

# VENICE AREA Orchid Society

Newsletter

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July/Aug. 2020

## MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT



Hi everyone! Welcome to a long hot summer of social distancing and no orchid meetings. I hope you are all well and that both you and your orchids are virus free!

Since we have not been able to meet, we have started a Facebook group for the Venice Area Orchid Society. In the past, we have had a different type of Facebook page but we found that it was difficult to interact with each other and that followers were not seeing an interacting with the posts. Our hope is that with this new group, you will join and post pictures of your blooming plants. Once we really get going with it, we can do some plant table contests—we can post a few different blooming plants and give prizes for who get the most “likes”. We have some gift certificates from local growers we are dying to give away, so join the group and let's get started!

You can also use this group to post pictures of problem plants and ask for advice. Show us your failures as well as your successes! We have a lot of expert growers, both locally and around the state who belong to the group and can offer advice. Feel free to offer advice yourselves. All we ask is that you be respectful and constructive to each other. And remember, “There are no stupid questions!” Ask away—if you wondered about it, someone else did, too. And if you solved a problem, you might save someone else some time and aggravation.

**MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT — CONTINUED PG. 2**

## July and August 2020 Events

**All meetings and events have been canceled through the end of Aug. and until further notice.**

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### Newsletter Quick Links

[VAOS 2020 - 2021 Officers](#)

[Orchid Resources](#)

**Share photos of your blooming orchids on our Face Book page**

## MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT — CONTINUED

Yet another thing you can do is to offer for sale, trade, or give away any extra plants and divisions. Just post the plant, and what you want for it. Then make your arrangements privately. Most of us have been accumulating extra plants we would normally put on the raffle table so let's share them with each other!

That is all for now, we have to wait and see what the most recent wave of Coronavirus does before we can make meeting plans. Cross your fingers it goes away soon and wear your mask!

Thanks and have a good summer!  
Joanna Shaw, President

## July in Your Orchid Collection

### July Climate Data

- Average high: 90.9
- 
- Average low: 76.5
- 
- Average mean: 83.7

Excerpted from [\*Florida Orchid Growing: Month by Month\*](#) by Martin Motes. All rights reserved.

Although it mostly passes unnoticed to millions locked in their air-conditioned bubbles, July in South Florida is quite different from June. While the pattern of afternoon showers built from the moisture of the morning's sea breeze persists in July, the thunder-storms are sharper and shorter. The clouds linger less and the foliage dries more quickly. Less quantity of rain falls in July than in June and periods of several days typically pass without a drop. This is good news for orchid growers. July (and August) allow orchidists to focus on the first essential of orchid growing, drying the plant out.

Frequently, neophyte growers ask "What if I go away for several weeks in the summer and there is no one to water the plants?" The response is "That's wonderful". Experienced growers use the break in the rainfall during July and August to dry their plants "hard". Depriving orchids of water for several days until they and the media or baskets they grow in are bone dry is essential to good orchid culture. By drying the plants hard, one deals a severe blow to orchids natural enemy, fungus. Orchids have evolved to withstand drought because fungus can not.

## July in Your Orchid Collection, continued...

Remember until the first drizzle of September sets in, allowing our plants two months to mature and harden their growth making them less vulnerable to the September conditions which give some advantage again to the fungi.

Careful watering and judicious drying will do more than any other practice to ensure healthy plants. Drought is the orchid plants armor against disease. Be sure that your plants dry as completely as the weather of July permits. Nonetheless, as our plants are in full growth they need adequate water in July therefor after a hard drying, orchid plants need a thorough re-hydration. If the next rain fall is insufficient to saturate pot, roots and media, the grower should add to the natural moisture until he is sure both roots and media are saturated, using two or three applications of water spaced a few minutes apart. When the plants stop dripping is the time to apply the next dose of water. Don't stop watering until the "heft" of the pot tells you that it is holding as much water as it can. More typically in July, orchidists should use these opportunities when more moisture is required to substitute fertilizer for water and saturate the roots and the media in the same thorough manner. In July typically think of fertilizing rather than watering. Weekly application of a commonly available balanced fertilizer (20-20-20 or 18-18-18) at two teaspoons per gal. will supply the nutrients that our plants require in this period of lush growth. This balanced formula should be alternated every other week with potassium nitrate and Epsom salts (one tablespoon each) to supply the extra magnesium and potassium we now know are plants need on a regular basis. Even better (although not so readily available) lower phosphorus fertilizers containing extra magnesium and calcium with a formula like Peter's Excel (15-5-15) have been shown to be the precise fertilizer our plants need. This formula is recommended year round. Hopefully such orchid specific fertilizers will become more widely available. Lowering the phosphorus intake of our plants is particularly important in South Florida because of our alkaline water. Always apply fertilizer in the same way as water, in two to three doses spaced a few minutes apart. Apply the fertilizer to the point of "run off" *IE. when the solution starts to fall off the plants; stop and move on to the next plant. Repeat the application a few minutes later when the plants stop dripping. In July more than ever, never, never follow the frequently heard and disastrously bad advice of watering before fertilizing. Always substitute fertilizer for water: now and at every season. Roots saturated with water cannot absorb fertilizer but the prolonged wetness can rot your plants. Don't give fungus the upper hand by wetting the plant's foliage and roots more often or longer than necessary. Careful watering is especially important throughout the rainy season.*

The wise orchidist will have long since finished all of his potting of sympodials and the top working of his vandas but for the rest of us this is the eleventh hour. Autumn is closer than we think and vandas will need at least three months to settle in to their new baskets or pots before the first chill of October tickles their root tips. Unless you can protect them thoroughly from cold, *Vandatop cuttings and keikies should not be made after the end of July. If you do take cuttings remember the "3 root rule". Count down from the crown and make the cutting beneath the third or fourth root. Keep as many leaves as possible on the stump and you will be rewarded with a greater abundance of offshoots. Always slip the sterile knife or shears down between the stem and the leaves and then cut transversely to save as many leaves as possible. Be sure to anchor the cutting firmly in its new lodging. Tie them up and tie them down! There is no time for mistakes in July.*

## July in Your Orchid Collection, continued

Thrips are much less of a problem in July as the rain tends to wash them away and doubtless there is an abundance of other lush fodder for them elsewhere in our yards. They can reappear in a prolonged patch of dryness, so if you need to think of watering in July it may be dry enough to worry about thrips. A prophylactic spraying for thrips in July will also put a damper on scale crawlers. If a second spraying with soap follows the first by seven to 10 days, the population of mites will be scotched as well.

### CULTURAL NOTE Water Your Plants!

Many growers focus their attentions on feeding their orchids - what fertilizer brand, formula, application concentration and frequency is best. **In truth, fertilizer is very low on the priority list of orchid needs, but water is much more important factor in growth. In fact, for a plant to grow and bloom it must consume about 19,000-times more water than fertilizer!**

In addition to being a raw material for growth and making up some 90% of a plant's mass, the mere presence of an adequate water supply at the root system releases the hormone "trigger" needed for growth. That is one reason that an open, airy, constantly-moist potting medium is better than putting your plants through repeated dry periods.

So now let's look at water quality. Simple fact: orchids have evolved getting very pure water, so grow better if that's what they get. The purer the water supply you have, the better the plants will do, but that doesn't mean you must have ultra-pure water.

Two important factors in water quality are the pH and the alkalinity. The pH is simply the ratio of acidic hydrogen ( $H^+$ ) ions and basic hydroxide ( $OH^-$ ) ions, and can be directly measured. Alkalinity, on the other hand, is a measure of how much resistance a solution has to lowering the pH through the addition of an acid. That resistance, or buffering capacity, is usually controlled by bicarbonates of calcium, magnesium and sodium, and to a lesser degree by their carbonates. The sum of their buffering effects is usually reported as the concentration of  $CaCO_3$ , usually in part-per-million (ppm).

Folks are often quite concerned about getting the pH of their irrigation solutions "just right", but fail to recognize that alkalinity may be more important than the pH itself, as if you have high alkalinity in your water supply, adjusting the pH may be a waste of time, as once it's in the pot, the rhizosphere pH will steadily climb - much like adding lime to your lawn.

If you use distilled, reverse osmosis (RO) or collected rainwater, the alkalinity will be quite low. For municipal tap water or well water, ideally you should send a sample for testing so you know your starting point. When I moved to North Carolina, I sent a sample to the J. R. Peters Lab in Allentown PA and got a report.



Even if you don't want to spend the money on a water report, your municipal water provider may publish that information online. Their primary focus is water quality from a safety perspective, but they might report hardness, as well. In my case, with an alkalinity of 1 ppm  $\text{CaCO}_3$ , I know that my solution pH becomes a controlling factor. Generally speaking, anything below about 50-60 ppm  $\text{CaCO}_3$  ppm is considered to be low alkalinity and is great for orchids. Higher may be OK, but I think it's best to keep it below 100 ppm in any case

If you have a high-alkalinity, high solids water supply (they often go together), the leaves of your plants will take on a dull, "matte finish" appearance, while those grown using purer, low-alkalinity water will be glossy and clean looking. If your plants are dull-looking, you might consider purchasing distilled or RO water to blend with your tap water or to use exclusively.

Ray Barkalow [www.FirstRays.com](http://www.FirstRays.com)



Here is a picture of an *Encyclia tampensis* blooming in my side yard. I'm trying to put all of my plants in trees or natural settings so I don't have any pots to water on the porch when we go away during the summer.

Submitted by Bruce Weaver

## REPOTTING TIPS

This time of year heat stress can take a toll on even our healthy, mature plants. Because many of us continue to repot throughout the summer months, some precautions will help to ensure our freshly potted plants get off to a good start. Soak your media before repotting. Use pot clips to ensure the plant is firmly secured in its new pot. Placing a thin layer of damp sphagnum moss on top of the media will encourage new roots and will protect them from snails. Drench the plant with fungicide and place it in a well-ventilated area out of direct sunlight. Reduce watering for the first two weeks.

## THE SECRET IS SEAWEED

Have you ever wondered how someone's orchid looks absolutely beautiful, with big flowers and healthy roots and yours looks so-so? I know I have. My orchids were just ok. They were growing, but they just didn't have the "wow" factor.

A little over a year ago I asked a friend of mine how he was able to get big beautiful flowers, and nice healthy roots. I told him that I fertilize, use cal-mag, have my orchids in the correct light and water accordingly; all the usual stuff. He told me his secret was seaweed aka kelp.

Seaweed/kelp has been proven to be extremely beneficial in growing healthy plants. It's also used as fertilizer in hydroponic growing methods. It is considered a supplement with fertilizer in growing your orchids as it has the macro-nutrients that orchids love.

Another benefit is that seaweed spray promotes root growth. If you have an orchid that has lost all its roots, put it in an empty pot and light mist it every day. Your orchid will start to produce new roots within a couple of weeks. I cannot guarantee it, depending on how far gone your orchid is, but the odds are pretty good new roots will start to grow. So, if you win that mystery bare root orchid with no roots at the raffle table, use seaweed spray and you will soon see roots. I do it all the time. Oops, I think I just gave away my raffle table secret.

I use it as a daily foliar spray. I get out my trusty pump sprayer every morning, mix up my seaweed spray and lightly spray my orchids, swishing my wand around in the air above my potted orchids like I'm some orchid fairy blessing my babies, to create a light mist on the leaves. It really doesn't take much, the seaweed is then absorbed through the leaves.

With my vandas and other bare root orchids, I do things just a little bit differently. As you know, vandas and bare root orchids require daily watering at least once a day in the cooler months and at least twice a day in our wonderful warmer months. When I spray these types of orchids in the morning, I concentrate on the roots and spray them down really, really well so they can (A) get watered; and (B) soak up the seaweed. Talk about a twofer. Now remember this is in addition to your fertilizing routine and not a replacement for fertilizer.

## THE SECRET IS SEAWEED, continued

Seaweed comes in a couple of forms, either granular or liquid. I prefer the granular form. During the slower growing periods I use ¼ tsp to a gallon of water. During the growing season, or as I call it, happy root time, I use ½ tsp.

Now let's talk about brands, oh my goodness there are so many brands. There's the one I use, which is NPK Raw Kelp, or there is Maxicorp, Liquid Kelp Organic Seaweed, etc., the list goes on. There are even fertilizers that have seaweed already in it as a convenience such as Palmer's. You can find seaweed online or at specialty nurseries, don't bother with Lowes or Home Depot, they don't carry it. But my favorite is the NPK Raw Kelp. If you are really ambitious, you can collect seaweed off the beach and make your own. There are plenty of YouTube videos that show you how.

There are a couple of caveats, it can be somewhat stinky and it can stain leaves. Happy growing everyone.

Vicki Fisher

### Treasurer's Report April 01, 2020

<b>Operating Fund</b> Starting April 01, 2020	\$42,693.08
+ Income	\$660.00
- Payments and Transfers	\$38,417.72
Closing Balance April 30, 2020	\$4,935.88

	+
<b>Petty Cash</b>	\$75.00

<b>Total Operating Fund April 30, 2020</b>	<b>\$5,010.88</b>
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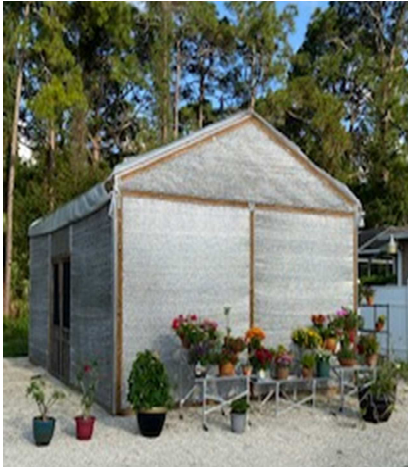
### Reserve Fund

Starting Balance April 1, 2020	\$23,895.79
+Interest Income April 30, 2020	\$1.04
Transfer from Checking	\$38,000.00
Closing Balance April 30, 2020	\$61,896.24

Submitted by Judy Loeffler, Treasurer

# A Virtual Tour of an Orchid Obsessed Member's Shadehouse

*Submitted by Stephanie Lubberger*



Due to COVID 19 the annual Spring Growing Tours were cancelled. This has been a favorite event every year and I was saddened when the tours were cancelled this year. My growing area was one of the areas to be toured this year. So instead we are doing a virtual tour via photographs. I hope you enjoy a peek into my little orchid obsession! Little did I know that going to the VAOS Orchid show in 2017 would lead to a total obsession with orchids! Shortly after attending the show my husband and I joined VAOS. We needed to learn how

to not kill all of our gorgeous new plants after all. What we found there was so much more than information about how to grow them. The monthly speakers opened our eyes to many different types of orchids and of course they all brought plants for sale...how could you not take advantage of getting plants from growers from all over the country! Then there was the raffle table. VAOS has very generous members who donate to our table each month. I have some very special plants that I won from the table! For new members that want to grow their collection, this is a great way to get quality plants! The next thing we did was start going to local growers open houses...I was in awe! Who knew there were such places of wonder, where you could just spend hours looking at tags, where specimen size plants bloomed in all their glory and imagining the possibility of what a tiny seedling could become. We joined the VAOS mentoring program. What a wonderful experience! Learning from people who have been growing for years was invaluable. Then I joined a group on Facebook named Florida Orchid Growing, more affectionately known as FOG. Seeing pictures of FOG members orchids multiple times a day led to a very long wishlist! For the next few months I kept seeing posts about this event named Tamiami International Orchid Festival. Of course we just had to go! I was not prepared for what I witnessed that first night at the preview. Vendors from all over the world had brought every kind of orchid imaginable. If you have never been, you should go! I was supposed to go to Redland International Orchid Festival that same year, but I got the departure time wrong and missed the bus!!! But that's ok, I made the trip the next year in 2019. Also a must attend event! We are fortunate that VAOS sponsors a bus trip. It was a fun day spending time with other members on the trip down and nice to be able to sleep on the way home after being in the sun all day! While my husband still loves orchids, he is not quite as obsessed as I am.

Over the last 3 years I have collected over 550 plants. I started growing orchids in my lanai originally, gradually adding shelves, benches and placed top rails of fencing along the edge of the pool cage to hang plants from. I soon outgrew that space! I loved having the orchids all around me! But with that many orchids it became necessary to start using chemicals and since we have critters that hang out in the pool cage.



7 parrots and a dog, plus the constant battle with algae, led us to building a structure on our property. We were fortunate to have a side lot that was already cleared and had gravel for the base. So we began the process of building. Due to county guidelines and restrictions we quickly learned that in order to build a big enough structure it would have to be permitted. We drew up plans for what we wanted the structure to look like and sent it off to the engineer. From there the plans were sent to a draftsman. Another member had given us the name of his contractor who built a shadehouse on his property. Plans were made for him to start and then a family emergency put the brakes on the project. Finding another contractor was not easy and delayed the project by a few more months. Shortly after the new year in 2019 we broke ground and started the process of building the structure. The good news is that the structure is rated for 160 mph winds so hopefully it will stand for many years! The contractor did the basic structure, added the wiggle wire tracks and an electrician added receptacles for the fans. Although my husband helped some, surgery prevented him from helping with the majority of the work to finish the project. I have a great sense of pride in the fact that I completed most of the work myself. I placed every panel of shadecloth, mounted the fans, mounted the rails for hanging, hung a light, assembled the benches and moved all 400+ orchids in.



I made a few mistakes along the way. In an effort to keep all of the like plants together I placed the phalenopsis orchids in a place where the afternoon sun would hit them all day. Even using a higher percentage of shadecloth and adding lattice to the roof it was not enough to completely protect them and many were damaged by the sun, but not completely burnt. This led to some fungal issues as well. That situation has since been corrected and they now happily live in a corner where they only get morning sun. All of my orchids are hand watered. The bareroot plants are watered daily and twice daily during the summer. The potted plants are watered 2-3 times a week. I have been resistant to putting in an automatic system as I enjoy searching for bloom spikes when I water! I fertilize weekly and every 4th time use a bloom buster fertilizer. I use the fertilizer from Palmer Orchids, but there are many good fertilizers available.



The structure of the shadehouse is pressure treated lumber and measures 16'x24'. The roof of the shadehouse is covered with a layer of 6mm white polyethylene. There is one continuous piece of poly that covers the long sides and the roof. The long sides are kept rolled up. All of the sides are covered with 50%Aluminet shadecloth. I have to thank some of the wonderful members of VAOS who answered my many questions about materials to be used.

During the winter when the weather is cold, the short sides have wiggle wire tracks so that poly can be placed over the shade cloth. I have 2 space heaters that I run during those rare nights when the temps go below 50 degrees. I also placed a hanging light from middle rafter so that I can go check the orchids at night after I get home from work!

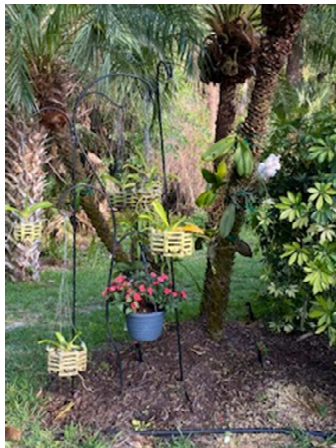
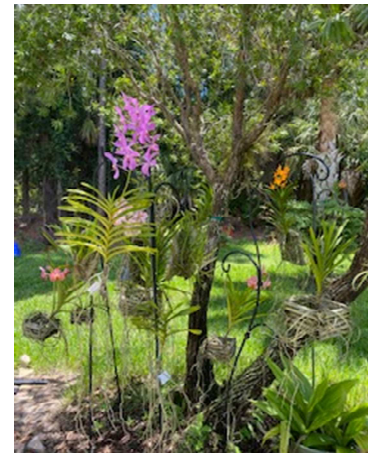


Here are some outside growing areas:



A few plastic benches were placed outside for the dendrobiums. I have new benches but haven't put them together yet. These hard cane dendrobiums get huge and when they all bloom at the same time they take up too much room in the shadehouse! I made a bit of mistake when I put these out at first. They were getting full sun all day and they were looking a little rough. Since moving to the back side they are now blooming and many new bulbs are growing!

Under the trees are a great place to grow! I have several shepherd hooks under a bottle brush tree. I have many terete type vandas growing here. When all bloom at the same time it is a spectacular scene!



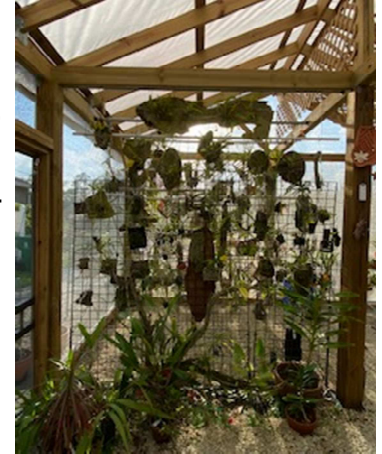
I also have several mounted on trees. Here is a mixture of Rhynchostylis giganteas in baskets and mounted phalaenopsis. The R. giganteas love the dappled sunlight they get under these palms! The phalaenopsis were ones that had the most damage from the original placement of them in the wrong place in the shadehouse. Here they are shaded most of the day and most of them have recovered nicely and are growing new leaves!





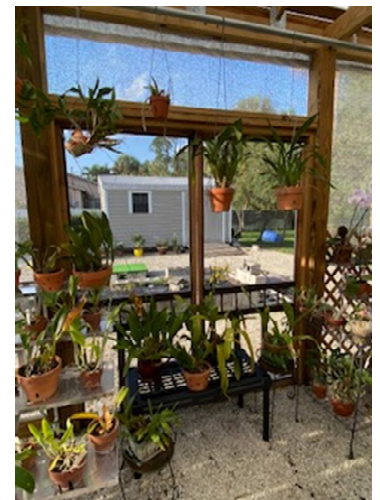
This is a terete vanda growing on the same type of palm in the front of my house. It doesn't receive as much sun. It has grown much larger than its twin in the above photo but does not bloom as often.

As you walk into the shadehouse, to the immediate left are the bareroot plants. Here there are many types of orchids. There are vandas, cattleyas, and dendrobiums, with a few odd types of miniatures as well. My husband also likes to stash some ground orchids in here for rehab occasionally when they get a little too much sun or the snails have a feast. There is a large piece of driftwood with mounted *Myrmecophila* (*Schombbergkia*), *Cattleyas* and *Tillandsia*. That was my first mounting project!

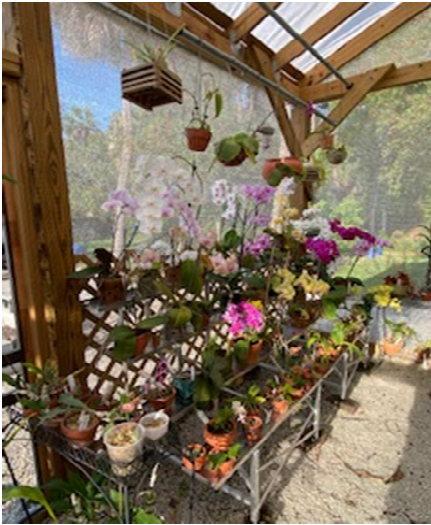


When we first started collecting we put many vanda's in wooden baskets. Now we just hang them on long S-hooks. We quickly realized that the baskets took up too much room and once the vandas got large the roots became a tangled mess! A wide variety of plants are mounted on cork, wood, tree fern and clay mounts from members Joanna Shaw and Natasha Romero-Contreras.

The same plastic shelves that I used outside for the dendrobiums is also used for the oncidiums that are also larger size plants. Eventually this too will be replaced with a bench.

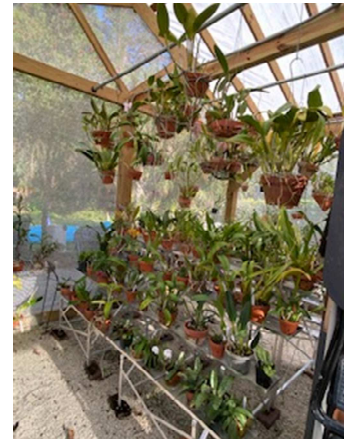


Benches from Plantstand Factory are a great place for the pots. The benches have really made a difference from when I was growing in my pool cage and many were on shelves. Plenty of air-flow now. I also have several of the multipot hangers from Plantstand Factory. I need a few more!



The phalenopsis orchids are much happier in this corner! They now receive morning sun only and are shaded most of the day. What is interesting is that the area was bright enough that cattleya's bloomed quite nicely!

The majority of my collection are cattleya alliance orchids. My favorites are the spotted bifoliate and big, floofy red ones! I tend to end up with multiples of those types. I have tried to keep like plants together so I have areas of encyclias, multiple types of smaller dendrobiums, and terrestrial types. Having the roof high enough leaves plenty of room for hanging space and room to grow!



This is truly a labor of love. I love going out and inspecting for new buds, roots and growth. It amazes me every time a seedling bloom for the first time. Thinking no one else on earth has ever seen this exact flower before is so exciting! Sharing my love of orchids with friends that I have made all over the country is a wonderful experience. VAOS has become like family.

I hope you enjoyed this virtual tour! Hopefully next year it can be in person! I miss my orchid family and I hope everyone is staying safe and healthy. (The nurse in me wants to remind everyone to wear their masks and wash your hands!)

*Submitted by Stephanie Luburger*





In an effort for VAOS to have a more interactive experience on Facebook a new group has been formed. The Venice Area Orchid Society page will be deleted on August 1, 2020. The address to the new group is: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/VAOS.org/>

We have many exciting events planned for the group. We had 70+ new members on our first day! We miss getting together and sharing our orchids. Until we can get together again, this is a great place to show everyone what you have blooming and chat with your orchid friends!

### **CLASSIFIED ADS**

Do you have an orchid that you wanted to bring to the raffle table? Do you have an orchid that you would like to sell or trade for something new? Do you have divisions that you would like to share? If you do you can post them in the new Facebook Group! All trades/sales must be negotiated in messenger and VAOS is in no way responsible for these transactions.



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*Education. Conservation. Research.*

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- [www.AOS.org](http://www.AOS.org)

## August in Your Orchid Collection

### August Climate Data

Average high: 90.6 / Average low: 76.5 / Average mean: 83.6

Excerpted from [\*Florida Orchid Growing: Month by Month\*](#) by Martin Motes. *All rights reserved.*

July and August are the two most similar months in South Florida. Most of the advice on watering, disease and pest control in last month's calendar still apply but subtle changes are taking place. Although it may not seem so, as temperatures climb into the low nineties most afternoons, summer is in retreat: each day a little shorter, each night a little longer. With shorter days the importance of watering as early in the morning as possible comes to the fore. With less hours of sunlight to dry the plants, extra care should be taken in choosing when to water. Back to the basics of the classic saying : If a Vanda looks like it needs water, water it; If a Cattleya or Oncidium looks like it needs water, water it tomorrow. If a Paph or a Phal looks like it needs water, you should have watered it yesterday. If plants retain water even from an early morning watering, allowing them to dry a bit harder before the next watering is always a good idea. An extra day of drying rarely does harm.

August should provide numerous opportunities to dry each orchid to its desired level of dryness. Take the opportunity to dry your orchids "hard" at least once but preferably twice in August. This will give your orchids a leg up on their mortal enemies, the fungus, before the drizzle of September switches the advantage to our adversaries. August is definitely not the month to over indulge in water. September, the soggiest of months, is next up. The corollary to this calculated drying is the concept that when watering in August above all water thoroughly. If watering is necessary be sure that the roots and medium are totally saturated with the application. The drizzling rains of September are so detrimental precisely because they keep the foliage of the plants wet unduly long. We want our plants which are still growing to receive plenty of water but also plenty of drying time.

Good air circulation and proper watering are the keys to disease prevention. Remember that your plants will have increased considerably in size by this point in the growing season. They have added extra growths and extra leaves across the summer. August is a good time to evaluate the spacing of our plants. Remember the old Florida saw that one needs a cat to grow good orchids because when properly spaced a cat should be able to navigate the benches between plants without knocking them over. While we can not recommend specific chemicals, the county agent recommends Banrot, a convenient combination of Thiophanate-methyl and Truban which controls a number of leaf-spotting diseases and soft rots, for home owner use. A combination of Thiophanate-methyl and mancozeb has also been recommended. This can be found pre-packaged as Duosan. If one can overcome the aversion to chemicals and can learn the safe application of them, they are valuable tools to better orchid growing. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure especially before the soft, slow drizzle of September sets in.

Lengthening nights in August mean cooler nighttime temperatures. Many sympodial orchids are reaching the end of their growing cycle and require less nitrogen. Cattleyas and oncidiums have maturing bulbs. Genera that become deciduous in winter like nobile dendrobiums, calanthes and catasetums should be given much less nitrogen in August to prevent them producing an unwanted off season growth and perhaps forgetting to flower. Substitute an additional application of potassium nitrate and Epsom salt (1TBS each per gal) instead of the balanced 20-20-20. Vandas will respond well to this also, as several of the parental species of our hybrids produce blooms on shortening day lengths and lower levels of nitrogen in their fertilizer seems to egg them on. As explicated in the last chapter, modern research indicates that orchids require less phosphorous than previously thought. This concept should lead us to more judicious use of phosphorus. Fertilizer high in phosphorus may still be of some value at the end of the growing season, perhaps not so much as stimulus as shock. One or two heavy applications in succession, a week or so apart will certainly provide all the phosphorus and all the stimulus (or wake up shock) our plants require to bloom

Snails can be somewhat of a problem in August too, but left to multiply they will be in their full glory when those slow unrelenting rains of September set in. Control them with baits in pellet or liquid/paste form. Remember, these are baits, the pests are drawn to them. Therefore apply lightly, but frequently. Because they wash away in the heavy rains, baits should be reapplied every two weeks. One pellet every two to three feet will do the job, but one application will not. Given a choice, the smallest pellets baits are best. They keep us from over applying and also pose much less threat to neighborhood pets. A small bait in a Vanda crown is a nuisance, a large bait can be a disaster.

If you have been waiting to make cuttings of the terete vandas or reed stem epidendrums, you can wait no longer. The potting season is drawing absolutely to a close. Pot up those overgrown phals before they even think of spiking. Re-set those strap leaf vandas early in August whilst they still have just enough time to re-establish themselves in the September humidity and before the cool weather arrives and their root growth slows or stops. As in all seasons be sure that the plants are firmly set in their containers. There is no "wobble room" this late in the growing season to restart tender roots that have been chafed off a loosely set plant. As the cooler weather approaches try to give plants that have been repotted late more protection from the first cold snaps.

## **DIRECTOR, COMMUNICATIONS**

We have a board position open for Director, Communications, responsible for compiling and producing our monthly VAOS newsletter. Board members and other members contribute their newsletter input, saved to our Dropbox files. Our newsletter is produced in Microsoft Publisher and distributed to members using Mail Chimp. It takes about three hours a month,

Please contact Carol Wood at [csec@vaos.org](mailto:csec@vaos.org) if you can help.

## Sunset Valley Orchids 2020 Catasetinae Plant Offering

For 2020-21, I am pleased to share the one of the most comprehensive selection of Catasetinae hybrids and species ever offered by SVO. Through the ongoing process of collecting, selecting, and developing our parental lines, the quality of the breeding stock is now without compare. These new hybrids will set the standard for flower quality, plant vigor, and your enjoyment.

**This season we have focused on four areas:**

**Cycnoches:** The elegant swan-shaped blooms of Cycnoches are simply breathtaking. Our Cycnoches breeding program has reached new heights, and this year's offering has brought together the results of evaluating 100's of potential parents and selecting for plant vigor and excellent flower color and quality. These new crosses will grow fast and reach blooming size in 3" pots, with outstanding new colors and pattern combinations not seen before. This is the year to 'stock up on these' - it's a truly spectacular offering.

**Mini-Catasetum:** The success of "mini-Catasetum" crosses and positive feedback by collectors have inspired us to step up the development in this category. Besides being compact growers, these plants consistently flower 2-4 times a year! This new list is by far the deepest and broadest we have offered, and there are many promising new crosses to select from.

**Mormodes:** Commonly called the goblin orchid, this genus has been getting lots of attention from my toothpick! These are the some of the last Catasetinae to bloom each season, and they look fantastic with their bare bulbs and upright spikes of strange-shaped flowers in fantastic colors! These new crosses are super exciting, and I can hardly manage my anticipation while waiting to see these bloom.

**Clowesia:** The benefits Clowesia brings to its offspring are surprising: flower longevity, reduced plant size, fragrance, multiple cascading inflorescences, full flower shape and more. We are capitalizing on these benefits in a wide variety of crosses. How many of you have wanted a Cl. Rebecca Northen? These are now available, and we have both a sibling cross and a remake of the original cross. Get them now!

This year we are splitting the new Catasetinae catalog in two, with the first half being listed now and the second half to be released about a month later. You will be impressed with the crosses in both releases.

Don't forget to like us on [Facebook](#)

I am always available to take your calls and E-mails, so please feel free to contact me. I love to talk orchids! [fred.clarke@att.net](mailto:fred.clarke@att.net) (760) 310-0778

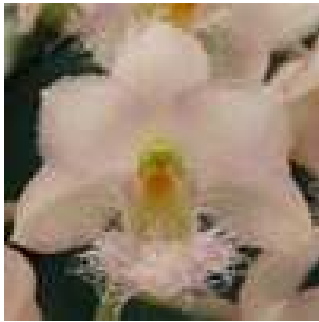


## Plant culture

Your Catasetinae should be in growth by now, with many growers in southern parts of the country already seeing some plants bloom. Watering and fertilizing should be in full swing for most everybody. This is when your plants really put on their best growth. Increase the fertilizer to 1 level tsp. per gallon from now through August, switching back to ½ tsp. from September through October.



Remember - no more re-potting at this time. However, it is ok to 'slip-pot' into the next larger pot size. Just wrap more moss around the existing and slip in to the next larger pot, being very careful not to damage those important new roots.



This is when your Catasetinae can really take advantage of lots of light and air movement to help push and develop large new growths. Ideal temperatures in summer are 80-95 degree days and 60-75 degree nights, with humidity between 40% and 80%.

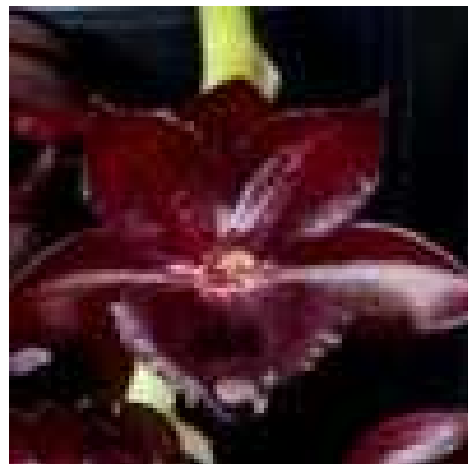
This is when your Catasetinae can really take advantage of lots of light and air movement to help push and develop large new growths. Ideal temperatures in summer are 80-95 degree days and 60-75 degree nights, with humidity between 40% and 80%.

Keep an eye out for spider mites, which can get a foot-hold on your plants (and they have 8 feet!). Be diligent and check the undersides of the new leaves regularly. If mites are detected, spray immediately. They can quickly get out of control if early action is not taken!

**Fred Clarke and Carlos Lopez**  
**Sunset Valley Orchids Inc.**

(760) 310-0778  
[fred.clarke@att.net](mailto:fred.clarke@att.net)

[www.sunsetvalleyorchids.com](http://www.sunsetvalleyorchids.com)



# Support Our Local Growers and Vendors!

## **Honey Bee Nursery**

2383 Englewood Road (Rt. 776)  
Englewood, FL (941-474-6866)

## **Palmer Orchids**

22700 Taylor Dr.,  
Myakka City, FL 34251(941-322-1644)

## **Plantio La Orquidea**

3480 Tallevast Rd,  
Sarasota (941-504-7737)

## **Orchid Envy**

339 Venice Ave. West,  
Venice, FL (941-266-6351)

## **Florida SunCoast Orchids**

8211 Verna Bethany Rd.,  
Myakka City, FL (941-322-8777)

## **Just One More Orchid**

[www.justonemoreorchid.com](http://www.justonemoreorchid.com)

## **Joanna's Orchid Pottery**

[www.orchidpottery.com](http://www.orchidpottery.com)  
[orchidpottery@gmail.com](mailto:orchidpottery@gmail.com)



## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

All VAOS events through Aug. 31st have been canceled until further notice.

All AOS Judging as been canceled

### **Ongoing**

**Mentor Program**: help for beginning growers, contact Rick Belisle [Mentor@vaos.org](mailto:Mentor@vaos.org)

**Orchid Judging** takes place at Christ the King Catholic Church, McLoughlin Center – Room C, 821 S. Dale Mabry Hwy., Tampa, FL 33609. at 6:30pm on the fourth Wednesday of every month. Info: <http://www.fncjc.shutterfly.com/>

Check website for updates.

## **Next Meeting To Be Announced**

**Bring a friend**

**Bring a treat to share**

**Donate plants for the Raffle Table**

## **Contact Us**

**Venice Area Orchid Society**

**PO BOX 443**

**Venice, FL 34284-0443**

### **President**

Joanna Shaw [pres@vaos.org](mailto:pres@vaos.org)

### **Membership**

Sue Grimmer [memb@vaos.org](mailto:memb@vaos.org)

**Visit us on the web at**

**[www.vaos.org](http://www.vaos.org)**



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