blooming Size Plants.* Seedlings are fun to bring home because you can spend hours imagining

what the bloom might look like when it finally opens. If you are selecting a plant from a seedling tray, look for the one with the thickest bulbs and leaves. I often ask the orchid grower which seedling he would select and why, you'll get lots of interesting insights. One grower said to choose a plant that had not yet bloomed, under the assumption that if it had bloomed and had a great flower, that plant would no longer be for sale.



*Bring New Plants Home.* If you grow cattleyas, scale is your arch nemesis. After many years of battling scale, the growth inhibitor Distance (it isn't cheap!) finally allowed me to declare the greenhouse a scale free zone. Imagine my surprise when I noticed scale emerging on some of the new plants I brought home. They appeared clean when I selected them, but several months later I noticed the tell tale chlorotic spotting and white patches. Clearly scale was lurking under the rhizome or paper sheathing of my new plants.

The books all tell you to isolate plants for several months when you bring them into your growing area so you can catch problems without spreading them to the rest of your collection. I find I can't resist the urge to group plants together as soon as I bring them home, new phals with old phals, new cattleyas with old cattleyas, etc. so the plants all get the proper light and water. I obviously needed a better plan for handling new orchids.

*Apply a Protective Drench.* Once you get home and before you introduce your new plant to the growing area, apply a protective drench through the potting media. There are a variety of pesticides that contain the active ingredient imidacloprid, a systemic insecticide that can be introduced to the plant via the roots and absorbed throughout the plant. It will kill scale, mealybugs, etc. from the inside out without your having to spray it on leaf surfaces like you would a contact pesticide. Imidacloprid bearing pesticides come in a wide variety of strengths. If you have the insecticide that contains 0.47% imidacloprid, add 3 ounces to a gallon of water (23 mg/l) and pour it through the pot to thoroughly drench the growing media (1 oz/gal (8ml/l) for the 1.47% strength, 2 oz/gal (16 ml/l) for the 0.74% strength, etc.). The Bayer Three in One product also contains a systemic miticide for residual control of spider mites as well as a systemic fungicide although this particular fungicide may not offer much protection against common orchid diseases. There are better protective fungicidal drenches, like Banrot or Subdue, available from specialty horticultural outlets albeit at a fairly expensive price.

*Repot into Your Mix of Choice.* If you bought a plant in bloom, let it bloom out and then repot it in your mix of choice. If it's a seedling orchid, you may want to repot immediately upon bringing it home. This way you won't have a hodgepodge of plants in sphagnum, bark and whatever else that all require watering at a different frequency. The only caveats are try not to repot in the fall when plants are going into their winter rest and be careful not to repot bifoliate cattleyas unless you see the initiation of new root growth. It is best to repot when new roots are just beginning to emerge because the plant will reestablish the most quickly when it is in a period of active root growth.

A new orchid should be a welcome addition to your collection, not a problem waiting to happen. Develop a system to make sure that your new beauty will live to bloom again along with all your old favorites.

# CLIMATE CHANGE PUTS IMPORTANT MEDICAL ADVANCES IN JEOPARDY

## ORCHID CONSERVATION UPDATE

by Charles
and Trudy Hess

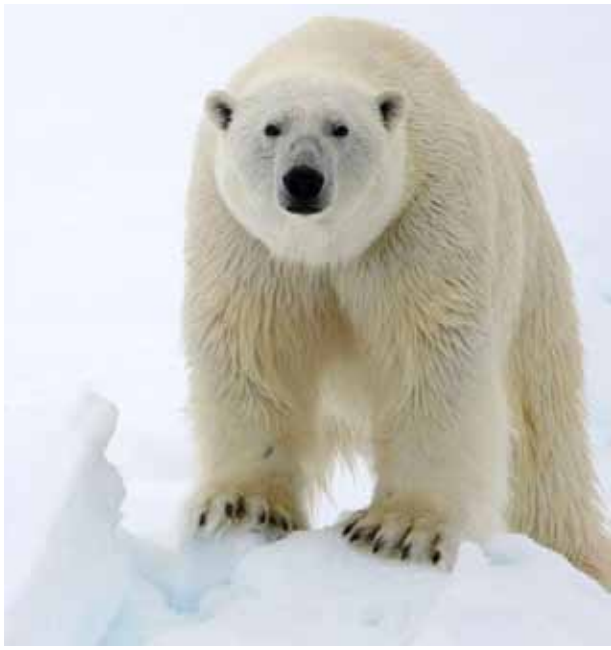
Diabetes, osteoporosis, kidney disease and cancer top the list of medical problems which are both difficult and expensive to treat. Moreover, these diseases all too often prove fatal. Very few of us have been spared from being affected, either directly or indirectly, by one or more of these serious illnesses.

How is the topic of orchid conservation, which is the purpose of this column, related to medical research and treatment of diseases? The answer is actually very simple. Orchids, like all living things, need a complex ecosystem in which to survive. Climate change, which is unfortunately advancing at a very rapid pace, is having deleterious effects all over the world. Ecosystems from the frozen arctic and Antarctic, all the way to the equatorial rainforests are undergoing major changes, causing many species to lose their habitat and food supply, and thereby threatening these species with extinction. This is a great loss in many ways, particularly when we consider that some creatures' anatomy carries the answers to some of our most urgent medical challenges, if only we had the opportunity to study them adequately.

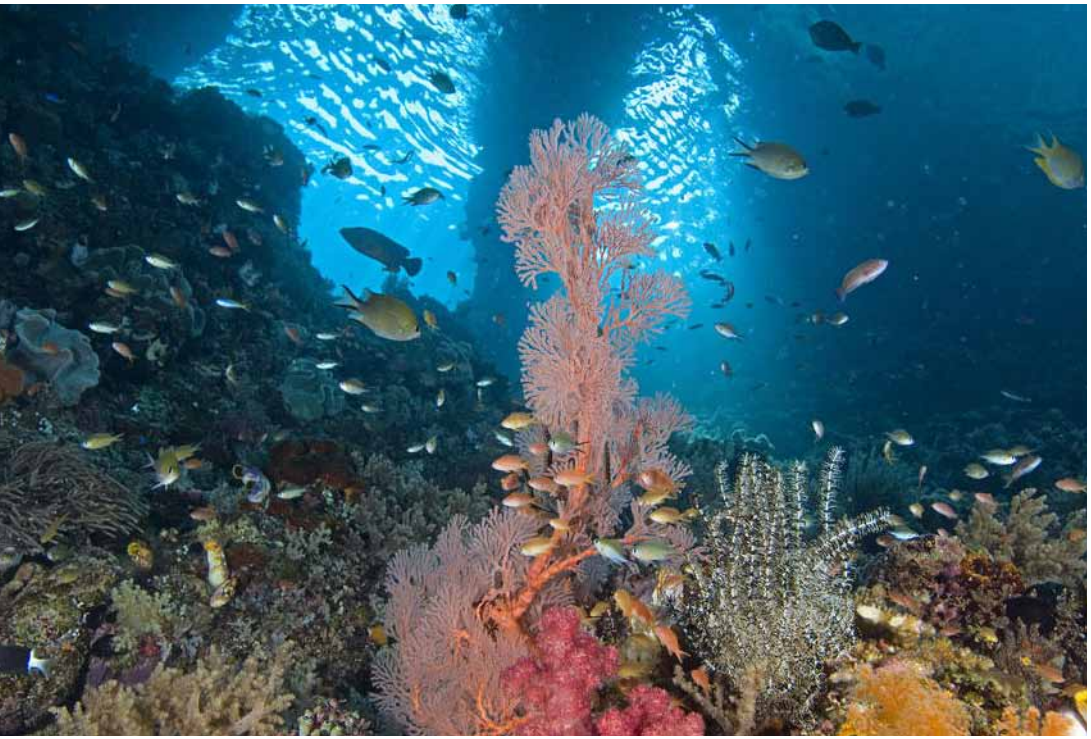
Although climate change rarely gets the news coverage it deserves, one topic that has been getting a considerable amount of attention is our health care system, and the question of how we can continue to fund a system which takes up 17% of our GDP and is growing yearly. This trend is concerning all of us. We all know someone with diabetes since it effects a large percent of our population. One-half billion people worldwide are obese and in this country, **250,000 Americans die each year from the effects of obesity, with medical costs amounting to $90 billion.**

Here is one example of how an important medical advance can be stopped dead in its tracks by the effect of climate change. It turns out that three of our country's most significant medical issues may have answers in the anatomy of polar bears. If there is enough time to study polar bears, we could possibly develop cures or treatments for diabetes, osteoporosis and kidney failure. However polar bears are under significant threat, due to loss of polar ice, which inhibits the bears' ability to hunt seals.

First, let's consider how polar bears could help us solve the problem of diabetes. Polar bears hibernate for 5 to 7 months every year. They prepare for this long fast by putting on massive weight, eating mostly seals, their main diet. But despite their obesity prior



to hibernation, polar bears do not get diabetes. As yet, the reason is unknown. All we know is that obesity in humans very often leads to diabetes, and in polar bears it does not. Science is working to under-



stand why polar bears seem to be immune, and when that discovery is made we will have the answer to a major medical problem in our country.

Second, osteoporosis is a medical condition which is frequently the cause of falls, particularly in elderly people. Recovery can be difficult and painful, and at times a fall can turn into a fatality. We have no cure for osteoporosis, and the drugs we do have manage to only slow down the progress of the disease. The drugs also have side effects, and are not well tolerated by some people. Polar bears are the only mammal species that does not get osteoporosis, despite long periods of immobility during hibernation. Polar bears' blood contains a substance which prevents osteoporosis. We need to learn what this substance is, find a way to replicate it, with the goal of treating humans. The importance of this medical advance cannot be over-emphasized. If we humans were immobile for 5 months through hospitalization or paralysis, we would lose 1/3 of our bone mass. As it is, 70,000 Americans die each year in this country related to this disease at a cost of $18 billion. One third of women over 65 experience bone fractures unrelated to accidents.

A third medical answer we could gain from studying polar bears is prevention of kidney disease. Many cases of kidney disease are related to urinary tract infections, which in turn are usually caused by difficulties urinating and consequential retention of urine. When humans are unable to expel toxins via urinations for three days, it results in death. Amazingly, polar bears never urinate during their very long hibernation period. Yet, their bodies are able to process the toxic urine into new amino acids and proteins. As a result, they do not get urinary infections. It would be a great boon to our human population if we could learn how this works in polar bears. Currently 8% or our population is affected with chronic renal failure.

Medical researchers studying polar bears face a growing problem, however. Global warming is breaking up the ice sheets, causing a serious threat to the polar bears. They feed on seals which come up to breathe through thin ice spots on the once massive ice sheets. With these ice sheets now shrinking, there is much more safe, open water for the seals, where the bears can't reach them, and the bears are literally starving to death.

Why don't scientists just study the polar bears in zoos? The problem is that the bears do not hibernate in captivity, so their bodies have no need to produce the substances which protect them from diabetes, osteoporosis and urinary tract infections. We need to study polar bears in their natural habitat, and we need them around for decades to complete the research.

There are even unique chemicals generated by many species that have proven useful to medicine and our lives. One such example is found in certain inhabitants of coral reefs, which are found in tropical and sub-tropical waters

in many parts of the world.

However, coral reefs are tragic victims of this same global warming. Currently there is an epidemic of coral bleaching taking place, caused by the death of organisms living in the coral killed by the rise in temperature of the sea water. Coral bleaching changes a colorful underwater world, teeming with a huge variety of plants and animals, into a pale skeleton, devoid of all life.

This affects more than just the scuba industry. Aside from being the source of life for so much of the marine ecosystem, some very interesting and valuable creatures thrive only on the reefs. The cone snail genus consists of over 700 different species, each of which produces from 100 to 200 different poisons. These poisons are used to stun their prey. Altogether the members of this genus could have up to 140, 000 different poisons in its arsenal.

Just to emphasize how important this little creature is, the only long term (chronic) pain killer on the market, called Prialt is made from the venom of one of these cone snails. The only alternative to Prialt is the group of drugs called opiates, which are commonly used


for pain relief today, but have the long-term aspect of becoming less effective and having serious side effects, such as cessation of breathing, among other problems. Prialt is the only chronic pain relief treatment we currently have.

Cone snails are thought to be the most valuable source of future medicines of any species. To date only 6 of the 700 snail species have been studied. Unless we manage to stop the global warming process and thereby save the coral reefs, we will forever lose the opportunity to study cone snails, because these creatures totally depend on the coral reefs for their existence.

While it is tempting to not think about global warming, we cannot avoid considering the cost of our exorbitant lifestyles, which are being supported by an energy usage per capita of twice that of any other advanced country. Each little thing we do to reduce this consumption will have an additive effect. Every time we make a change which requires less fossil fuel, we are helping the environment. Every decision, from combining errands to reduce driving, to using less fertilizer on our lawn, makes a difference.

With each of our efforts, however small, perhaps we will increase the chances to benefit from the vast wealth of information and cures awaiting future discoveries, if only these resources continue to exist. Change is not easy for humans. It requires a firm commitment and a little extra work. Most of the time we only make changes when we have no other choice. The key is to help everyone realize that we have no other choice if we are to survive as a species.

On my website you can find a video which is the source of the above information. The video is by Nobel Laureate Dr. Eric Chivian of the Harvard Center for Health and the Global Environment. Visit www.OrchidArtByCharlesHess.com and click on the conservation video section.

# ORCHID GROWING TIPS

*by*
*Courtney Hackney*

A monthly growers advice column by Courtney Hackney. Hackneau@comcast.net

This column was written in humid coastal North Carolina and Florida, and the advice given should be adjusted to our climate.

# CHEAP AND EFFECTIVE ORCHID PRODUCTS

There are many products available today for orchid growing, most far more expensive than necessary. Hobbyists usually just pay the price since they have only a few plants. As your collection gets larger or you wish to be more frugal there are many ways to reduce the cost of your hobby.

Many hobbyists got stared when presented with a gift of an orchid and are still in the early stages of learning to grow. Many of the big-box stores get a regular supply of orchids, which are sold as pot plants. Some orchids do not sell and go out of bloom. These are either tossed or placed on a sales table at a reduced price. Caution should be exercised when purchasing these orchids, but some bargains can be found. Inexpensive orchids also make great plants on which to experiment. Learn to repot using these orchids. Try different media and pots. All of these "experiments" will teach you to be a better grower and make you more confident when you purchase an orchid that you really like. Most hobbyists err in the beginning because they are afraid to damage a newly purchased orchid so they do nothing when a problem develops.

Fertilizer is a classic example of the concept that excellent orchids do not require the most expensive products. One of my favorite growers that proved the concept was the late Ralph Wasdon from Greenville, NC. He used K-Mart, soluble fertilizer and grew orchids as well as anyone I ever met. When asked to speak about his prowess in growing orchids he always replied that it only took five minutes to explain his methods; water when needed, fertilize when you remember, and put your plants under the pines when it was warm enough.

Practical wisdom is often overlooked when growing "exotic" orchids in favor of the elaborate and expensive. Powdered cinnamon is a very effective fungicide applied directly to the wound. Many growers buy cinnamon powder by the bag and sprinkle it over roots and rhizome just before placing a newly repotted orchid in a new pot. This non-toxic and relatively inexpensive fungicide has the added benefit of a nice fragrance.

Another simple, and amazingly effective, anti-bacterial/anti fungal agent is Hydrogen Peroxide. It is available everywhere for topical use. Joe Grezaffi introduced me to its use. Whenever he saw crown rot in a phal or rot on a cattleya he poured hydrogen peroxide right in the crown or damaged area. For awhile, I used half strength, but found that there was never any damage from using it full strength. It even stops pseudomonas rot on phal leaves that I once cut off entirely when I saw just a small rot spot.

One of the most significant changes in fertilizer for orchids is the availability of a slow release fertilizer named Nutricote. This product is being used by many commercial orchid nurseries, but is even more important to the hobbyist who has just a small number of orchids. Available as Dynamite in small quantities from Home Depot stores, this is an easy to use fertilizer that delivers a constant supply of nutrients for a set amount of time. Most last for six months and provide micronutrients as well.

# SOCIETY HISTORY

The history of the GNTOS goes way back. In the mid-40s there were only three orchid growers in town: Eli Sanger of Sanger Brothers, which was Dallas' biggest department store at that time; Roy Munger, known for Munger Place and Munger Street, and Percy Larkin.

Margie Corn, a garden columnist, was the source of any orchid information they could find and she gave their names to a woman running Hardy's Seed Company, Mrs. Moses. They gathered at her house one day in 1946 and it was Mr. & Mrs. Polhemus, Mr. & Mrs. Roy Carter, Homer Baldwin, Percy Larkin and a young man from Waxahachie named Costalanus. They decided they would apply for AOS membership and started receiving the Bulletin and meeting monthly. More and more people started to show up and they elected Percy Larkin, Jr. their first president in 1947. This was the North Texas Orchid Society.

They held their first show in 1950 at the Marsh Kaiser Fraiser automobile agency on Ross Avenue. Jack Morris was president of the society and Homer Baldwin sent out invitations to everyone who grew orchids in Dallas. Invitations also went to the big orchid firms who would send representatives from around the country to the show They had everyone sign a book that came to that show

There was an incident that year that upset several members of the North Texas Orchid Society, so several members chose to leave and form another society calling themselves the Dallas Orchid Society. Percy Larkin was one of the members who left to form the Dallas Orchid Society. This society was never sanctioned by the AOS.

The following year with much encouragement from Homer Baldwin, most of the members from the Dallas Orchid Society came back to join the original society.

Later, they decided to become affiliated with the American Orchid Society so they wrote a Constitution and Bylaws for the society. On March 19, 1954, they were issued a charter by the AOS as the Greater North Texas Orchid Society.

They put on a show in the Dallas Garden Center but there weren't enough plants in the area so the bulk of the show was made up of boxes of blooms sent to them for free from commercial growers. They'd get five, six, or seven boxes of flowers from different growers from all over the country – even overseas. Of course, Homer had mailed cards to everyone who had an ad in the Bulletin to achieve this. Fortunately for Homer, Lena Baldwin knew how to type and she and another woman spent half the night writing letters on two typewriters but it worked and they had orchids for the show.



# MEMBERSHIP DUES

GNTOS membership dues are paid yearly by January 31, in order for you to be listed in the published Yearbook.

- $30.00 – New or Renewing Member (individual)
- $15.00 – Additional Member (each additional person in same household)

Please mail completed form with payment to:

Kathy Halverson
1922 Baylor Drive
Richardson, TX 75081

Make check payable to GNTOS.

☐ New Member ☐ Renewing Member

Name (#1): _____

Name (#2): _____

Address: _____

_____

City: _____

State/Zip: _____

Phone:_____

E-mail (#1): _____

E-mail (#2): _____