

Richmond Orchid Alliance  
We are all about Orchids!

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November 2005

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### Upcoming ROA events:

**December 11** - No ROA program -  
**Happy Holidays**

**January 8** - Monthly program;  
Speakers: **Janette and James Harris**  
of the Triad Orchid Society, and  
**Linda Thorne** of Seagrove Orchids,  
Seagrove, North Carolina

**February 12** - Monthly program;  
Speaker: **Courtney Hackney** of the  
University of North Carolina -  
Wilmington, Wilmington, North  
Carolina

**March 12** - Monthly program;  
Speaker: **Glen Lehr** of New World  
Orchids, Manchester, Michigan

**April 7-9** - Orchid Show and Sale  
(set up April 6); AOS judged show  
sponsored by ROA at the Science  
Museum of Virginia

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

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# ROA Bulletin



## ROA Wishes its Members Happy Holidays

The time from Thanksgiving through New Year's Day is a very busy time for all. Although we wish we could see all of our orchid friends during this period of time, it really is a time for family and loved ones.

We want to thank all who have joined our ranks - we now have

more than 70 members. And not least of all, we want to extend our holiday best wishes during this season, whether you celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, or Kwanza. May the spirit of the season be with you and see you safe until we gather again.

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## Maximizing Your Membership

Over the past four years, I have been unsuccessful getting a Phal to re-bloom. I noticed all the beautiful *Phals* Jim Culbert would bring into the meetings. My inquisitive nature prompted me to ask him about how he grows them. He insisted they were easy to grow. Later we participated in an orchid event together and I got to know him even better, which included an invitation to see his greenhouse. Needless to say, my husband and I were amazed at the beautiful plants Jim Culbert had re-bloomed with ease. He suggested that I use the Michigan State University fertilizer, and was generous; he gave me a jar to use. I am hoping that the fertilizer will make at least one of my *Phals* bloom. Jim, the pressure is on.

I had the wonderful opportunity three years ago to meet Chuck Noe. It was not at an orchid event, but at a fund raiser. He was so much fun to talk with I found myself coming back over the two days to chat with him. He introduced me to his wife Barbara, and it was at that moment I discovered we shared a common interest, orchids. Barbara also grows

fabulous *Phals*. She just could not believe I couldn't get them to re-bloom. With her guidance, I repotted them in a media just for *Phals*, and put them in clear pots. I also put them outside over the summer, leaving them until they could experience the natural nighttime temperature drop that comes in late summer and early fall. I have been checking them almost daily looking for those spikes. Nothing yet!!!

One thing is for sure, when you attend meetings, watch who's brings in great plants — this is an opportunity to expand your knowledge. Ask questions! Every time you volunteer, and you are around orchid lovers, it's a great time to discuss the challenges you are facing with them. This could make all the difference in your success as an orchid grower.

Jim and Barbara, you'll be the first two to know should a spike emerge. Thank you for sharing your knowledge — those *Phals* just might have found themselves in the trash had you not been so helpful.

- Valli LaNeve





Blc. Goldenzelle

## Orchid Spotlight: Blc. Goldenzelle and Buddy Harvie

I got started growing orchids many years ago when I saw an ad in the Sunday paper about an orchid grower named Mr. Keeton who wanted to sell his inventory. So I went to Mechanicsville and bought five *Cattleyas*. They all died, but one bloomed gloriously before it expired. I was hooked.

This plant is *Blc. Goldenzelle*. This clone is not awarded, but other Goldenzelle clones have been. This plant is one of my favorites because it has good *cattleya* form and lots of blossoms. I also like the color. I got

it from Stewart Orchids in Mississippi. I have had it for about 20 years. It was registered in 1982 so I couldn't have owned it any longer than that. This plant is not finicky. It probably can be grown in any range of *cattleya* conditions.

I grow it in bark with charcoal added. I use half-strength 20-20-20 with an occasional dose of bloom booster. I don't do anything unusual. In the summer I put it

outside on benches under oak trees where it gets filtered light. In winter, I keep it in the greenhouse hung up high near the top where it can get maximum light. Temperatures in the greenhouse are around 65 degrees at night and around 78 in the daytime. I don't have very good humidity control.

Soon after I first joined an orchid society, I felt like I ought to participate. So I decided to bring one of MY orchids to the next meeting for showing. The Saturday before the meeting, I selected what I thought was my best plant. It was *Phal. lueddemanniana*. I trimmed up the untidy roots, cleaned and polished the leaves, scrubbed the white stuff off the pot and supported the inflorescence for best presentation of the blossoms. (I read in a book that one should do those things.) I couldn't have dressed up my children for Sunday School any better. Next day I placed it prominently among the other *Phals*. No father of a newborn baby could have been more proud. In addition to being awarded a half a point, the judges cited it as the cleanest plant on the show table. That was about 25 years ago, and I still get a great deal of satisfaction when others appreciate orchids that I have flowered.

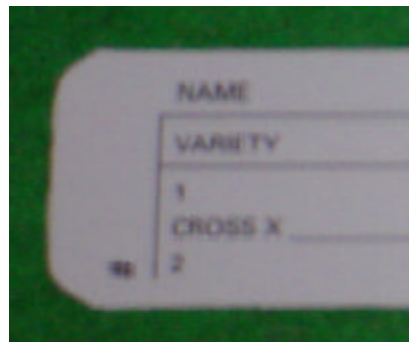
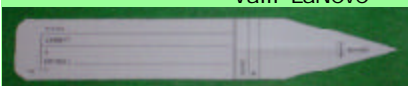


L.K. (Buddy) Harvie with his *Blc. Goldenzelle*

## Budding Advice

Use plant tags. It is a convenient place to keep a detailed record of the plant: its name, purchase date and location, a blooming record, and a repotting record. The plant tags pictured below and to the right can be purchased from Joe Mathias.

- Valli LaNeve





### ROA Closes the Year on a Strong Note



Alan Koch



Members and guests listening to Alan's program



Alan Koch brought us great growing information, excellent orchids and exciting news

ROA's Program on Sunday, November 13th was full of energy and excitement which is the norm when Alan Koch is around but was even more festive as we celebrated our affiliation with both the American Orchid Society and Orchid Digest having recently received notice following the requisite approval at the respective member's meetings. These are additional giant steps in the growth of our young progressive alliance.

Alan's program was a spirited and informative presentation based on some of the myths of orchid growing. Most people still grow orchids with technology that was available for our Grandparents and Great-grandparents. The science of plant physiology has changed greatly in the last 20 years and it's time for all of us to step up and grow our plants the best we can. The better we grow our plants the more rewarding our hobby becomes. This talk should make us better growers and had tons of helpful tips for difficult to

grow species and hybrids. This was an easy to follow commonsense approach to orchid care. Hopefully, we will be amazed at how quickly our plants respond to just a few changes he suggested. As all of our programs will be, this one was just as appealing to the novice with one plant as to the commercial grower with thousands of plants. (Editor: see below and p. 8 for many of Alan's cultural tips.)

As we were enjoying our holiday reception following the program, Alan made a generous gesture to aid in the recovery of the AOS greenhouse and gardens suffering from recent hurricane damage. ROA members responded quickly and generously acquiring even more great plants as they did their part to help AOS. Members had already shown tremendous community responsibility to Richmond residents facing challenges by donating a hamper overflowing with socks for Freedom House. This was a really special day for ROA and a lively but thankful kickoff for our holiday season!

- Barbara Noe

### Koch's Solutions to Some Orchid Problems

- To cure crown rot in *Phals*, Alan's process is to pull out the diseased tissue, pour on a mixture of 1 part bleach to 10 parts water for 30 seconds, rinse off the bleach, and then pour 3% hydrogen peroxide on the plant once a week for the next 3 weeks. Hydrogen peroxide isn't an approved fungicide in most areas, so if the agricultural inspector asks, you are using it to stimulate root growth.
- Spraying Rootone, Dip-n-Grow, or a similar rooting compound on rootless plants will help prevent the plant from going into a rest period and allows them to keep photosynthesis going until the plant is able to grow new roots. This is particularly critical for plants that only have seasonal root growth.
- Some *Cattleyas* that are grown in excessive light levels will develop red blotches on their leaves. These red blotches are the plant's defense against high light level; it tries to isolate anthocyanin, the excess chemical, into "sinks" to try to protect the rest of the plant. However, if not moved to lower light levels, the plant will experience anthocyanin toxicity.

### Lost and Found

A navy blue women's jacket, size 8 was found at the November ROA program. It is currently residing in the Resource Cart waiting to be claimed.





### Orchid Showcase

#### Showcased Orchids



*Lc.* (*C. Sapphire 'Gran Stan'* HCC/AOS x *Lc. Gran*), grown by Allen Black



*Masd.* Ken Dole, grown by Valli LaNeve and Jim Creech



*Ascda.* Queen Florist 'No. 2', grown by Michael Mealy

This unregistered *Laeliocattleya* is a cross between *C. Sapphire 'Gran Stan'* HCC/AOS and *Lc. Gran*. Allen Black obtained this hybrid off of Ebay about two years ago from Ervin Granier. Ervin was one of the speakers at the Huntington Symposium (see p. 7). This flower is the result of Ervin's work toward improving the blue color of *cattleyas*. It was not one of the crosses that he discussed during his program, so it is unclear whether Allen has bloomed his before Ervin, or if Ervin is dissatisfied with the color or lip and has not bothered to exhibit or name this hybrid. Allen is using this hybrid in his own breeding program.

*Masdevallia* Ken Dole is a primary cross (a cross between two species) between *Masd. coccinea* and *Masd. tonduzii*. This hybrid was registered by Gerardus Staal in 1992. This particular cross seems to have gotten its color from *Masd. tonduzii*, but the shape seems to be a blending of the two parents. Also, the *Masd. coccinea* parent was probably an alba variety, otherwise there would likely be some red in the flower.

*Ascocenda* Queen Florist 'No. 2' is a cross between *Ascda. Medasand* and *V. Rothschildiana*. This hybrid was registered in 1972 by Somsak Rakpaibulsombat. At least one cultivar of this hybrid has been awarded a First Class Certificate (FCC) by AOS. The contribution from each parent to this flower is unclear; *V. Rothschildiana* has several color varieties between red and blue, but I was unable to find photographs or descriptions of *Ascda. Medasand*.

More plants from the November Showcase will be featured in the December Bulletin.

### Why Should ROA Affiliate?

Being an affiliated society of the American Orchid Society and Orchid Digest may be taken for granted by older more established groups; however the Richmond Orchid Alliance looks at these associations as giant steps for our young alliance. Our aim is to be vibrant contributing members of both of these prestigious groups and we encourage our members to individually join both as well. Just the publications are worth the price of membership!

The benefits of affiliation with the American Orchid Society are so numerous and we invite those interested to visit their website to see them all. To mention just a few that affect us immediately:

- Vital assistance in the producing, promoting and judging of our upcoming AOS sanctioned show scheduled for April 7-9, 2006 at the Science Museum of Virginia.
- Supplying informative brochures and culture sheets useful to our members and to those we meet during various outreach opportunities.
- Providing a vast resource of slide programs and videotapes for us to use as needed.
- Just knowing that they are there to assist us on all levels as they have from day one of the formation of ROA. The support and guidance from trustees, the executive director and his staff has been invaluable.

The Orchid Digest is really the *last* word in orchid information as a publication. Each edition is outstanding and their special issues are collector's items. Their edito-

(continued on p. 9 "Affiliations" )





## 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 a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. We are affiliated with the American Orchid Society and Orchid Digest.

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 15<sup>th</sup> 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)

November is the month where it is finally necessary to admit that winter is coming. Now is the time for even the worst procrastinators to check heaters, light pilot lights, and acquire gas or oil. This is likely to be a painful proposition given the high cost of energy. Imagine having to heat several large commercial greenhouses this winter. This is what is facing the commercial growers here in the Continental U.S. this winter. Given this fact it is not surprising to see slightly higher orchid prices at my favorite nurseries.

High fuel prices are occurring at a time when a number of well-known orchid nurseries have already ceased operation or are in the process of closing. Lenette Orchids, where many excellent *cattleya* and *phalaenopsis* hybrids were developed, closed its doors this year. Its legacy remains in the fine art-shade *cattleyas* seen in orchid shows. It was at Lenette Orchids where Ken Griffith line-breed *Phal* Hilo Lip for five generations until he attained dark pink clones with their contrasting white lips that grows well in our warmer climate. The latest issue of Carter & Holmes fall catalog illustrates one of these clones. Unfinished was Ken's drive to create a pink *phal* with a bright yellow lip.

Another loss to the Orchid World this year is Everglades Orchids, where warm growing members of the *oncidium* and *cymbidium* alliance were developed. The innovative and dedicated work of the owner and hybridizer, Milton Carpenter, remains in many of our greenhouses where *cymbidiums* and different-looking *oncidiums* flourish in the heat of southern summers. Rumor has it that much of this line will be continued at Carter & Holmes where an

important portion of their stud plants can now be found.

Those of us in the Carolinas were fortunate to get a visit from Sue Fordyce a few months ago. Some did not realize that the plants she brought with her were some of the last ones that would come from Fordyce Orchids. Their lease was lost and there was no location available to move. Frank Fordyce produced some remarkable hybrids during his life, many at his Livermore nursery, including some of the best miniature and compact hybrids available today. One look at his recent hybrids makes *cattleya* lovers wish that Fordyce Orchids would remain forever. Fortunately, he has not lost his love of *cattleyas* and hybrids and will retain some of his favorite clones in a backyard greenhouse so he can continue hybridizing.

Breckenridge Orchids was put up for sale last year. Here some of the most remarkable *phalaenopsis* hybrids produced in the U.S. were made by Mark Rose. Over the years Mark also made some excellent *cattleyas* hybrids. More recently *paphiopedalum* hybrids were produced as well. Anyone that attended any of the local shows in the Carolinas or the monthly judging of the Carolinas Judging Center will also attest to Mark's growing skills.

The loss of Kensington Orchids a few years ago and its owner and hybridizer, Merritt Huntington, this year is a reminder that a great generation of hybridizers is ending. Some are speculating that in a few more years, orchids will no longer be grown and hybridized in the U.S. Undoubtedly, there are changes

(continued on p. 6 "Growing Tips")



## Calendar of Events Outside of ROA:

### December 3

National Capital Judging Center, US National Arboretum, Washington, DC.

### December 4

Tidewater Orchid Society, Norfolk, VA; Holiday party; contact: Evalyn Walch, email: walch@verizon.net.

### December 5

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

### December 11

Charlottesville Orchid Society, Charlottesville, VA; Holiday Party; contact: Brenda Steigma, email: Bsteigma@aol.com.

### December 12

National Capital Orchid Society, Washington, DC; Holiday Party and Member sales; contact: Ruth Lazarowitz, email: ncos\_information@yahoo.com.

### December 18

Virginia Orchid Society, Richmond, VA; Speaker: Bill Goldner of Woodstream Orchids; contact: Valerie Thacker, email: VLThacker@excite.com.

### January 7

National Capital Judging Center, US National Arboretum, Washington, DC.

### January 8

Charlottesville Orchid Society, Charlottesville, VA; Cultural Q&A; contact: Brenda Steigma, email: Bsteigma@aol.com.



## Yes We Did Pull Out All the Socks!!!

At our November program, we collected 92 pairs of socks for Freedom House.

Thank you everyone who made a donation! Several members expressed a desire to donate socks at the meeting, please call Valli (360-1625), so arrangements can be made to collect the socks. The socks will be delivered to Freedom House on Monday, December 5th for distribution. We all have helped to make life a little better for someone who is working through a crisis.



## ROA Bulletin ROA Member Update

Please join me in extending a warm welcome to Rebecca Randolph, the new assistant editor to our Bulletin. Rebecca has graciously volunteered to work on column development, editing and proofreading the Bulletin.

Jim Creech is on a recently formed ad hoc committee that reports to the AOS Affiliations Committee. Carol Holdren is chairing this committee that will be striving to improve AOS web-based resources available for newsletter editors. Also on this committee is Peggy Shaw, who edits newsletters for the Jupiter Tequesta and Martin County Orchid Societies in Florida. Congratulations.

## Growing Tips (con't from Page 5)

coming in the orchid business that will affect all hobbyists. This comes at a time when orchids are more popular and more available than ever. Will all orchids soon be hybridized, grown, and shipped from tropical countries? Are commercial growers in the U.S. doomed?

There will certainly be a continuation of what has occurred; well-known hybridizers retiring and leaving the business and fewer large nurseries. However, similar mega-scale changes in the orchid business have happened before. In the 1950s and early 1960s many huge orchid nurseries that had flourished and grown based on selling cut flowers for corsages closed and sold their stock. Many rare and once prized plants were sold for pennies on the dollar. Growers raised in this business thought that the orchid business was over. A few however, focused on hobbyists and thrived. The orchid business of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century seems to be one based on people that enjoy orchid flowers

more than orchid plants. Profit margins are small and nurseries entering this market rely on mass production and marketing, not on flower quality.

Orchid nurseries that remain profitable will need to adapt to these new conditions and exploit these new markets. Unfortunately, the sale of large numbers of previously unavailable clones from nurseries going out of business is flooding the hobbyist market with great orchids at low prices, making profits for those that continue even harder to realize. Many new, niche orchid nurseries are developing that cater to smaller groups of hobbyists. These businesses have always been around, but are likely to become an ever more important part of the orchid growing landscape. These and the traditional orchid nurseries that successfully make the transition will become the new American orchid nursery business, which relies on plants shipped from all over the world as well as local products developed by hobbyists and small nurseries.

## In Your Words

I was excited when I received the information on the upcoming Merritt Huntington Memorial Orchid Symposium. I knew that if I attended an event of this magnitude, meeting other people who share my love for the orchids and the orchid experts would be the best way to answer my novice questions and concerns about orchids. Much of the conference was way over my head because I am a novice, although conversations with members and vendors helped put me at ease with some of my orchid insecurities. I even dragged my husband along who is not an orchid enthusiast, and he enjoyed himself discussing orchid photography with the Richmond Orchid Alliance's newsletter editor, Jim Creech. I feel so much more at ease to know that what I am experiencing with my orchids others have also experienced. I know I will always have many questions and concerns; however it is such a relief to understand that some of my concerns are merely the ways of the orchid. It was a privilege to be able to see so many orchid varieties in one place and have the opportunity to talk with the experts. I was truly amazed that the speakers were so friendly and genuinely caring, and how willing they were to communicate with me at my novice level.

- Cheryl Nachman



## Merritt Huntington Memorial Symposium

On Saturday, November 12, the inaugural Merritt Huntington Memorial Symposium was held in Williamsburg. A strong contingent of ROA members joined orchidists from many states to remember our friend, Merritt Huntington, in Williamsburg on Saturday, November 12<sup>th</sup>; there were about 125 in attendance. The session started with memories of this giant of orchidom and the reading of a heartfelt letter from Lee Cooke, Executive Director of the American Orchid Society. Tom Ward then introduced Helen Huntington to present her with a remembrance of the occasion. Rob Griesbach (currently AOS Immediate Past President and with the U.S. Department of Agriculture) moderated the event.

Alan Koch of Gold Country Orchids spoke first on "Miniature and Compact Cattleyas." There were two primary themes to his talk. The first was orchid culture, and much of his content on this theme can be found in ROA's program recap (see pp. 3 and 8). The second was to describe elements of his Cattleya breeding program; describing the genetic elements (color, size, length of blooming, frequency of blooming, ease in growing) he was trying to emphasize with different hybrids, and whether the attempt was successful.

The second speaker, Ervin Granier, discussed his "Search for the Blue Orchid." As a hobbyist, he has spent the past 12 years hybridizing *Cattleyas* for better blue color. To that end, he has 15 registered crosses that have resulted in more than 50 cultural and quality awards. (One of his unregistered hybrids was purchased by Allen Black on Ebay a few years ago, and is pictured in the Orchid Showcase.) To avoid the need to repot, Ervin reported that he grows exclusively in a mix of

charcoal, spongerock and peat. While this mix may work well in Louisiana, no one in the audience believed that it would work well in Virginia.

The final presentation was on "Brazilian Cattleyas." Luiz Hamilton Pima helped to put a geographic and climatic context to Brazil's *Cattleya* species. By understanding the cultural needs of the species, we as orchid growers can make better decisions about the cultural needs of the resulting hybrids.

After a brief question-and-answer panel involving all three speakers as well as the moderator, Tom Ward returned to present the AOS judged awards. Of the 26 plants that were entered, six were pulled for closer examination, and four were awarded. Three Highly Commended Certificates (HCC) were presented; one to Seagrove Orchids for a *Phalaenopsis*, and two to ROA's Allen Black for the *Cattleyas* pictured on p. 8. The final award was a Certificate of Cultural Merit (CCM) for Jeff Morris from the Charlottesville Orchid Society (for those who were on the bus trip to Pine Crest, Jeff was the speaker on *Paph.* and *Phrag.* culture) for a specimen-sized plant of *Paph. spicerianum*.

Door prizes were awarded throughout the event by drawings that were periodically posted never slowing down the program. A buffet lunch was enjoyed and seven sales tables offered beautiful healthy orchids, supplies and other orchid related items. This event is an example of how orchid growers and friends from the Tidewater and Central Virginia areas can join forces for successful events and enjoy the process!! It is anticipated that the second Merritt Huntington Memorial Symposium will take place in the spring of 2007.

-Jim Creech and Barbara Noe

## Two HCCs for Allen Black at Symposium



Blc. Haw Juan 'Jade' HCC/AOS (77 points). Four full flowers on two inflorescences; sepals and petals yellow with even chartreuse suffusion; lip evenly ruffled with markings reminiscent of cattleya dowiana; throat veined deep yellow, side lobes sopped pale red, midlobe and base velvet fuchsia. Substance hard, texture diamond dust.



Blc. ( B. Little Stars x Lc. Memoria Robert Strait) 'Joy Black' HCC/AOS (Provisional, 76 points). Eighteen star-shaped white flowers and three buds on five inflorescences; lip overlaid amethyst with fuchsia spots coalesced into veins at base, throat pale yellow. Substance firm, texture crystalline.

Images by Allen Black  
Descriptions by the AOS judges

## Alan Koch's Culture Tips

### Air

- Air movement is crucial in the growing area because it prevents stagnant air from surrounding the little pores on the underside of leaves that allow plants to absorb air. This increases gas exchange and also helps the plants dry out faster.

### Water

- A pH of around 6 or 7 is necessary to allow uptake of nutrients.
- pH levels above 8 will cause some nutrients to be unavailable because solubility is decreased.
- pH levels below 6 will make some nutrients unavailable and cause others to be absorbed in toxic amounts.
- The harder the water, the longer you should water your plants. In south Florida, Fuchs/Coronado will mist for 45 minutes because of the amount of calcium and magnesium in their well water, where another grower using a reverse osmosis (RO) system only needs to water for 10 minutes to achieve the same level of absorption.

### Potting Mix

- To help aerate, add non-organic material (perlite, floating pumice, diatomite) to your potting mix that will help aerate it.
- With soft water (water with low levels of calcium, magnesium and other elements) it helps to have 10 to 20% organic material in the potting mix to help buffer the pH of the fertilizer solution.
- Leave an air space in the bottom of the pot to improve drainage.
- Mini-catts are potted with a collar or sphagnum moss around the roots.

### Nutrition

- Magnesium is used in the production of chlorophyll (it can be found at the head of the chlorophyll molecule).
- Calcium helps to thicken the cell walls which affects the physical strength of the plant and its ability to resist disease. Plants with plenty of Calcium won't need as much staking.

A suggested nutrition schedule is Hydrofarm Agro All-Purpose fertilizer one week, seaweed and iron the next week, a balanced (e.g., 20-20-20) liquid fertilizer the next week, then flush with just water the fourth week.

Hydrofarm's Agro All-Purpose fertilizer with CMS was recommended for foliar feeding. Use at 1/8 tsp. per gal.

Seaweed extract was recommended as a supplemental source of nutrition. Seaweed contains oxins, cytokinins, and many micronutrients. Terry Root uses seaweed extract on his plants. Seaweed supplements are great for growing *Paphs*.

Liquid Ironite can be used as an iron supplement and should be available locally. It is very hard to cause iron toxicity in an orchid if the supplement is given at any reasonable dose. You may want to look around for Max Sea, a product that has both seaweed and iron.

When foliar feeding, remember that 90% of the small leaf pores (macropores) are on the underside of the leaves. The nutrient molecules should be less than 25 microns to fit into those pores. Chelated iron molecules are too large for foliar feeding, so use products that contain iron sulfate. You can use Liquid Ironite monthly at half-strength.

The root-tips of orchids absorb micronutrients. The velamen on the rest of the roots collects water to cool the roots.

Most fertilizer absorption is done within 20 minutes of watering. For salt-sensitive plants, you can rinse off the fertilizer salts after 20 minutes.

Black leaf tips indicate salt buildup; flush the plant's media.

Plants coming out of flask need supplemental calcium, apply this through a foliar feed.

-From Jim Creech's Notes at ROA November Program and Huntington Symposium



### The Orchid Thief (con't from Page 10)

#### Thank You

Barbara Sims and I would like to thank everyone that generously contributed to our holiday reception table. From appetizers to desserts and everything in between, there was something for everyone to enjoy. Happy holidays.

- Kathy Walker and Barbara Sims

#### Welcome Desk

Meet your fellow members and guests by assisting at the Welcome Desk. Contact me at 360-1625 or Valli@GourmetCookiesByValli.com for more information. Thanks to all.

- Valli LaNeve

#### Gifts to ROA are Tax Deductible

As the end of the year approaches, we want to remind our members that ROA is a qualified non-profit organization under 501(c) (3). A contribution to ROA is tax deductible and is eligible for matching gift programs offered by some employers.

#### 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.

Motes of Motes Orchids, Tom Fennell of the former Orchid Jungle (now Dade County's Hattie Bauer Hammock preserve), and Lee Moore "the Adventurer" (a former smuggler of orchids and pre-Columbian art). She attends various orchid shows, a black-tie American Orchid Society gala at the Flagler Mansion in Palm Beach, and the annual tribal fair and rodeo at the Seminole reservation in Hollywood, Florida. While she somehow refuses to start collecting orchids, she nonetheless finds herself venturing time and again into the uninviting Fakahatchee Strand in search of a *Polyrhiza lindenii* in bloom. "You would have to want something very badly to go looking for it in the Fakahatchee Strand," she writes.

Perhaps the underlying theme of *The Orchid Thief* is something orchid hobbyists have always known: there is something about orchids that draws us to them, that makes us want to learn about them and

surround ourselves with them - and the more orchids the better.

A side note: While *The Orchid Thief* is a wonderful book, the movie *Adaptations*, loosely based upon *The Orchid Thief*, is something of a disappointment. *Adaptations* is the Hollywood version of *The Orchid Thief*, complete with a neurotic screenwriter with chronic writer's block (portrayed by Nicholas Cage, who also plays the screenwriter's twin brother), an illicit relationship between the married Ms. Orlean (Meryl Streep) and Mr. Laroche (Chris Cooper), and drug use - of a type of drug manufactured from *Polyrhiza lindenii* orchids. Far-fetched, and painful to watch at times (how much do you really want to see of a screenwriter struggling with writer's block?), *Adaptations* may or may not be worth the rental fee. But *The Orchid Thief* is certainly worth a visit to the library or Amazon.com.

- Rebecca Randolph

### Affiliations (con't from Page 4)

rial staff is a Who's Who of Orchidom. Orchid Digest also provides excellent slide programs that are ours upon request. The Orchid Digest Trophy, only available to affiliates, is a coveted award presented at shows. Their annual speaker's day event is always outstanding.

Both of these groups allow us to network with others in the orchid



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world making our work on a local level more meaningful as they provide us with the tools to do the job; always validating our efforts and recognizing when we do good work for orchids.

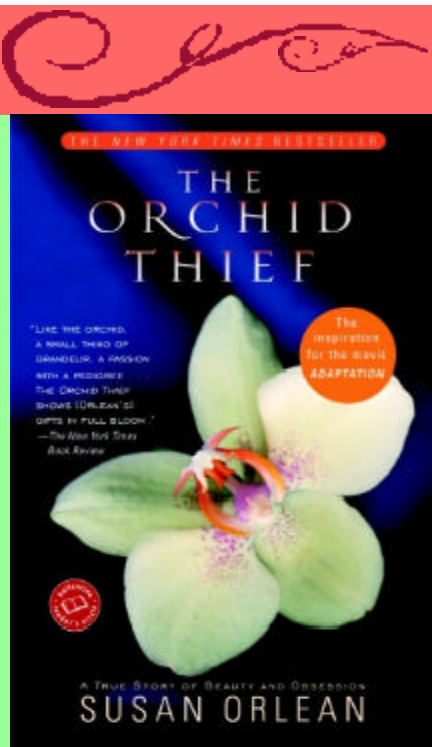
- Barbara Noe



Memberships are \$46.50 per year and include the monthly magazine Orchids. Details are at www.orchidweb.org. AOS is a 501 (c) (3) organization.



## *The Orchid Thief: a True Story of Beauty and Obsession* by Susan Orlean



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The first time I read *The Orchid Thief*, I distinctly remember saying to my husband, "Susan Orlean is such a good writer, she can even make *orchids* seem interesting." Many orchid acquisitions later, I can pinpoint exactly how and when I caught the "orchid bug" - while reading this book. Part biography, part history, part essay, *The Orchid Thief* is a delightful read, particularly if you share my interest in all things orchid.

Although named for its initial subject, the alleged "orchid thief" John Laroche, this book is not simply a story about Laroche or orchid poaching. Instead, it chronicles the human race's fascination with orchids, and the lengths to which men have gone in pursuit of this fascination. The story of John Laroche turns out to be little more than a starting point for Ms. Orlean, who then delves into the history of orchid collecting and cultivation, Florida's natural history, development and land schemes, and the business ventures of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, among other topics. She entertains her readers with accounts of her forays into the

orchid world, her meetings with contemporary orchid growers and collectors, and her adventures with Laroche.

Laroche, arrested for removing endangered *Polyrhiza lindenii* from Florida's Fakahatchee Strand, is a bizarre character, often offensive, but usually interesting. Hard on his luck, he is constantly concocting schemes by which he can make large amounts of money and serve some greater good, such as orchid conservation. None of his plans come to fruition, and by the end of the book he has completely renounced orchids - and moved on to internet pornography. But by this time he has served his purpose and introduced Ms. Orlean to the world of orchids, to which Ms. Orlean, in turn, introduces the reader.

From the perspective of Ms. Orlean, a non-orchid person, the orchid world is full of interesting people and things, thievery, smuggling, and drama. During the course of her research, she visits Florida's major orchid houses, and speaks with Robert Fuchs of R.F. Orchids, Frank Smith of Krull-Smith Orchids, Martin

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