

August 2005

Upcoming ROA events:

September 11 - Monthly program;
Speaker: **Jose Exposito** of Soroa
Orchids, Homestead, Florida

September 29 - October 2 - Educa-
tion/market venue at the **State Fair**
of Virginia

October 9 - **Auction** of quality
orchids gathered from around the
globe

November 13 - Monthly program;
Speaker: **Alan Koch** of Gold Country
Orchids, Lincoln, California

December 11 - No ROA program -
Happy Holidays

All ROA activities and speakers
will emphasize the how-to
and hands-on aspects
of growing orchids.

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ROA Bulletin

ROA Welcomes Jose Exposito

ROA welcomes Jose Exposito of Soroa Orchids in Homewood, Florida, who will be featured at our September program. He will speak on "Orchids ... a survival guide," which will be a down-to-earth program of orchid culture appealing to all levels of orchid growers, from the novice to the experienced. Jose has been recognized, worldwide, as one of the premier growers and hybridizers of Phalaenopsis orchids.

Jose founded Soroa Orchids in 1985, shortly after he emigrated from Cuba. Jose began making new Phalaenopsis hybrids almost immediately and his success has been reflected in a number of AOS Awards. One of the early hybrids was Phal. Soroa's Delight.

Jose is a founding member of the International Phalaenopsis Association (IPA), past president of the East Everglades Orchid Society and the Coalition for Orchid Species, and has served for many years on the board of the South Florida Orchid Society. He is an Accredited AOS Judge and lectures here and abroad. Jose serves as a director of the IPA for the South region.

Growing orchids was not Jose's first career choice. Born and raised in Cuba, he planning to teach literature and had already been published by age 17. That plan was altered when, in 1980, Jose sought asylum at the Peruvian embassy, and along with thousands of other young Cubans seeking the same thing, was arrested. Although sentenced to 4 ½ years, Jose was one of the prisoners



Jose Exposito,
photo courtesy of Soroa Orchids

that Fidel Castro released to the Mariel boatlifts. So on May 13, 1980, Jose was put onto a shrimp boat bound for Florida. He arrived in Miami, unable to speak English, with \$12 (given to him by a Catholic mission) and the clothes on his back.

In 1982, while working in a hospital, Jose met an orchid hobbyist. That led to a fascination with orchids. He set up a greenhouse in his 30 square-foot backyard in Little Havana and began to create award-winning hybrids; this home greenhouse was the start of Soroa Orchids. By 1987, Jose had saved enough to buy a new home and build a 3,000 square-foot commercial greenhouse.

Soroa Orchids suffered a major setback in August 1992, when Hurricane Andrew swept through and destroyed everything. However, Jose was able to build a new greenhouse by December, and purchased new inventory on a trip to Hawaii in

(continued on P. 3 "Exposito")



Phal. Carmela's Spots 'Orinda'
Photo courtesy of Robert Bedard
Orchids, www.robert-bedard.com



Steve Partlow

Budding Advice

Cut up old plastic orange juice containers and write on a strip of about 1" square with a hard pencil so it is scribed into the plastic. Put it in the bottom of the pot or, if you have clear plastic, put it on the side at the bottom of the pot so it can be seen through the pot. Ink will fade, so don't use it. With it engraved in the plastic, it is still visible even if the pencil rubs off. Use it to record the plant name, repotting date, or whatever information you want to keep with the plant. - Jim Culbert

Orchid Spotlight:

Phal. Carmela's Spots and Steve Partlow

Since I am still fairly new to growing orchids, my favorite also happens to be the first orchid that Barbi and I were able to get to bloom on our own. It is *Phal. Carmela's Spots*. We got the plant from Chadwick and Sons Orchids in Powhatan about four years ago, and it blooms once a year for us. We grow it in a sphagnum mix on a windowsill that has moderate light, and it gets light fertilizing.

Barbi and I have been growing orchids for about seven years. I started collecting orchids because of the beauty of the flowers and wanted to learn how to get them to re-bloom.

I enjoy working outside in the yard, gardening, and also doing home improvement (do-it-yourself) projects. I like to hike, play golf (when I can) and cook - especially desserts (anything with chocolate).

- Steve Partlow

(Editor's Note: The plan for this space is to feature an orchid and its grower from the monthly showcase. As this is appearing before ROA has had its first showcase, Steve graciously talked about one of his favorite phals. Unfortunately, he and Barbi did not have a picture of this orchid in bloom, but the orchid pictured above Steve is one that it looks much like their orchid in bloom.)

Richmond Orchid Alliance Announces the 2006 Program Schedule

The Richmond Orchid Alliance is pleased to present the following orchid education opportunities at the Science Museum of Richmond at 2:00 PM in the Discovery Room. Everyone is welcome. All events are FREE. Light refreshments and orchids for sale are features of each event.

- **January 8 - Janette and James Harris** with **Linda Thorne** of Seagrove Orchids, Seagrove, NC (all are a part of Carolina Judging Center) will lead a "how to select the best orchid then grow it" and orchid photography discussion. Plants for sale.
- **February 12 - Dr. Courtney Hackney**, Orchid columnist and author of *American Cattleya's*. He will have plants and his book for sale. His wife will have orchid art for sale. Member's Orchid Market.
- **March 12 - Dr. Glen Lehr**, New World Orchids, Manchester, MI. Plants for sale.
- **April 7-9 - Orchid Show and Sale** (set-up April 6)
- **May 14 - Carol Allen**, US Botanical Gardens. Interactive Workshop on Down and Dirty Potting and Pests. Member's Orchid Market.
- **June 11 - Steve Frowine**, Author of *Orchids for Dummies* and *Fragrant Orchids* (forthcoming in the fall). Member's Orchid Market.
- **July 9 - Potting Session and Picnic** at a local Picnic Shelter. Member's Orchid Market.
- **August 13 - Trip and Culture Session** (destination TBA)
- **September 10 - Norman Fang**, Norman's Orchids, Montclair, CA. Plants for sale.
- **October 8 - Auction** of quality orchids from around the world.
- **November 12 - Glen Decker**, Piping Rock Orchids, Galway, NY. Plants for sale.



On the Road Again With ROA



Shopping at Orchid Station
(above and below)



Le Blumrich and Jay Gammon,
our hosts at Pine Crest Orchids



Shopping at Pine Crest Orchids



Slipper culture with Jeff Morris



Our day began on Sunday morning August 7th as we loaded up the bus with ROA members, coffee and coolers of drinks. The trip lineup began with catching up on the summer activities, talking orchids and watching an informative orchid video from AOS as we headed up the road.

First stop Orchid Station... a commercial greenhouse located in Barboursville. Paul and Mark Philhour showed us their spectacular orchid setup. We had been forewarned that this was the middle of their repotting, but other than the pots set aside for a demonstration, there was little evidence of the mess that repotting can bring to a greenhouse. Paul gave us a demo on how they repot and grow their orchids in addition to answering questions from the ROA membership. After a little more shopping, it was time to load up the cargo area of the bus with our assortment of newly purchased orchids. The Philhour's also donated to the ROA library several years worth of the old AOS Bulletin and Award's Quarterly. The gifts were very much appreciated.

After a scenic drive through the countryside past the winery's and

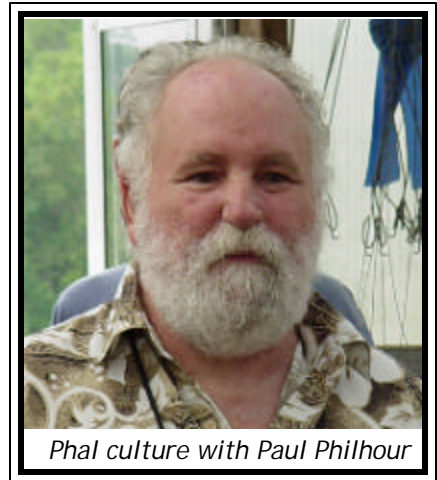
Exposito (con't from Page 1)

February. Now Soroa Orchids has 30,000 square-feet of growing space, four employees, and revenues that are expected to be more than \$800,000 this year.

ROA is pleased to bring an international personality of this caliber to the Greater Richmond orchid community for our opening program at the Science Museum.

- Jim Creech

grape vineyards we arrived in Charlottesville for our next stop - Pine Crest Orchids. Owners and ROA members Le Blumreich and Jay Gammon hosted a wonderful lunch, poolside, as we caught up with old friends and met new ones from Charlottesville and Greensboro.



Phal culture with Paul Philhour

After lunch we then ventured into the greenhouse for a chance to get that special plant from a wonderful selection of orchids. In addition, Jeff Morris from the Charlottesville Orchid Society, gave two presentations on orchid culture. After lunch, Jeff spoke on growing paphs, and then after everyone had been through the greenhouse at least once, he spoke on growing phrags. Once again it was that time to say goodbye and load up the bus.

On our ride home, we discussed what had been purchased while checking out plants purchased by others. Before we knew it our day was coming to an end; we were back in Richmond and time to unload all the newly purchased babies.

What a wonderful day of fun with orchid friends!

- Kathy Walker

Report from the International Phalaenopsis Alliance Symposium

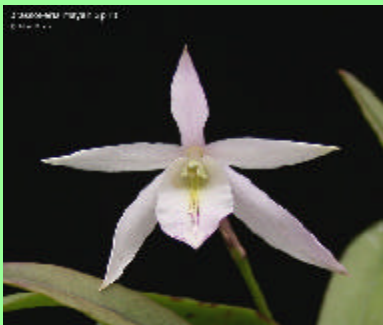
ROA Member in the Orchid News

ROA member, Allen Black has recently registered two of his hybrids with the Royal Horticultural Society. The first is named *Prosavola Nodoprismo* (pictured below) which is a primary hybrid of *Brassavola nodosa* and *Prosthechea* (syn. *Encyclia*) *prismatocarpa*. A primary hybrid has two species for parents (seed and pollen).

The second is named *Brassokeria* Mayan Spirit (pictured at bottom) which is a primary hybrid of *Brassavola nodosa* and *Barkeria melanocaulum*. There are only five registered hybrids in the genus of *Brassokeria*; of these Allen has registered three of the five hybrids.



Prosavola Nodoprismo



Brassokeria Mayan Spirit

Orchids pictured above grown and images by Allen Black

On Friday July 15 Barbara Noe and Kathy Walker left Richmond for a three-day event at the International Phalaenopsis Alliance Symposium in Philadelphia, PA. That evening we attended a preview reception, show and sale with an opportunity to mingle with familiar faces and purchase plants from the vast supply of orchid growers that were in attendance from all over the world. Some of the phenomenal growers included Orchidview, Brother Orchids, Gold Country Orchids, Normans Orchids, Hilltop Orchids, Big Leaf Orchids, Orchidophile and Marshall Ku of Taiwan.

Saturday morning after a quick breakfast we were off to a day of speakers, workshops and of course another chance to see what plant we couldn't do without.

After the welcoming ceremony from John Stubbings, IPA President the first program began; "Blue Genes and More of What's Fashionable" from H.P. Norton of Orchidview. This was a great program. In fact, H.P. was very much in fashion at this symposium; he received best flower trophy for *Phal. violacea* 'Blue Chip.' Believe me - WHAT A BEAUTY!!!!

We then attended several workshops, a recognition luncheon and then the Live Auction with Alan Koch as the auctioneer. What a fun and fantastic time we had. All sorts of items were donated for this event, one that comes to mind and touched a tender spot in everyone's heart were the neckties donated by Helen Huntington that were worn by Merritt with the food stains still embedded in the fabric. We all laughed as others reminisced about their friendship and good times that

they had spent with Merritt. He was so dearly missed at this event. Later that day we attended a program presented by Tom Harper and Dr. Wang on the "2005 Taiwan Orchid Show." This program provided much insight on how Taiwanese orchid growers and government worked together to focus on *Phalaenopsis* breeding and mass production. His slides showed the elaborate orchid displays, each perfect in form and presentation. The day ended with another quick stroll through the orchid vendors and then dinner.

Sunday morning began with a continental breakfast and then off to hear the last program given by Norman Fang owner of Norman's Orchids located in California. Norman's presentation was on "New Trends in Harlequin *Phalaenopsis*." He gave a short synopsis on how he entered the order world and slides showing his orchid nursery and the breeding in Harlequin *Phalaenopsis*. A short note that some of the plants that you see on TV and in the movies might be from Normans Orchids as he does provide plants to Hollywood.

A final walk through of the grower's plants and of course a few more purchases and goodbyes to all the acquaintances during this fantastic event. It was now time to leave for the ride back home to Richmond. What a wonderful and exciting time we both had laughing and talking about that addiction we all have as orchid growers.

In closing a short note that IPA is exploring the possibility of a future event in Taiwan.

- Barbara Noe and Kathy Walker



ROA Embroidered Logo Available

The ROA Logo can be placed on a number of clothing items including denim and polo shirts, t-shirts, sweatshirts, caps and visor caps. Contact Barbara Noe at (804) 359-3674 or CelebrateOrchids@aol.com. The logo can also be placed on your own NEW item on a cost per design basis. Although she expects the turnaround to be less, Barbara asks that you allow three weeks for completion of your order.

The Richmond Orchid Alliance meets at the Science Museum of Virginia, 2500 W. Broad Street, Richmond, at 2:00 P.M. of the second Sunday of each month from January through November. Yearly dues are \$20.00 per individual, or \$25.00 for a joint membership. Dues should be paid to the ROA Finance Director, Sue Akin.

The Richmond Orchid Alliance is affiliated with Orchid Digest and a member of the American Orchid Society.

The **ROA Bulletin** is a publication of the Richmond Orchid Alliance and is distributed to the Society's members monthly, prior to all club meetings.

Submissions to the Bulletin should be sent to the editor early enough to arrive by the 15th of the month prior to a meeting. Unless otherwise credited, all images in this publication were by the editor.



Growing Tips by Courtney Hackney
(email: Hackneau@Bellsouth.net)

The general mantra among orchid growers is that there is no such thing as too much air movement. Unfortunately, most hobbyists and commercial growers suffer from not enough air movement somewhere in their growing area. In "Nature", most orchids growing on trees have continuous air movement around them. More importantly, the air is not recycled air, but is fresh air without loads of disease spores.

Good air quality and movement serves several purposes in a greenhouse or growing area. First it provides a continuous supply of carbon dioxide, from which plants make more tissues. At night plants require oxygen supplied by the same moving air. Airflow also pulls water vapor from small openings on the bottoms of leaves, which cools the leaf surface. This is especially important when the air temperature is high and the leaf is receiving direct light. The warmer the leaf's internal temperature, the faster it can photosynthesize up to some limit. Above that limit and chlorophyll stops working. Plants compensate for heating by cooling themselves via evaporation. The degree to which they can do this depends on the habitat in which they originated.

The degree of cooling at the leaf surface depends on the relative humidity of the air and the rate at which air moves across the leaf. The higher the relative humidity, the less the cooling effect. In the dog days of summer here in the South, high humidity is normal, requiring as much air movement as possible. In the daytime, if you can keep a match burning in the greenhouse, there is not enough air movement. Orchid leaves will burn if the orchid cannot cool itself adequately. This happens under a variety of different

scenarios, not all of which require high light. Besides air movement, the plant must have water delivered to each leaf. Without water to evaporate, orchid leaves may burn, even under lower temperature and light conditions. In the wild, orchids have extensive root systems, thickened leaves, and even pigments on leaves to limit internal temperature. They also have only as many leaves as the plant can maintain under the ambient water and temperatures at that location.

In cultivation, a very different situation occurs. The mass of roots changes dramatically after repotting, while the volume of leaves stays the same. Increased nitrogen levels lead to increased growth of leaves, which also require more water, especially under high light and heat conditions. Hence, the recommendation to lower light and heat levels after repotting. Indoor growers can still burn orchids for the same reasons, but there is an additional problem. Humans prefer lower humidity than occurs outside, meaning that orchids inside have a greater ability to cool themselves via evaporation indoors. However, increase airflow on orchids grown inside and the low humidity may increase the evaporation so much at the leaf surface, that there is not enough water getting to the leaf, resulting in leaf burn. This is commonly found on Phalaenopsis grown on the windowsill.

Greenhouse growers often have the same problem in late winter and early spring when the sun's intensity increases, but humidity is very low. Increased air movement under these conditions can increase water loss to such an extent that flowers wilt,

(Continued on P. 6 "Growing Tips")



Calendar of Events Outside of ROA:

September 10

Hollin Hills Orchid Society,
Annandale, VA; Auction; contact:
Stephanie Jarrell, email:
Stefanie.Jarrell@wilmerhale.com

September 11

Charlottesville Orchid Society,
Charlottesville, VA; Speaker: Linda
Wilhelm of Woodland Orchids;
contact: Brenda Steigman, email:
bsteigman@aol.com.

September 18

Virginia Orchid Society, Richmond,
VA; Speaker: Linda Wilhelm of
Woodland Orchids; contact: David
Sombach, (804) 994-5721; email:
clearskyfarms@mindspring.com.

September 19

National Capital Orchid Society,
U.S. National Arboretum, Washing-
ton, DC; Speaker: Bill Goldner of
Woodstream Orchids; contact:
ncos_information@yahoo.com.

October 8-10

National Capital Orchid Society
Show, US National Arboretum,
Washington, DC. Contact: Jerry
Rice, (301) 986-0659;
jmricewas@aol.com.

October 9

Charlottesville Orchid Society,
Charlottesville, VA; Speaker: Tom
Purviance of Parkside Orchids;
contact: Brenda Steigman, email:
bsteigman@aol.com.

October 9

Virginia Orchid Society, Richmond,
VA; Auction of member plants;
contact: David Sombach,
(804) 994-5721; email:
clearskyfarms@mindspring.com.



Merritt Huntington Memorial Symposium

The schedule for the inaugural Merritt Huntington Memorial Symposium has been announced. The Symposium will be held Saturday, November 12, 2005 at the Ramada 1776 in Williamsburg.

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| 8:00 am | Early Bird Plant Sales and Coffee |
| 8:30 am | Deadline for Plants Entered for Judging |
| 8:50-9:10 am | Welcome |
| 9-10:45 am | Alan Koch , Gold Country Orchids, Lincoln, California, "Miniature and Compact Cattleyas" |
| 10:45 am-12:15 pm | Ervin Granier , Gran Blue Orchids, St. Gabriel, Louisiana, "The Search for the Blue Orchid" |
| 12:15-1:45 pm | Buffet Lunch (included in Registration) |
| 1:45-3:15 pm | Luiz Hamilton , Amazon Orchids, Manaus, Brazil "Cattleya Walkeriana and It's Hybrid" |
| 3:15-4:30 pm | Rob Griesbach , USDA Judging Results, Wrap-up and Panel Discussion Moderator |

Each presentation will be culture oriented!

Plant Sales 12:15 - 1:45 pm and 4:30 - 5:30 pm
Additional plant vendors featuring various genera will participate in the sales area.

The pre-registration admission until September 30 is \$30, after that, the admission rises to \$40. In addition, space is limited, so the organizers suggest that interested persons should register early. Register with Dot Pierce, 917 Beryl Ave., Virginia Beach, VA 23464; email: pierce.db@verizon.net.

Growing Tips (con't from Page 5)

buds drop and roots wither. Thus, air movement must be reduced, but only during the day when air is entering the greenhouse from outside. At night, high humidity in the greenhouse combined with cool nights causes water to condense on cool leaves; the perfect recipe for bacterial rots such as Pseudomonas on leaves and Botrytis on flowers. When nights are cool, air movement should be sufficient such that flowers move noticeably to prevent bacteria from establishing on wet surfaces. Windowsill growers often have the same problem because they often mist their orchids to compensate for heating or air conditioning. While this is generally a great idea, it should never result in leaves or flowers being wet at night.

Thus, the answer to questions about

air movement is to adjust based on the problem you are attempting to solve and to remember that the amount of air movement needed changes with the season.

At this time of year most homeowners prepare for hurricanes. Dedicated orchid hobbyists also prepare for the associated power outages, heavy rains, and secondary damage from rots that show up on orchids days or weeks after a hurricane passes. One preventative measure is to spray plants with a general fungicide/bactericide, such as Kocide, occasionally during Hurricane Season. This prevents exotic bacteria and fungi that always accompany hurricanes from invading your orchids when the power is off and there are no fans to cool or keep spores at bay.



**Please Note:
Program Timetable**

*Orchid Showcase - plants need to be on table by 1:30 for judging
Program Speaker to begin by 2:10.*

Reception Table

Barbara Simms' has agreed to coordinate the Reception Table for our meeting! Thank you! Our goal is to keep it simple and easy for her and other volunteers. Should you want to contribute, please keep it to items that do not need to be kept hot or eaten with a utensil. Examples would be nuts, candy, cookies, brownies, vegetables, crackers, pre-sliced cheese, chips. Sugar-free cookies will be available for those with dietary restrictions. Punch will also be available.

- Valli LaNeve

Welcome Desk

Karen Collier has agreed to be the Welcome Desk hostess for September. Members please pick up your badge at this table, check off your name, and return the badge after the program. Assisting at the Welcome Desk will be Barbi and Steve Partlow. Thanks to all.

- Valli LaNeve

Orchid Supplies

Joe Mathias and Machodoc Orchids has been granted exclusive rights for the sale of orchid supplies at ROA programs. If you have a special need, contact him at orchidude@aol.com or (540) 710-2323.

Show Your Blooming Plants at the Monthly Program

One element of the monthly program is the Orchid Showcase. We want every member to bring in your blooming plants. There will be four display categories:

Cattleya, Slipper, Phalaenopsis, and Other Genera. If there are enough orchids within a category that the judging panel think can be split out (e.g., standard vs. mini Catt, Paph vs. Phrag, Dendrobium vs. Other Genera), then they may do so. The judging panel may also

provide special recognition to a species plant within a category. Generally, there will be three ribbon winners per category who will be listed in the Bulletin. The judging team will also try to provide comments and suggestions for plants submitted to the Showcase. A special attempt will be made to recognize less experienced growers.

The Bulletin will also be looking to the Showcase to select orchids and

growers for the Orchid Spotlight column.

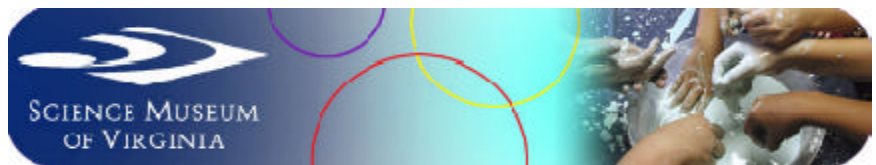
A member of the judging team will be responsible for discussing the



Doritaenopsis Jim x Doriella Tiny
Grown by Valli LaNeve

Showcase plants. This discussion will be limited to 5-8 minutes and will concentrate on a few plants, but providing educational comment where appropriate. We hope you will peruse the showcased plants after the program and ask questions. For a plant to be eligible for ribbon awards, the grower should have owned and cared for it for at least six months.

- Jim Creech



In many ways, the Science Museum of Virginia is our partner in helping to educate others about orchids and their cultivation. The following are some of the benefits of membership with the Science Museum.

- Unlimited free exhibit admission for an entire year
- Free passes and discounted tickets to the Ethyl IMAX®DOME and Planetarium
- Members-only reservation service
- 10% discount on purchases in Shop 4 Science
- Invitations to special events
- Free subscription to Quest, the quarterly members newsletter
- Discounts on classes and special programs
- Free admission to more than 250 science and technology centers worldwide, including eight in Virginia





Orchids For Dummies: Another Perspective

Orchid Houses: Going Out of Business

Breckinridge Orchids

6201 Summit Avenue
Brown Summit, NC 27214-9744
(336) 656-7991
(mostly paphiopedilums and phalaenopsis)

Everglade Orchids

1101 Tabit Road
Belle Glade, FL 33430-4587
(561) 996-9600
www.evergladesorchids.com
(mostly oncidiums and cymbidiums)

Board of Directors

Bill Akin – Chair

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Sue Akin – Director of Finance

Kathy Walker – Director of Records

Valli LaNeve – Director of Outreach

Jim Creech – Director of Member Services

Wanda Andrako – Director at Large

Bayne Hawkins – Director at Large

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.richmondorchidalliance.com

In *Orchids for Dummies*, author Steven A. Frowine has employed very successfully the format of previous *For Dummies* books, that is, each chapter begins with a list of subjects to be covered in the chapter. Then, in an introductory paragraph, the author tells us what he's going to tell us. Then he tells us.

The book is organized into four major sections, an introduction to orchids, culture, lists of orchids suggested for beginners and a section on FAQs, problems with orchids and easiest orchids for the beginner. Each section includes several chapters. While the organization is certainly logical any of the sections can be read beneficially in any order or independently.

The first section lists guidelines for beginners to evaluate their particular potential orchid growing environments for light, temperature, space, etc. and suggests several easy-to grow orchids that are appropriate for each environment. Unfortunately most beginners purchase their first orchids without benefit of this information. Maybe, when their first orchids expire they will borrow or purchase *Orchids for Dummies* before their second try.

The second section is a godsend for beginners. Most orchid books cover culture in a series of generalities, much to the frustration of the beginner who looking for specifics.

Orchids for Dummies gives these specific cultural conditions.

The third section presents various orchids suitable for beginners. They are grouped as moth orchids, cattleyas, slipper orchids and *oncidiums*. Each listing includes a brief descriptive paragraph of the orchid. It looks like the author listed his own collection.

The last section is a good wrap-up. It lists the ten easiest orchids to grow, the ten most common ways to kill an orchid, the ten most frequently asked questions and the ten most common reasons why orchids won't bloom.

Generally this is a well-edited book but there are a few nits to pick.

- On page 14 the author mentions *grex*, a term familiar to only a few beginners. He does define it later on.
- *Degamroara* was misspelled several times as *Deganorara*.
- He fails to mention that *Catasetums* have both male and female flowers, a very significant characteristic of this genus.

This is an excellent book for beginners – for experienced orchidists also – and that is what it is intended to be. If one wants a more definitive work your reviewer suggests *Home Growing Orchids* by Rebecca Tyson Northen.

- L.K. (Buddy) Harvie



P.O. Box 14572
Richmond, VA 23221