



Southern Tier Orchid Society

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JANUARY 2007

President's Message

This year, STOS celebrates its 21st anniversary since its rebirth. From a group of a mere five members in 1986, it has grown to be a dynamic organization that has more than sixty-five current members. This growth effort has only been possible by communication of the goals of our organization, programs and participation in many local and out-of-town shows. At present, I hope that with the expansion of our reach through diffusion in the Internet and simply by word of mouth, our organization will continue to grow and attract more members that are new. As I write these lines, we are updating the STOS website to reflect current information and we hope you find this material useful and friendly. Please visit our site frequently since we will be adding current news and other important dates in our calendar.

As usual, our efforts this year are going into preparing an enjoyable set of programs that will serve both educational and informational goals that will enhance your experience with orchids. It is also the other component of an organization, that is, people that complements these activities. For this reason, I consider that this is also an opportunity for all of us to meet and make new friends.

In our December 2006 newsletter, we had announced a lecture by our friend Tom Daly from CNYOS for this month. However, due to circumstances beyond our control, this lecture and usual meeting (January 21, 2007) have to be rescheduled to a future date. FEMA is presently occupying our usual meeting place for the month. However, in lieu of this session, we will conduct two other important STOS meetings that will highlight also a show table in the larger of the two rooms in the back area of the Community Room of the Vestal library. The first meeting is the first annual STOS Executive Board Meeting and the second one, chaired by Paula Matienzo, will be the 2007 Show Committee Planning Meeting, which will start promptly at 2:00 p.m. Since the latter meeting is a club effort that culminates with our annual April 2007 show, it has many facets during its conception and development. You will find this gathering

interesting and educational as well and, therefore, we encourage you to stop by and participate. Again, we would highly appreciate if you bring plants in flower since we will have a show table. Perhaps this is an opportunity to see your team in action and also to see plants you have only seen in books or in advertisements.

The February 2007 meeting will highlight a description by John Zygmunt of the new OrchidWiz[®] program geared to identify orchid species and hybrids, and a dynamic presentation by Son Tran and Luis Matienzo on orchid material using live Internet resources. I am sure that these topics will generate more questions and will pique your interests.

See you soon,
Luis J. Matienzo, STOS President

Editor's Note: Minutes and Treasurer's Report for the December 2006 meeting will be published in next month's newsletter.

❧❧ Please Note ❧❧

January 2007 STOS Meeting Cancelled

The regular January 21, 2007 STOS meeting, scheduled for 2:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Vestal Public Library, has been replaced by two other STOS meetings: The First Annual Executive Board Meeting and the Annual Show Committee Planning Meeting. As a result, we have postponed the presentation scheduled for this month and will reschedule it.

These changes were made to allow FEMA use the community room for flood victims' claims during the month of January.

If you have not attended a show planning committee meeting, we encourage you to attend this session and learn some issues of interest that will make our annual show another success.

We will also have a show table and brief discussion of the plants that members bring. However, be aware that this meeting will be held in one of the rooms behind the community room. This meeting starts at 2:00 p.m.

Show Committee Meeting, Sunday, January 21, 2007

Since FEMA's use of the Community Room has caused us to cancel the STOS general meeting for January, we will use the same time to hold the Show Committee meeting in the larger of the two rooms behind the Community Room. Scheduling the Show Committee meeting at this time, we hope, will make it easier for everyone, especially those who have to travel some distance in weather that can be unpredictable at this time of year.

We welcome *all* interested STOS members to attend and become more involved in the planning and organization of this event. Please come!

In case you have forgotten the dates and times of the STOS Annual Show at Oakdale Mall, here is the overall schedule as we see it now:

Setup -- Thursday, April 26, 2:00 p.m.

Judging -- Friday, April 27, 10:30 a.m.

Open to the Public –

Friday, April 27, 4:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 28, 10:00 a.m. -- 9:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 29, 11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

We need everyone's support to make our Annual Show another success. If you have not been involved in helping out with the show, the following list includes major areas of the show for which we are requesting your help:

Plant Registration – Both people and plants needed here.

Table Setup for Vendor Sales and Exhibits

Set Up Panels For Art and Photography Exhibits

Planning and Setting Up Our Club's Exhibit(s)

Judging Clerks – Assist AOS judges by spotting plants, recording awards, and placing ribbons.

Organizing the Judges' Luncheon

Working At the Information Table

Teardown

So, we look forward to seeing you at our meeting on Sunday, January 21, when we will be discussing some of these issues in greater detail. If you are unable to attend the meeting or need further information, please feel free to e-mail or call Luis or me. You'll find our contact information on the first page of this newsletter. Thanks for your help.

Paula Matienzo, 2007 Show Chair

Dues Are Due! - A Request

If you have been a member of STOS, or want to join our organization, it is time to pay for your dues for the present year. You can do so by either using our standard form (see web-

site) or by bringing payment to our next meeting. This is the only way we can continue offering exciting programs, some hands-on sessions, paying for our Website and offering you timely newsletters. STOS annual memberships are \$15 per individual or household, for which we ask you to complete our form to update our membership and mailing lists for the newsletter. Payments are accepted as check or money order (made payable to: Southern Tier Orchid Society).

Please send your payment to:

Pete O'Connell, STOS Treasurer, 3718 West Road Cortland, NY 13045

or

Anne Tinker, STOS Vice-President, 163 Crary Avenue, Binghamton, NY 13905.

Please indicate if you would like to receive the newsletter as an electronic document or via mail. Forms are available at our website.

STOS in the News

Karen Woytowich, of the Staten Island Orchid Society, will be giving an Orchid lecture to *all* New York based National Garden Club Inc. judges in March 2007. STOS has provided information to make our club known to other horticultural organizations.

STOS Newsletter

In order to keep our current events and news reaching all of us in a timely manner, we need volunteers who can assist the editor and others involved with the newsletter. Please see our editor, Roxanne Shank, or Luis or Paula Matienzo for details.

Refreshment Volunteers

Following is the current list of refreshment volunteers. More than one person may sign up for an individual meeting so that the cost and work can be shared among members. Please note that we still need additional volunteers for one upcoming meeting, or to team up with an existing volunteer.

February – Susan Gal

March – Martha Birch

April – *Open*

May - Roxanne Shank

Please sign up at the next meeting for the open slot in April and/or to assist those who've already signed up.

❧ Items of Interest ❧

New Orchid Species Discovered in Two African Nations

Regarding . . . 221 newly identified species of orchid plant, Fidel Ruzigandekwe, the Executive Director of Rwanda Wildlife Authority said that a documentary is being compiled for the public and regional and international marketing.

"This compiled documentary will help us portray the value of these orchid plant species for tourism purposes. After they are entirely recognised that's when many tourists will be attracted to visit their localities," he said."

Source:

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200612200587.html>

Mini Cymbidiums

"Mini-cyms are easier to grow and tend to rebloom much more dependably than the standard varieties. The flowers are smaller, but just as spectacular, and because the plant is petite, it's easier to find room to display it in the house.

Place your mini-cym in a cool room, out of direct sunlight, and water whenever the soil surface is dry. As soon as the blooms fade, cut off the old stalks and repot in the same (or slightly bigger) container using a good cymbidium potting mix. Water well, then withhold water for the next two weeks, misting the foliage daily.

After the two-week rest period, move the plant next to a sunny window and begin fertilizing every two weeks with a growth fertilizer diluted half-strength. Next spring, as soon as the danger of frost has passed, move your mini-cym outdoors where it will receive morning sun until about noon.

Continue feeding with growth fertilizer until August, then switch to bloom fertilizer and feed at the same rate and dilution until the end of December. The mini-cyms do not require low temperatures to set blooms, but the plants perform best if you leave them outdoors until freezing temperatures are predicted. When you bring it inside, if it hasn't set buds, place your mini-cym in full sun and water sparingly until buds form."

Source:

http://.seattlepi.nwsourc.com/nwgardens/296456_ciscoe21.html?source=rss

Let's Collect Wild Orchids Before They Are Destroyed

"Wild orchid enthusiasts have been blamed for the possible dying out of various species. But these enthusiasts place the blame squarely on the shoulders of the authorities who allow forests to be cleared for development. They say that no attempts are made to save the flora in areas slated to be cleared.

They also believe that the rules imposed by CITES (Convention for International Trade of Endangered Species) have only encouraged the illegal smuggling of wild orchids. "It may work well for its original intended purpose of controlling the trade in endangered animals, but I fail to understand why the same rules apply to wild orchids," said Nik Ahmad Fahmi Nik Abdullah. The 40-year-old. . . orchidist . . . has been promoting the beauty of Malaysia's wild orchids through his website Vortex's Orchids.

Nik Ahmad Fahmi says because of CITES regulations, governments or companies may clear thousands of hectares of land in the name of development but, ironically, it is illegal to go into these areas and collect the orchids before they are destroyed.

As for the Orang Asli trade in wild orchids, he says the percentage of wild orchids they remove from the jungle is negligible compared to what has been lost through "development". . . . "I would rather allow the Orang Asli to collect and sell orchids in areas targeted for development. At least this will allow them to earn a decent income, and save the orchids from ultimate destruction," he said.

Education, he adds, is an important tool for the survival of wild orchids. "While the Orang Asli and orchid enthusiasts need to be taught how to care for and propagate orchid species, legislators, developers and all parties need to be made aware of the importance of conservation."

Nik Ahmad Fahmi feels that if the CITES rules against the trade in artificially propagated wild orchids are relaxed, growers would not resort to buying illegally collected orchids on the black market. . . . "A species will have a better chance of survival in the care of orchid enthusiasts, rather than leaving them to their own devices in the wild," he said.

Using bio-technology, thousands of plants could be propagated from a single seed pod in a lab, compared to maybe fewer than 10 plants surviving and reaching maturity in the wild. These plants could be used to re-introduce species into the wild as well. He added that the trade in artificially propagated wild orchids could finance the conservation of equally rare plants with little or no commercial value.

41-year-old Othman Ismail, who has been collecting orchids since he was 14, says the authorities should license non-governmental organisations or orchid societies to collect orchids. "Collection should be allowed only in logging areas or areas gazetted for development"...

Source:

http://www.nst.com.my/Current_News/nst/Sunday/National/20061217094927/Article/local1.html

Gardening Indoors This Winter Doesn't Have To Be Expensive And Complicated

By Julie Kirkwood, Staff Writer
Eagle-Tribune (North Andover, MA)

Frank Coppelino's greenhouses at Tindara's Orchid Supplies in Georgetown [Massachusetts] use industrial-strength artificial lights to keep the flowers blooming and plants growing.

But when it comes to Coppelino's personal gardens, he uses a plain fluorescent bulb that

screws into an ordinary light socket. And sometimes he doesn't even use that.

"I'm in my office," Coppolino said. "I have 10 orchids in bloom. I'm surrounded by them. They are just under regular fluorescent lighting, just regular office lighting."

Artificial light can get flowering houseplants to bloom in winter, make up for low sunlight in a house or apartment . . .

Garden supply catalogs will happily sell you hundreds of dollars worth of growing lights, carts and timers, but there are much cheaper ways to do it.

"For small growers and for home hobbyists - someone who's not doing a large scale production of plants - you don't really need to spend a lot of money," Coppolino said.

Joan Blackett, a member of the Indoor Gardeners of New England, is growing about 100 orchids on her enclosed front porch with ordinary shop lights, 4-foot-long rectangular lights that are suspended from the ceiling. The lights are connected to a simple timer set to run them from 4 to 9 p.m., and she turns them on early on cloudy days.

"I'm just growing them and seeing if I can get them to bloom," she said of the flowers. . . .

Home gardeners who want to grow houseplants indoors over the winter should start small, Blackett advises.

"You usually start with a windowsill and something simple," she said. "When you have enough plants or too many plants and you want to get serious about it, you decide you may need to do something else."

People also use growing lights to start seedlings indoors, said Eagle-Tribune gardening columnist Barbara Barger. This, too, can be

expensive if you order special light carts from garden suppliers, she said, or it can be as inexpensive as using fluorescent light fixtures from a hardware store.

"You can put (the light) on a chain or rope and hang it from something so you can raise it or lower it," she said.

Many orchids do well under growing lights, Barger said. . . . Coppolino continues to grow orchids under lights indoors as a hobby, even as his business moves toward selling supplies rather than live plants. . . . "I need plants around me all the time, especially in the middle of the winter months here in New England," he said. "Indoor gardening, I personally find it relaxing and therapeutic and it's kind of an escape for me."

Tips for growing under lights:

- * Ordinary fluorescent lights provide plenty of artificial sunlight for most plants. Use any shop light fixture. Install bulbs in pairs: one cool white fluorescent tube and one warm white tube. This is just as effective as fluorescent grow lights, and cheaper, say gardening experts.

- * Artificial lights make it possible to keep the "sun" on your plants 24 hours a day, but you shouldn't. Plants get worn out if they don't have dark periods to rest. Most plants like about 12 to 14 hours of light and 10 to 12 hours of darkness every day. A simple timer on the outlet where the lights are plugged in will help with the schedule.

- * When placing plants, beware that there are two-inch dead spots at the end of the tubes and the light is more concentrated in the center. The dead spots are the same length regardless of the length of the tube, so it is more efficient to buy 4-foot tubes rather than 2-foot tubes.

* Fluorescent lights have expiration dates. The bulb may still light up but not provide enough light for your plants. To keep track of which of your lights are fresh, write the date you bought the bulb on the fixture.

* Be careful - leaves or flowers should not touch the fluorescent light. If they do, or they get too close, they can burn.

* Don't set the plants too far from the light, either. Light intensity drops dramatically as you move the plant away from light. If placed too far away, plants will reach for it and become leggy. An ideal distance is four to six inches from the tip of the leaves to the bottom of the light.

* Plants under lights are going to grow faster than your other houseplants, which means they will need more fertilizer in the winter and more frequent watering. . . .

Shortcuts to indoor gardening

You don't need hundreds of dollars worth of equipment to get started with growing lights. Here are ways to tap into artificial sun at minimal or no cost.

Grow plants at work - The fluorescent lights in a typical office are enough to sustain many varieties of plants. If possible, place the plants within two or three feet of the lights, said Frank Coppelino. . . . Try putting them on top of file cabinets. Slipper orchids do well under office lights. . . .

Use cheap light fixtures - If you already have a fluorescent fixture in your house, try growing under that. Shop lights work well.

If you don't have a fluorescent shop light, but you do have a clamp light (a cheap reflective fixture with a socket for an incandescent bulb), you can buy a fluorescent grow light to screw into that socket. A 160-watt fluorescent bulb

that plugs into an ordinary incandescent socket goes for about \$50.

If it ain't broke ...- Indoor gardening is a process of experimentation, Coppelino said. When a plant is doing very well indoors, forget the rules. Don't move it. Keep doing what you've been doing. It probably doesn't need growing lights or any other fancy equipment."

Article URL:

http://www.eagletribune.com/pulife/local_story_014102526?keyword=topstory

Arizona Vanilla Company to Present at the New York Botanical Gardens Annual Orchid Show

"Arizona Vanilla Company, a dynamic online retailer and distributor of high-end specialty has been invited for the second year in a row to participate at the New York Botanical Gardens annual Orchid Show. On March 24, 2006, Arizona Vanilla CEO, Eric Elsberry, will be presenting the History of Vanilla. . . .

[P]ure vanilla extract, as well as the cookbook "Simply Vanilla" by Arizona Vanilla Company's co-owner, Patty Elsberry, will be available for the visitors to the Gardens during the Orchid Show.

Chef Annemarie Huste . . . will be putting on three cooking demonstrations. . . .

Arizona Vanilla Company is a rapidly growing online distributor of bulk and processed vanilla products including the Madagascar, Mexican, Tahitian and Bourbon vanilla varieties. Arizona Vanilla Company works directly with vanilla growers . . .

Source:

<http://prweb.com/releases/2007/1/prweb497543.htm>

