

## **HOW TO PREPARE YOUR PLANT FOR THE SHOW**

### **Groom Your Plant:**

Remove dead or brown leaves and pseudobulbs from the plant. Clean the pseudobulbs and leaves (water helps to soften the dry papery covering around pseudobulbs so that you can gently rub it off). Trim dead areas from leaves. Cut following the basic shape of the natural leaf ending if possible.

Wipe the top of the leaves (vinegar, lemon juice, sprite, 7 up, etc.) to remove residue. Do not use commercial spray to shine the leaves.

Make sure the media in the container is clean. Remove trash, debris, dead leaves or stems and weeds from the pot.

### **Pests or Diseases:**

While prepping orchids for a display, check for pests and disease. Check the leaves and pseudobulbs for a white cottony substance, an indication of mealybugs. Hard, whitish bumps may mean scale and if any are found remove them with alcohol and a Q-tip. If there is a bad infestation, do not bring the plant to the show. Check for other pests such as snails, slugs and ants. Inspect the flowers for thrips and other damage. If a flower is marred by the spots it is better to leave the plant at home.

### **Stakes:**

Carefully stake the spike that will present the flowers to their best advantage. If you can plan ahead of time, it is best to stake the spike as it emerges; an older spike is harder and can break off easier.

These are often needed to support the flower spike but should not distract the eye. Keep them looking as natural as possible. Stakes should not protrude beyond the top of the last bloom flower, but should allow the flowers to be kept away from the foliage. It may also protect the flower spike from damage during travel to the show.

Remove any wire hangers, hoops, etc. Water each plant thoroughly before bringing to the show. If the plant is in a plastic pot, drop it into a clay pot for stability. Place each plant carefully in a large box or container for transport. To keep the plants from moving around you can put rolled newspapers around the pots.

**Labels:**

Take a piece of masking tape, write your name on it and tape it to the side of pot. This is how the Team knows the proper plant owner so it will be returned to you.

**Your blooming plants are needed to create our winning displays.**

**All plants must be registered in advance via email 8:00pm, two days prior to setup day**

**Email your plant name with a photo or bloom size and color description to [PlantReg@VAOS.org](mailto:PlantReg@VAOS.org)**

