



VENICE AREA ORCHID SOCIETY

ORCHID RESOURCE GUIDE

Venice Area Orchid Society
P.O. Box 443, Venice, Florida 34284
www.vaos.org

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Welcome VAOS members! This publication provides an overview of the VAOS organization and member activities, orchid culture tips for our growing area and provides helpful links to other useful resources.

1.0 THE VENICE AREA ORCHID SOCIETY

The Venice Area Orchid Society (VAOS) is an affiliate of the American Orchid Society. It was founded in 1962 to foster and preserve orchid growing, to provide a forum for orchid exhibition, and to share the knowledge and experience of growers and hobbyists.

Our mission is:

- to encourage, organize, and support educational activities among its members
- to develop and extend knowledge of the cultivation and hybridization of orchids, and
- to promote the conservation and protection of native species.

The VAOS is one of the largest orchid societies in Florida with over 300 members. Our annual show and sale held the first weekend in February, attracts more than 4000 people and is widely regarded as one of the top three orchid shows in Florida. AOS accredited judge's travel from nationwide to participate in our show, our largest fundraising event of the year.

The VAOS has an active membership and maintains a strong awareness of community responsibilities. Members participate in planning and hosting our regular monthly meetings as well as our annual show and sale. Our annual show brings visitors from surrounding areas that contribute to the local economy in numerous ways, including dining and entertaining. Our annual show is the society's major fund raising event.

1.1 VAOS Monthly Meetings - The VAOS meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm at the Venice Community Center, 326 South Nokomis Ave., Venice, Florida. We start with a brief business meeting and announcements of upcoming events, following by a speaker presentation, refreshments, plant table presentation and raffle. The speaker will often bring plants available for sale at the meeting. Guests are welcome to attend.

1.1.1 Meeting Program - Speakers are invited to present on a variety of topics ranging from orchid culture to how to prepare your plants for display. Most speakers include power point presentations or demonstrations and will bring plants to sell at our meetings. The VAOS has been fortunate to bring in some of the most authoritative experts in orchids - topics are always informative and focused on our south Florida growing conditions.

1.1.2 Refreshments - Following the speaker's program, we take a refreshment break. All members are encouraged to bring in treats that may include homemade sweets, crackers and cheese, fruit or snacks for the refreshment table. Coffee and sodas are provided. The refreshment break offers a great opportunity to mingle with and get to know other members.

1.1.3 Plant Table - Members bring in their blooming plants to share and display on the plant table. Plants of all varieties and sizes are always evident and provide helpful insight into how others grow. A judging team comprised of three members designated at the beginning of each meeting select and award first place, second place and third place ribbons. Ribbons are also awarded for New Member, Best Species, Member's Choice and Speaker's Choice.

Following the refreshment break, the lights are set up and each plant is presented and described by an expert grower and the speaker. They discuss the heritage of the plant, characteristics, attributes and culture and the member-grower may offer suggestions on how they grew their plant. This part of our meeting is always extremely informative, providing culture advice and plant background information.

1.1.4 Raffle - Every monthly meeting ends with a plant raffle. Members and often the speaker bring in plants and plant divisions and raffle tickets are sold. This is a great way for members to share divisions of their plants or to give away plants they no longer wish to keep. This is also a great way to expand your collection. All donated plants and divisions should be healthy, pest-free and labeled with the name of the plant. Proceeds from the raffle support VAOS activities.

1.1.5 Library - The VAOS maintains a comprehensive collection of orchid books, publications, videos and journals available for members to borrow. The portable library is set up at the back of the room. Members may check out books for a month, returning them at the next meeting. Book and journal donations to the library are always appreciated.

1.2 GROWERS CLINIC

The VAOS Growers Clinic is normally held the second Thursday of each month at the Venice Community Center at 7pm. The clinic provides an excellent opportunity for new growers to learn the basics of orchid growing culture in our area. Members and guests bring in plants to get cultural advice or to get help with problem plants. The Growers Clinic is hosted by members who are experienced orchid growers in our area. Monthly topics will include hands-on potting clinics, mounting orchid plants, pests and diseases, local and online resources, and other topics suggested by participants. Guest speakers may be invited to present on specialized topics. New members are encouraged to attend and guests are welcome.

1.3 MENTOR PROGRAM

The Mentor Program is intended to assist beginners in learning basic orchid growing skills such as watering, potting, sun exposure, pest control and fertilization. Some Mentors and their Mentees initially visit one another's homes to view orchid collections and discuss orchid culture. Mentors typically discuss growing techniques; answer questions, provide resources for printed and internet information and offer support and encouragement. The mentoring process is individualized, but short term. Each mentor/mentee experience is different and is designed so that both may share the joy of growing orchids.

Applications to be a Mentor or to receive Mentoring are at the Membership Table during each monthly meeting and at Growers Clinic meetings. The Mentor experience is enhanced by the Growers Clinic. Orchid growing information is supplemented and reinforced at these meetings, where experienced VAOS growers provide small group, interactive instruction and demonstrations.

1.4 ANNUAL SHOW

The VAOS Annual Orchid Show and Sale is a premier event and is the largest orchid show on the west coast of Florida. It is held the first weekend of February at the Venice Community Center and draws over 4000 attendees each year. Highlights of our annual show include:

- Thousands of blooming orchids presented in 11,000 s.f. of orchid displays and exhibits
- Local growers offering superior plants for sale
- An arts and crafts exhibit (orchid theme) and an Artists Sales Area
- Plant arrangements, designed by members, for sale
- Orchid supplies and books for sale

The VAOS invites other area orchid societies to exhibit at our show and local growers also set up exhibits. Blooming orchids are judged by AOS judges - there are often 25-30 accredited judges participating in this major event. Ribbon and trophy awards are given to individual plants as well as exhibits.

Show set up is on Friday and the show opens Saturday morning. A judge's luncheon is hosted on Saturday and VAOS members operate the kitchen all weekend with food brought in by members.

Venice area businesses and organizations are invited to sponsor our show and their donations help to offset our costs. Corporate sponsors have included media, business, retail and professional organizations.

All VAOS members are encouraged to participate in our biggest fund raising event of the year. Areas of participation include:

- Bring in blooming plants for the VAOS exhibit
- Bring in food for the kitchen, open throughout the weekend for judges, vendors and working staff members
- Assist in kitchen
- Show set up (Friday) and take down (Sunday)
- VAOS exhibit set up and take down
- Help with plant registration on Friday
- Clerk for AOS judges Saturday morning (a GREAT learning experience!)
- Make and sell floral arrangements

- Set up and take down arts and crafts exhibit
- Security - help to man entrances during the show
- Admissions - collect entrance fees at the door
- Membership - Staff the membership table and recruit new members
- Signage - Help to post signs and flyers prior to the show
- Greeters and helpers - Welcome visitors, answer questions and provide assistance
- Corporate sponsors and patrons - Help to recruit sponsors and collect patron donations prior to the show.

Planning and preparation for our annual show begins early, in March each year. Contact the Show Chair to get involved.

1.5 EXHIBITS – AREA ORCHID SHOW PARTICIPATION

The VAOS participates in three area orchid shows each year, setting up an exhibit with member plants.

The Ridge Orchid Society Show is held in the Lake Mirror Center in Lakeland, FL mid-September each year.

The Sarasota Orchid Society Show is held the first weekend in January at the Sarasota Municipal Auditorium. VAOS sets up a table top display for this show.

The Englewood Area Orchid Society Show is held in March each year at the United Methodist Church, Englewood.

The VAOS Vice President - Show Displays coordinates these exhibits and always needs help from members to transport plants and set up and take down exhibits. Member blooming plants can be brought to the coordinator's home on Thursday's prior to these shows for Friday setup.

1.6 VAOS SPECIAL EVENTS

In addition to our monthly meetings and shows, the VAOS hosts a number of trips and special events each year for our members.

1.6.1 Bus Trips - Bus trips are planned to visit orchid nurseries and sales events outside of our area. Destinations have included:

- Redlands International Orchid Festival, held in May each year at the Redland Fruit & Spice Park in Homestead, FL. The largest orchid sales event in the country features 60 internationally acclaimed orchid growers and lecturers from around the U.S. and the world.

- Krull-Smith Orchids, Apopka, FL, a world-renowned grower who also participates in our annual show and sale each year.
- Carter & Holmes Orchids in Newberry, SC

Bus trips require advance reservation and payment and typically leave around 7 a.m. and return in late afternoon/early evening. Pick up locations are in Sarasota, Venice and Englewood. Large comfortable buses provide an opportunity to meet other members and onboard contests and prizes make the trip fun.

1.6.2 Fall Sale - The VAOS holds their Annual Member Plant Sale in the Fall each year in Centennial Park in downtown Venice. The downtown location on Venice Avenue attracts the public and sale proceeds are split 80% to the member and 20% to VAOS. All types of orchids and tropical plants are for sale at reasonable prices. This is a great way for members to sell their divisions and excess plants as well as to acquire new plants.

1.6.3 Holiday Party - The VAOS annual holiday party is held in December each year in lieu of our regular monthly meeting. This is always a special event with great food, a plant auction, music, dancing and fun.

1.6.4 Member Growing Area Tours - Each fall and spring VAOS members open their orchid growing areas to members for an open house/ tour. Based on interest, typically three member's homes, in close proximity to each other, are open for four hours on a Saturday. Members are provided directions and may visit at their leisure. Most VAOS members grow outdoors, in their patio, lanai or pool cage. Some members have shade houses and greenhouses. This is always a popular and well attended event as it affords members an opportunity to see how others grow, what culture works for them and how they organize their orchid growing area.

1.7 VAOS WEBSITE

The VAOS webmaster maintains our website at www.vaos.org. Visit our website to see:

- Calendar of upcoming events
- Meetings scheduled for the year including speakers and topics
- Past VAOS newsletters
- Links to local growers and other resources

1.8 GOVERNANCE

VAOS officers are elected each March and serve two year terms:

- President
- Vice President - Programs
- Vice President - Show Displays
- Vice President - Social Events
- Treasurer
- Recording Secretary
- Communications Director

Committee Chair and other positions are filled by members for a two year term or longer:

- Newsletter Editor
- Membership
- Education & Outreach
- Librarian
- Raffle Table
- Show Chair
- Webmaster

Addendum A provides descriptions and responsibilities for VAOS directors and committee chair positions. A copy of the VAOS Bylaws is available upon request from any board member.

2.0 THE AMERICAN ORCHID SOCIETY

The American Orchid Society (AOS) has an 88 year history devoted to orchid education, conservation and research. The AOS website provides a wealth of information for the orchid grower. Membership comes with a monthly subscription to Orchids Magazine, discounts on books and publications and free or discounted admission to more than 200 botanical gardens and arboreta. The VAOS is an affiliate of the AOS.

The AOS website www.AOS.org is the starting point for orchid information:

- Orchid Basics for the beginner
- Culture Sheets
- Pests & Diseases
- Monthly Checklists
- Orchid Magazine articles
- Shop for orchid books
- Links to worldwide resources and vendors

AOS members have access to 'members only' areas with in-depth information and also receive the AOS monthly newsletter.

3.0 ORCHID JUDGING

Orchid judging for the Venice Area Orchid society occurs on three levels. At our monthly meetings plant are judged by a team of VAOS members. At our orchid show and those shows in which we participate, AOS judges and others judge plants for ribbons. At shows and at monthly judging events in Tampa and Orlando, plants are judged by AOS Judges for AOS awards. Each of these judging systems uses a different set of standards.

3.1 VAOS Plant Table Judging – The VAOS awards seven ribbons each month to plants on the plant table. The ribbons are First, Second, Third Place, New Member, Best Species, Speaker’s Choice and Members’ Choice. The monthly speaker gives the Speaker’s Choice award to a plant of his or her choice – no criteria are specified. The Members’ Choice is voted on by anyone attending the meeting and represents the favorite of the members. If there is a tie vote, multiple awards are made. A team of judges drawn from the members present at the meeting select the other awards. Judges for these ribbons do not have to have extensive orchid growing experience to be part of a team, but it is desired that the team reach a consensus in giving the awards.

3.2 Judging at AOS Sanctioned Shows - Two types of judging usually occur at AOS sanctioned shows – ribbon judging and AOS judging. Ribbon judging is done by teams of AOS judges and plants are judged against like plants in the same class. At our show, we have 20 classes of Cattleyas. One of these classes, that include only large flowered Cattleyas that are pastel pink – pale lavender, may have several plants entered. All the plants in this class are judged against each other for first, second and third ribbons. Plants must be of good quality and presentation to earn a ribbon. Our show schedule defines over 100 classes of orchids for ribbon judging.

AOS judging occurs after ribbon judging and only plants nominated by AOS judges are considered. In our area, AOS judges work as teams to consider each of the nominated plants. Exhibited plants may be considered for any of the AOS awards listed below. AOS judging compares plants to desired standards of form and color and compares plants to previous awards to the species, or hybrid. The purpose of AOS judging is to encourage and recognize meritorious achievement in all fields of orchid endeavor.

The AOS awards are:

HCC (Highly Commended Certificate) - Awarded to orchid species or hybrids scoring 75 to 79 points inclusive on a 100 point scale,

AM (Award of Merit) - Awarded to orchid species or hybrids scoring 80 to 89 points inclusive on a 100 point scale.

FCC (First Class Certificate) - The highest flower quality award, awarded to orchid species or hybrids scoring 90 points or more on a 100 point scale.

JC (Judges' Commendation) - Given for distinctive characteristics that the judges unanimously feel should be recognized but cannot be scored in the customary ways.

AD (Award of Distinction) - Awarded to a cross representing a worthy new direction in Breeding. The award is granted unanimously without scoring by the judging team assigned.

AQ (Award of Quality) - Awarded once to a cross exhibited by a single individual as a group of not less than 12 plants or inflorescences of different clones of a hybrid or cultivated species.

CBR (Certificate of Botanical Recognition) - Awarded to rare and unusual species with educational interest that has received no previous awards.

CCM (Certificate of Cultural Merit) - Awarded to the exhibitor of a well-flowered specimen plant of robust health. The plant must score between 80 and 89 points on a 100 point scale.

CCE (Certificate of Cultural Excellence) - Awarded to the exhibitor of a well-flowered plant of robust health. The plant must score more than 90 points on a 100 point scale. Plants receiving this award represent the highest level of orchid culture.

3.3 AOS Florida Judging Centers - In addition to orchid shows, there are four AOS Judging Centers in Florida where members may enter their plants. The AOS website provides instructions for entering plants at these judging centers and contains the latest information on locations and times of judging.

Tampa - Florida North Central Judging Center, Christ the King Catholic Church, McLoughlin Center, Room C, 821 S. Dale Mabry Hwy., Tampa, FL at 6:30 pm on the fourth Wednesday of every month. Info: <http://www.fncjc.shutterfly.com>

Orlando - Florida North Central Judging Center, Harry P. Leu Gardens, 1920 N. Forest Ave., Orlando, FL at 1:30 pm on the second Saturday of the month.

Miami - Florida / Caribbean Judging Center, Fairchild Tropical Garden, 10901 Old Cutler Rd., Coral Gables, FL at 1:00pm on the third Saturday of the month.

West Palm Beach - West palm Beach Judging Center, AOS Visitors Center and Botanical Garden, 16700 AOS Lane, Delray Beach, FL at 2:00 pm on the fourth Saturday of the month.

3.4 Preparing Your Plants for Judging – When plants are shown on the plant table, in a society exhibit, or at an AOS judging they should be presented in the best condition. The flowers should be fresh and fully developed, and the plant should be clean and in good condition. If a plant or

flower shows signs of disease or insects, it will be eliminated from consideration. Cleaning spray or water marks from the plant enhances the presentation.

4.0 GROWING ORCHIDS LOCALLY

4.1 Local Orchid Vendors - Several local growers offer top quality orchids for sale and have been long time supporters of the VAOS. They provide the best possible source of advice on orchid culture and sell plants that will thrive in our warm climate.

Plantio La Orquidea (Tina & Rafael Romero), located at Tropiflora, 3480 Tallevast Rd., Sarasota 941-504-7737 www.plantiolaorquidea.com

Honey Bee Nursery (Jeff Higel) 2383 Englewood Rd. (Rt. 776) Englewood. 941-474-6866

Other orchid vendors located within easy driving distance of the Venice area include:

Palmer Orchids - (Robert Palmer) 22700 Taylor Dr., Bradenton, FL 34211 941-322-1644

Florida SunCoast Orchids - (Jim Roberts) 8211 Verna Bethany Rd., Myakka City, FL 941-322-8777

4.2 Culture For Commonly Grown Orchids - Because of our temperate climate, many orchids can be grown outdoors in our area. This section provides an overview of the orchids most commonly grown here with basic culture information.

4.2.1 Cattleya - This group includes standard Cattleyas, mini-Cattleyas, and their hybrids - Brassavolas, Laelias, Epidendrums, Sophronitis, etc. This is our favorite group of orchids because of the wide range of colors, fragrances and bloom sizes. There are cattleyas for every season and many bloom several times per year.



Light: Provide bright, filtered sunlight. Morning sun is best. A bright south or east exposure is good. During the warm season, a screened patio or the shade of a tree is desirable.

Temperature: Nights above 50* F. Days below 100* F are tolerable with increased water, shading and good air circulation.

Water: Water thoroughly and allow to dry between watering.

Fertilizer: Fertilize during the warmer months with any good orchid fertilizer. Follow the rule "Weekly - weakly" each week with a 1/4 strength solution. The key is to fertilize on a regular basis. You may wish to supplement with a time release fertilizer (Nutricote, sold as Dynamite at Home Depot works well).

Potting: Repot when the plant has outgrown the pot or when the media breaks down, typically every two years. Do not over pot - leave enough room for just two years growth from the newest pseudo bulb. The best time to repot is when the plant is putting out new roots. Cattleyas do well in plastic or clay pots, as well as in baskets depending on your watering habits.



4.2.2 Dendrobium - Dendrobiums are popular because of their long-lasting flowers and frequent blooming habit. Some become very large and others have been bred to stay very compact. All of the evergreen dendrobiums offered are easy to grow and bloom.

Light: Provide bright, filtered sunlight. Morning sun is the best. A bright south or east exposure is good. During warm seasons, a screened patio or the shade of a tree is desirable.

Temperature: Nights above 55* F. Day temperature below 90* F. Keep phalaenopsis- type dendrobiums warm (never below 55* without protection) or they will lose their leaves.

Water: Water thoroughly and allow to dry between watering. Grow somewhat on the drier side during the cool winter months. Over -watering damages roots and plants will use their energy to produce keikis instead of flowers. Nobile type dendrobiums require a "dry winter rest", meaning no fertilizer and less water until they set buds in the spring.

Fertilizer: Fertilize during the warmer months with any good orchid fertilizer. "Weekly-weakly" each week with a 1/4 strength solution. Reduce fertilizer during the cooler winter months.

Potting: Dendrobiums do not like to be repotted; they like to be crowded in their container. When they become well-established in their pot they will increase flower count and vigor. The best time to repot is when the plant is putting out new roots. Since most Dendrobiums like to dry out between watering, clay pots are recommended.

4.2.3 Oncidium - This group includes thin-leaved oncidiums, the tiny equitant oncidiums and the butterfly types. Brassias, commonly called spider orchids, are also included. Equitants and the butterfly types are grown like Phalaenopsis, except in clay pots. The following is the care for the thin-leaved oncidiums and brassias.



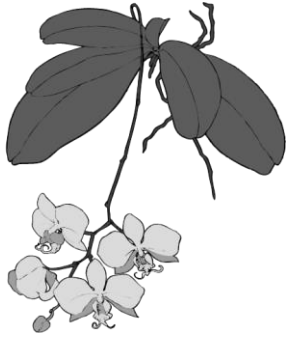
Light: Bright, filtered sunlight similar to the light required for cattleyas.

Temperature: Nights above 50* F. Day temperatures below 90 to 95 * F. Remember to increase water, fertilizer and air circulation during high temperatures. You may also have to increase shading during the summer months.

Water: Water thoroughly and allow to dry between watering.

Fertilizer: Fertilize during the warmer months with any good orchid fertilizer. "Weekly-weakly" with a 1/4 strength solution. Fertilize on a regular basis. Less fertilizer during the cooler winter months. You may supplement with a time release fertilizer (Nutricote).

Potting: Repot when the plant has outgrown the pot or the media has broken down.



4.2.4 Phalaenopsis - Commonly called the Moth Orchid, this group typically flowers in the spring and will provide you with blooms for three to six months!

Light: Provide less light for Phalaenopsis than for cattleyas and dendrobiums. A shady, screened patio is good, no direct sunlight.

Temperature: Nights above 55* F. Day temperatures below 90* F. Keep warm during cooler winter nights - cold air will blast buds. A 20 degree day/night differential is necessary to initiate spikes.

Water: Water thoroughly, but do not allow to become completely dry between watering. By picking up the pot you can tell by the weight whether the plant needs water. Keep slightly moist. Be careful to avoid getting water in the crown of the plant - do not expose to rainfall. Water early in the day to allow the plant to dry out before nightfall.

Fertilizer: Fertilize during the warmer months with any good orchid fertilizer. "Weekly - weakly" each week with a 1/4 strength solution. Supplement with Nutricote time release fertilizer.

Potting: Phalaenopsis love to be repotted. Try to repot phals every year. It is best not to repot during intense heat.

4.2.5 Vanda - This group includes Vandas, Ascocendas, Ascocentrums, Rhyncostylis, Aerides and Angraecums. They prefer to grow in baskets with little or no media.



Light: Brighter light is required for this group. In warmer climates these plants only need to be protected from midday sun.

Temperature: Nights above 50* F. Days below 100* F. are tolerable with increased water, shading and good air circulation.

Water: LOTS!!! Vandas do not have pseudo bulbs like cattleyas and dendrobiums, so they cannot store water and nutrients. Many people grow these types in empty baskets with no orchid media. When grown without media, they require daily watering.

Fertilizer: Fertilize during the warmer months with any good orchid fertilizer. Some growers fertilize two or three times a week. The key is to fertilize on a regular basis. Vanda roots will benefit from periodic applications of KLN, a rooting hormone made by DynaGrow.

Potting: Because of their large root systems, this group likes to be grown in baskets and hung in a bright location. Never try to remove the plant from the basket once it is established. A smaller basket may be set inside a larger basket. There is no need to repot.

The AOS website (www.aos.org) provides culture sheets for these and other popular orchids as well as a wealth of information on plant culture. If you do not have access to a computer, the VAOS Membership table has copies of most AOS culture sheets.

4.3 VAOS Member Culture Tips - This section provides basic culture tips compiled from members and local growers that are specific to our south Florida growing area. Remember that each grower's conditions and needs will vary.

What orchids grow best in South Florida?

Cattleyas, dendrobiums, oncidiums, vandas and bulbos grow well outdoors in our area. Phalaenopsis and paphiopedilums grow well but require more shade and should be hand-watered and not exposed to rainfall. Phragmipediums grow well and prefer to have their "feet wet" (set in saucer of water). Most cymbidiums, miltonias and odontoglossums are cool growing plants and will not bloom well here unless purchased from a local grower and bred to be "warmth tolerant". Any species plant requires special attention - your success is based on your ability to match its' natural habitat. Consult www.species.com or Bakers Culture Sheets for species habitat information.

How Often Should I Water my Orchids?

Water your orchids once or twice a week or more frequently when it is very hot. Water thoroughly, wait 15 minutes and then water thoroughly again. Allow cattleyas, dendrobiums and oncidiums to dry out before the next watering. Use the pot "heft test" to determine if the pot is light and the plant needs watering. Bulbos, phals, paphs and phrags require more frequent watering - keep them evenly moist but not wet. Vandas and other mounted plants grown with no media will require daily watering during the warm months. Seedlings will require more frequent watering. Rain water or reverse osmosis (RO) filtered water is best as it is pure, but, our Venice area water is excellent. Do not use a water softener - the salt will kill the plants.

How much light and/or shade do my orchids need?

Cattleyas, dendrobiums, oncidiums and phragmipediums flourish in bright light with 15% to 30% shade - about what a screened patio, lanai or pool cage provides or a shade tree. East or south exposure is best. Slowly acclimate your new orchids to higher light conditions to avoid sunburn. Phals, paphs and bulbos require bright, indirect light - they often do well under a

patio overhang providing them protection from the sun and rain. Vandas require high light. The most frequent reason for lack of blooming is too little light. There are micro-climates in every growing area and often moving a plant to another area will improve blooming. Watch for and adjust for seasonal changes in sunlight exposure in your growing area.

How important is air circulation?

Good air circulation around your orchids is critical especially during the warmer months to reduce the risk of fungus and pests. The higher the heat, the more water and air circulation is needed. Ceiling fans work well supplemented with smaller fans to maintain a slight breeze around your plants 24/7. Avoid crowding plants to allow air to circulate around them.

What type of fertilizer should I use?

Any good orchid fertilizer will do, some people even use tomato or african violet fertilizer. Use a 20-20-20 balanced fertilizer and supplement occasionally with calcium and magnesium. Or use a Michigan State University (MSU) - type fertilizer that contains micro-nutrients including calcium and magnesium. The rule of thumb is to fertilize "weekly-weakly", using 1/4 to 1/2 tsp. fertilizer to a gallon of water. When the plants' pseudo bulbs have matured and the plant begins dormancy in the cooler months, fertilize less frequently. Many local growers recommend supplementing with a timed-release fertilizer (Nutricote sold as Dynamite at Home Depot).

What type of media works best?

Orchids grown outdoors in South Florida require an open mix that drains rapidly after our heavy rains. Most growers use a bark mix (bark, charcoal, sponge rock) or a cocoanut husk chunk (CHC) mix (CHC, charcoal, sponge rock). Some growers use a partial or 100% inorganic mix composed of one or more of the following: lava rock, charcoal, aliflor (clay pellets), dyna-rok, sponge rock or other media for their mature plants. Use smaller size media for seedlings or fine root plants and larger size media for mature plants. Some growers prefer sphagnum moss in clay pots for Phalaenopsis, but sphagnum moss holds water, is tricky, and should not be used in plants exposed to rainfall.

The best quality media can be found at local orchid nurseries or purchased through online orchid suppliers.

If you use cocoanut husk chunks (CHC), be sure to rinse it thoroughly before use. Soak and rinse in clear water three times and then add calcium nitrate to the final rinse to remove all salt residue.

What type of pots should I use?

Using clay or plastic pots is a matter of personal preference. Clay pots dry out faster and help to keep plants cooler in hot weather. They also add weight to stabilize the plant in heavy winds. Plastic pots are less expensive and hold moisture longer. Many growers pot seedlings and moisture loving plants in plastic and mature plants in clay. Some outdoor growers will set plastic pots into clay pots for added stability. Azalea (short) clay pots with slotted holes work well. Aircone plastic pots are popular. Whichever pot you choose, be sure that it has sufficient drainage holes. Wood or plastic baskets are also popular and are used for vandas, agraecums and those genera that like to wander.

What works best for pest and fungus control?

Many pest and fungus problems can be avoided by keeping your growing area clean and increasing air circulation during hot weather. Monitor your plants carefully and if you find a problem isolate the plant and treat it. Remove dry sheaths where scale often hides. Spray clean your work areas and plant shelves with Physan or a 10% bleach solution.

Common pests in our area are scale, thrips, aphids, mealy bugs and slugs. If you have a small collection or if the problem is not widespread, try a non-chemical treatment first - Neem Oil, All Seasons Oil, 50/50 alcohol and water solution or just plain dish washing soap in water. Several treatments will be necessary. Saturate the plant, spraying under the leaves. Do not spray oils on a hot day. See www.firststrays.com for some popular home remedies.

If a pest problem is widespread or cannot be eliminated by non-chemical treatments, the next step is a pesticide. Merit 75 or Orthene WP 97 is recommended for scale, thrips, mealy bugs and aphids. Follow label directions carefully and wear protective clothing. Rotate pesticides. Routine preventative spraying with pesticides is not recommended.

Treat slugs with slug and snail bait pellets (sprinkle small amount on top of media) available from Home Depot or Lowes. Mites require a miticide such as Kelthane or Pentac. Ants can be eliminated with Orange Guard, Sevin or Orthene.

Neem oil and All Seasons Oil will control pests and also fungus. For widespread fungus problems treat with Banrot 40 WP or Zyban. Preventative spraying with Banrot or Zyban in spring and early summer will help to prevent fungus problems during the rainy season.

Several websites recommended in Section 5.0 Resources will help to identify pests and diseases and suggest treatments.

What is the best way to sterilize my pots and cutting tools?

Pots and tools must be sterilized to prevent the spread of disease. Three common approaches to sterilizing tools are 1) propane torch, 2) 10% bleach solution and 3) use disposable razor

blades. A propane torch is probably the best method. Alcohol and Physan are not effective. Soak used pots in a 10% bleach solution for one day, rinse and dry before reuse.

5.0 RESOURCES

This section provides a brief list of books, websites and subscription services recommended by VAOS members.

5.1 Recommended Books - Check the VAOS Library first for copies of these books to borrow. Good sources to purchase these books are www.AOS.org or www.Amazon.com where you may find inexpensive used books for sale.

Beginner Orchid Books

- Golden Guide to Orchids
- Your First Orchid - A Guide for Beginners, AOS
- Understanding Orchids, William Cullina

Classics

- Mary Noble: You Can Grow Orchids; You Can Grow Cattleya Orchids; You Can Grow Phalaenopsis Orchids
- Rebecca Northen: Home Orchid Growing; Orchids As House Plants

Coffee Table Books

- Flora's Orchids, Timber Press
- The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Orchids, A. Pridgeon, Ed.
- The New Encyclopedia of Orchids, I. la Croix
- The Orchid, Mark Griffiths
- The World's Most Beautiful Orchids, Greg Allikas and Ned Nash

Florida Orchid Culture

- An Intro to Orchids, A Guide to Orchid Growing in the Subtropics, So. FL Orchid Society
- Florida Orchid Growing Month By Month, Martin Motes, PhD
- Orchid Growing In the Tropics, Orchid Society of So. East Asia

Florida Native Orchids

- Wild Orchids of Florida, Paul Martin Brown
- Wild Love Affair, Essence of Florida's Native Orchids, Connie Bransilver

Genera Specific Books

- The Classic Cattleyas, Chadwick and Chadwick
- Dendrobiums and It's Relatives, B. Lavarack, W. Harris, G. Stocker
- Culture of the Phalaenopsis Orchid, Bob Gordon
- Paphiopedilum Growers Manual, Lance Birk
- Tropical Slipper Orchids, Harold Koopowitz

Identification and General Culture Books

- AOS Growing Orchids
- Botanica's Orchids
- Ortho Books: Complete Guide to Orchids
- Simon & Schuster's Guide to Orchids
- Taylors Guide to Orchids

Non-Fiction/Must Reads

- Orchid Fever, Eric Hansen
- The Orchid Thief, Susan Orlean

Pests & Diseases Books

- Pests and Diseases , AOS

5.2 Recommended Websites

Online Forums

Garden Web Orchid Forum	http://forums2.gardenweb.com/forums/orchids
The Orchid Source Forum	http://forum.theorchidsource.com
The Slipper Orchid Forum	http://www.slipperorchidforum.com

Each forum has a search engine and FAQ section, good resources for specific culture advice.

Online Supplies

Kelley's Korner	www.kkorchid.com
OFE International	www.ofe-intl.com
Roberts Flower Supply	www.orchidmix.com

First Rays www.firststrays.com
IGS (Stainless steel shelves) www.indoorgardensupplies.com

The above online suppliers sell excellent quality media for growing your orchids as well as fertilizers, pesticides, plastic pots, hangers, etc. Some local resources for supplies include:

- Home Depot – Clay slotted pots; wooden baskets; Dynamite fertilizer (in red canister)
- Lowes - Pots, baskets, fertilizer, pest control
- Honey Bee Nursery (941-474-6866) Jeff Higel. 2383 Englewood Rd. (Rt. 776) Englewood (orchids, supplies)

Online Species Information

- Bakers Culture Sheets (see subscription services below)
- Brazilian orchid species info Mirandaorchids.com/brazilianorchidsVGA.htm
- Jay Pfahl's Internet Orchid Species Photo Encyclopedia www.orchidspecies.com
10,600 species in 763 genera - best resource for species native habitat info.
- RHS/Kew Checklist www.kew.org/science/orchids

Online Vendors

If you can't find what you are looking for locally, here are some online vendors that offer good quality plants:

Andy's Orchids (species)	www.andysorchids.com
Carmela Orchids	www.carmelaorchids.net
Carter & Holmes	www.carterandholmes.com
E.F.G. Orchids	www.efgorchids.com
Exotic Orchids of Maui	www.maiorchids.com
Gold Country Orchids	www.goldcountryorchids.com
Hausermann Orchids	www.orchidsbyhausermann.com
H&R Nurseries	www.hrnurseries.com
Krull-Smith Orchids	www.krullsmith.com
Odom Orchids	www.odoms.com
Plantio La Orquidea	www.plantiolaorquidea.com
Sunset Valley Orchids	www.sunsetvalleyorchids.com

5.3 Software and Subscription Services

AOS AQ Plus - Comprehensive orchid research software available by subscription from AOS (www.aos.org) including AOS award in Awards Quarterly format and images.

AOS Beginners Newsletter - Register at www.aosforum.org/phplist

Bakers Culture Sheets - Charles and Margaret Baker species culture sheets available through subscription www.orchidculture.com

Martin Motes Florida Orchid Growing Month by Month - Monthly emails available by request from Martin.Motes@gmail.com

Orchid Wiz - Comprehensive orchid research software available by subscription (www.orchidwiz.com) including hybrid registrations and AOS awards, images, and Baker culture data for species.

ADDENDUM A - VAOS DIRECTORS AND COMMITTEES

DIRECTORS - The VAOS has nine Directors who serve two year terms and are elected or appointed in odd or even years according to the bylaws:

President - The President is the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation. The President has general and active management of the business of the organization and is subject to the directions of the Board of Directors. The president shall be ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating committee.

Vice President - Programs - The Vice President- Programs chairs the Program Committee and acts as the president in the president's absence or inability to serve as the president. Responsible for planning and coordinating meeting speakers, programs and special events.

Vice President - Show Displays - The Vice President -Show Displays chairs the Orchid Show Committee, responsible for planning and coordinating the annual VAOS show exhibit and our exhibits at other society shows.

Vice President -Social Events - The Vice President -Social Events chairs the Hospitality Committee, responsible for the monthly meeting refreshment table and coordinating other member social events.

Recording Secretary - The Recording Secretary has custody of and maintains the corporate records, except for the financial records, and records the minutes of meetings of the Board of Directors and of the membership. The Recording Secretary maintains an accurate list of the membership and serves as Chair of the Membership Committee.

Communications Director - The Communications Director is responsible for all correspondence for the organization, for transmitting information from the Board of Directors to the membership and for distributing notices of meetings. The Communications Director may also serve as the Newsletter Editor.

Treasurer - The Treasurer has custody of all organization funds and financial records and is responsible for keeping full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements. The Treasurer presents an account of the organization's finances in the monthly VAOS newsletter and at each Board of Directors' meetings and at the annual meeting. The Treasurer has the authority to execute instruments in accordance with the VAOS By-laws and shall perform other duties as prescribed by the Board of Directors.

Membership Director - The Membership Director is responsible for developing ideas and programs to promote membership. This Director maintains current membership information, updates board monthly of the membership roster, collects and records dues, prepares member nametags, publishes the annual membership directory and welcomes members at the meetings with assistance from member volunteers.

Immediate Past President - The duties of the first Immediate Past President of the organization who has not been elected to another position on the Board of Directors shall be assigned by the president.

Directors At Large - The duties of the Directors At Large shall be assigned by the President. Directors At Large will normally serve in key positions such as Show Chair, Director of Education and Outreach or other key functions. Directors At Large have no set term.

COMMITTEES- The Board of Directors shall approve annually the appointment of positions and chairs of committees that play a critical role at meetings and other activities of the Society. They may include:

Annual Show Chair(s)
AOS Representative
Education and Outreach Chair
Librarian
Mentor Program Chair
Newsletter Editor
Nominating Committee
Plant Table Chair
Raffle Table Chair
Technology Chair
Webmaster

Other positions, committees and ad hoc working groups may be created as deemed necessary by the Board. Committee chairs will appoint members to their committee. Each committee shall operate under the direction of the Committee Chair. The Board of Directors shall approve the committee members, define the budget and initiatives of the committees.

Committee Functions

Show Chair - The Show Chair(s) directs all aspects of the annual orchid show in February. They design show layout, choose vendors, assign committee chairs for each show function, promote and manage the show and report show income and expenditures to the Board of Directors.

AOS Representative - The AOS Representative serves as the interface between the Society and the American Orchid Society (AOS), promoting AOS programs, resources and membership benefits.

Education and Outreach Chair - This Chair oversees the Growers Clinic and other special events, workshops and programs focused on member education with assistance from member volunteers. This promotes orchid culture training and education to assist beginner growers and to encourage long term membership retention. This Chair also may give orchid culture presentations to the broader community as a service and to draw in new members.

Librarian - The Librarian shall manage all aspects of the library including bringing the library books into the main meeting room, periodic selection of additional books and publications, loaning out and tracking books.

Mentor Program Chair - The Mentor Program Chair coordinates and promotes the program, recruits and assigns new mentors and mentees, and monitors and reports on the progress and success of the program.

Newsletter Editor - The Newsletter Editor is responsible for soliciting input, writing, editing, production and publishing the Society's newsletter to the members in accordance with a publication schedule set by the Board of Directors.

Nominating Committee Chair - This Chair, appointed by the President and supported by two member volunteers, is responsible for recruiting candidates to fill vacating board positions.

Plant Table Chair - This Chair shall coordinate the set up of the plant table at monthly meetings, select volunteer judges, record awards, maintain supplies and coordinate photography and plant descriptions for the awarded plants.

Raffle Table Chair - This Chair shall solicit and bring plants, sell raffle tickets during the monthly meeting, hold the raffle at the close of the meeting, and give proceeds to the Treasurer.

Technology Chair - This Chair shall be responsible for equipment, lighting and set up configuration for the monthly meetings including the speaker's equipment for presentations.

Webmaster - The Webmaster chairs the Website Committee, is responsible for keeping the VAOS website current by posting information about the VAOS, Society events, other upcoming events of general interest, orchid cultural information and links to sites of interest.

NOTES