



The Greater Whorled Pogonia

Official Flower of the Club

Newsletter of the

AMHERST ORCHID SOCIETY

An affiliate of the American Orchid Society

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October, 2007

October is Membership Renewal Month

From the Presidents Corner:

Hello all, sorry this is so short, but I have been walking on the road less traveled lately.

Just a couple of quick notes, first of all the sale. We enjoyed a beautiful day with reasonable sales. I think if we can continue to hold on to this site for future sales it can only get better. Thank you again for all of your support.

Secondly, with regards to T-Shirts, I am willing to start another order form for shirts, in either violet- like mine- or ice green, sort of like Verda's fleece the day of the show. This will be the same design. I am working on a black and white design for year 2008. The deal with the shirts is we need to order at least 24, and people need to pay in advance.

Third, I will be putting an Amherst Orchid Society display at the Mass. Orchid Show the weekend of October 26th. I will be looking for a few select plants to display. If you think something at your house might be in bloom, let me know ahead of time so I can pre-register. Our club meeting is the week prior, so it will be convenient for me to take the plants.

I will also be clerking on Friday, and may be speaking on Sunday, so I will endeavor to both stay healthy and be an excellent ambassador for all of you. (Sometimes I channel Bill, when the judges ask me a crazy botany question, however, I channel Verda most of the time, makes me sound much more sensible than I really am! I consider myself fortunate to have such people to draw upon.)

I asked Carol to print the piece about the NYC show (see pg 2), I think it was pretty obvious to all of us clerking last year that GNYOS was very unhappy with the show site. Lets start thinking about another great thing to do, either make the Longwood Garden trip one day longer, go to one of the Canadian shows- I will speak to Howard Ginsberg about his recommendations, or something else. Let me know if there is some place you have always wanted to go, but never got the time- an orchid place would be best, although I am not opposed to interesting suggestions.

As for the rest, I am sure there are other things I should be passing along, and they will come to me the instant the newsletter goes to press.

Cheers, Ellen

FYI to members

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Starting this year membership renewals will be handled differently. **Everyone's** dues are due in October. If you pay at the meeting you will receive the free membership plant. If you do not pay in October you will get one notice that your membership has expired then you will not receive the newsletter for December. This has come about since it is very hard to keep on top of all the members due dates and it only makes it fair for everyone and easier for the treasurer. Do not forget that the dues are now **\$20**. If you have any questions please contact Ellen Kennedy at E832847@aol.com



Dear AOS Judge,

This is a very unfamiliar kind of letter for me to be sending out. In response to a number of inquiries, I am writing to inform you that the Greater New York Orchid Society will not be organizing an orchid show this coming Spring of 2008 and that the Board of Trustees has voted to not organize a show to be held before the Fall of 2008. Further, after very amicable discussions with Tishman Speyer representatives it was mutually agreed that after six years of some exceedingly memorable and great orchid shows at Rockefeller Center it is now in the best interests of both the Greater New York Orchid Society as well as Tishman Speyer/Rockefeller Center that we will no longer organize a show with Rockefeller Center as our host venue.

Tishman Speyer has been an exceedingly generous and gracious host and continues to support the efforts of the Society and our long standing tradition of putting on public orchid events here in New York City. Personally, I am very proud of our collaborative successes and exceedingly appreciative of their ongoing support of the Society and the New York International Orchid Show; most particularly for their efforts and assistance after September 11, 2001. The show has evolved and been reinvented through several different manifestations over the years; for a variety of reasons it is time for a change. We are now actively considering various possibilities for future orchid events, hopefully as soon as the Fall of 2008, but it is premature to offer any suggestion regarding our future plans at this time.

Undoubtedly there will be plenty of questions and rumors, but be assured, we feel this is nothing but a positive change and look forward to whatever happens next. The Society is very proud of its stature and its history of contributions to the New York City cultural community and I want you to know that we very much value what you have contributed as well-as a participant in one show or twenty-seven. Regardless of what our next effort will be, we will keep you informed as things develop and expect that we will be working together again in the very near future.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

David Horak
President, The Greater New York Orchid Society



Questions for “ASK BILL” can be given to me at the monthly meetings. If possible write them out. If you prefer you may call me at 413-253-7036, write me a 52 Jeffrey Lane, Amherst, MA 01002-2532 or reach me via e-mail at >wa.hutchinson@comcast.net<. Answers to written questions may take one or two months to appear. The e-mail questions I nominally will answer within 24 hours or less. Keep in mind that if you are puzzled by a growing problem, etc. someone else is too.

Go to> www.larchhillorchids.com<, click on AmOrch and go directly an Amherst Orchid Society Web page. Additional information may be found on the Larch Hill pages. The web page now has the newsletter posted as a PDF file and most of them for the whole year are available.

Q. What is the best all around fertilizer for the small time window grower?

A. It somewhat depends upon how offensive you find some odors. Can you stand fish emulsion? How about seaweed extract, not as strong as fish? Probably Dyno-Grow® which has two basic formulas, one for vegetative growth and one to stimulate flowering. These also are low analysis formula fertilizers and thus help in the weekly weakly approach.

Q. Could you give some rule of thumb as to the size of pots? Some people advocate giving the roots room to grow, others like to crowd plants. Some don't use pots at all. A rule of thumb would be nice.

A. The best answer I can give you based on your last sentence you won't care for. Hard and fast rules in orchid growing are few and far between and the best parallel I can give you is that it is like studying French where the rule ----except ----.Keep in mind the answer to the question above in roots crawling out of the pot. Orchid often do not have extensive root systems. The best overall rule is to put the plant in the smallest pot that you can use to contain the root mass and some potting material. I use not only the smallest pot that I can because of space but I also use a mixture of wood baskets, wire baskets, plastic baskets slabs of tree fern, cork, and some selected shrub branches. All based on space and root spread and the need of roots to get wet and not sit in a soggy medium, If you are growing on a window sill some of these will not be useful to you so adapt by putting a good layer of Styrofoam peanuts on the bottom for drainage (do not use the biodegradable ones since they dissolve in water).

Q. Bill, how do you grow *Sarcochilus hartmannii*?

A. I have several in my collection and they are usually in flower for our spring show. In addition I have *S. fitzgeraldii* and *S. fitzhart* (and a number of other species and crosses), The reason I put them in is because Fitzhart is a natural hybrid between *S. hartmannii* and *S. fitzgeraldii*. Culture is the same for all three. I grow mine in medium bark with some charcoal, sponge rock and volcanic rock mixed in and used as a surface covering. Plants are grown outside all summer with an eastern exposure unless I run out of space. I water every two to three days depending upon the weather and use the weekly weakly approach to fertilizer. Several years ago when I received a new batch from Australia I used Osmocote. Sadly every plant with the Osmocote joined that compendium which all orchid growers have –to wit – “Orchids I have known and killed”.

When cold weather approaches, around early October, I bring them into my cool house and put them up on a shelf with a western exposure. I can only do this for my show plants since they have gotten so big

they take the whole shelf. The rest of the plants go on a space available. I water at least weekly and fertilize about ever month. I also watch for scale and any other problems including slugs for which I use `Escargot' ®, iron phosphate, non-toxic granules.

In nature these plants are common along the cliffs and along watercourses and near waterfalls where the spray does them a world of good. I have also found that when grown in plastic pots they do much better but they are not as hardy as clay grown plants.

Are these good candidates for a windowsill with phals and paphs? In my experience they would seem to be a compatriot for the cool growing paphs but not with phals which need temps over 60° F.

Q. Why is my Sharry Baby growing so poorly? I grow it on a windowsill and under lights. Have repotted it, fertilized it, water moderately and nothing seems to help.

A. Sharry Baby like others in the Oncidium alliance are high light plants. Try putting them out in the summer, but be careful to avoid immediate, maximum exposure or you'll get sunburn. Have you repotted somewhat frequently? If so that could be a problem. The only reason to repot is medium breakdown. Which is the best medium? I've grown it in several different media with almost equal response. During the summer I use the weekly weakly fertilizer program with Dyno-Grow® or Pete Lite 15-16-17. Using the growth formula (higher nitrogen) in the early part of the summer and bloom initiator formula towards the fall months. There is also no substitute for a mature plant. Older plants, say from a division purchased at the club 50/50 sale will bloom faster than a seedling. Pseudobulbs on a good healthy plant may be as large as coffee cup. It is of interest that they might carry over some of the `Grandmother's" characteristic of doing better when pot bound and watered more frequently.

Q. With new bare root plants being shipped , what are the specifics of treating them that you use? After the initial treatment in sugar water and Sprite® should one apply a weak solution of fertilizer or hormones or both. Should seedlings be repotted frequently?

A. I don't use the sugar water/ spite mixture on seedlings unless they are very young plants shipped bare roots, as required by the USDA. I repot seedling only when I must since shifting may create stress. Some of the other additives such as vitamins, superthrive and hormones have been used but I tend to avoid them.

FOR SALE

Leilani and Harold Norman of Aloha Enterprises have bark, both fine and medium for sale at the meetings in 1/4 cu. ft. bags. We also have 2 cu. ft. bags available with a phone call. We also carry fertilizers, RD-20 and Super Thrive available at the meetings. We can be contacted at 413-267-5124



Members & Shoppers busy themselves at our September Plant Sale.



Missing Plants

There were two plants unaccounted for after the plant sale. The labels read as NOR23 and NOR42. Does anyone from the club remember purchasing plants with these labels?

November Meeting

Keith Tibbits will be giving the program in November called 'The Orchid Scene in Thailand'. He will show slides plus have several items to auction off to benefit the club; orchid tee shirt, poster, flasks, and a woman's pin which is a real Dendrobium Blossum with gold plated edges.

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

I am looking for any member who may be interested in taking over the job of the newsletter. I will help you get started and can fill in for any months that you may be unable. Let me know at the next meeting if you might be interested. Carol

To find the bylaws of the Amherst Orchid Society go to: www.larchhillorchids.com and click on Amherst Orchid Society and then bylaws.

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Amherst Orchid Society
2007 Upcoming Events

- Oct 21:** Monthly meeting at the Munson Library, Amherst
Oct 26-28: Mass Orchid Show
Nov 18: Monthly meeting. 'The Orchid Scene in Thailand' by Keith Tibbits
Dec 16: Annual Holiday Party

Note to Members: Submissions for the November, 2007 newsletter must reach the editor by October 31, 2007 to be printed.

AMHERST ORCHID SOCIETY
MONTHLY MEETING

Our monthly meetings are held the 3rd Sunday of each month except the month of August. Most of the meetings (except June and July) are held at the Munson Memorial library in South Amherst at 1046 South East St. next to the Congregational church. Meetings start at 2 pm with beginner programs some months at 1:30 pm.



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NEXT MEETING:

Sunday, Oct , 2007. The program will be 'Restrepias and Their Culture' from the AOS.

Refreshments: If your name begins with U, V, W, X, Y, or Z it is your turn to bring refreshments to the next meeting.