

# MARYLAND ORCHID SOCIETY

# ORCHID

## newsletter



News and information for the members of the Maryland Orchid Society

December 2010

### *president's message*

## Season's Greetings

Greetings to everyone.

My message this month is short and sweet. I'll take this opportunity to wish all of you a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays. It's the time of year to gather with friends and family, to exchange stories and to catch up on events and happenings in our lives. It's no different with The Maryland Orchid Society. Enjoy the relaxed atmosphere of this month's meeting and catch up with friends and make a few new acquaintances. Take time to introduce yourself to a new member or guest.

Remember our Swap and Sale at this month's meeting. It will be a great time to pick up some good deals from growers you know. And you'll be able to talk to the grower and learn the ins and outs of growing and blooming your new plant.

Keep in mind we are expanding the December monthly auction as well, removing the limit on the number of blooming plants each member can bring to put up for auction. Another perfect opportunity to get that special someone a beautiful blooming orchid... even if that special someone is yourself, no guilt, it's the Holiday Season.

Enjoy the gathering, good food and friendship of our Maryland Orchid Society.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays,

*Bill*

## December Meeting: Member Plant Swap and Sale

At the December meeting, our traditional Holiday Party, we will be having a member Plant Swap and Sale. Each member can bring up to five plants to sell, trade or simply give away to other members or guests. The plants for the Swap and Sale are NOT to be in bloom as blooming plants are still part of the (expanded) December monthly auction (see below for details). We plan to use the kitchen space to hold the plants since the Hall will be filled with delicious treats for the party. Please clearly identify your plants with your name to avoid confusion, and as always, be sure your plants are healthy, clean and free of any disease or pests. MOS is simply supplying a forum for this activity and is not responsible for, or involved in any of the transactions. It's purely a member to member or guest activity.

As part of the new Holiday Plant Swap and Sale we will expand the monthly auction as well. We are removing, only for this December meeting, the limit on the number of blooming plants one can bring to the monthly auction. It's a good time of year for plants to be

coming in bloom, so hopefully you'll have a division or two to sell at the auction. This is a great opportunity to sell those blooming divisions and just as great an opportunity to add to your collection.

I hope you enjoy this new opportunity and happy shopping!

*Bill*

### Don't Miss the Holiday Party

Cut loose at the December meeting and holiday party! Sarah Spence will sing, "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer" and Bill Ellis will do elf face painting. If you'd like to contribute to the holiday party, contact Barbara Buck at 410-551-9374 or [barbarabuck@comcast.net](mailto:barbarabuck@comcast.net). Also, don't forget to pick up your 2010 - 2011 Member Roster at the meeting.



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5 November's Auction a Huge Success

Special thanks to Sarah Hurdel for the beautiful photos below of last month's show table plants!



**Novice**

1. Phal. Mini Hybrid (above) - Janice Mazur
2. Alcra. Hilo Ablaze 'HOF' - The Dagostins
3. Onc. Midas 'Valleyfield' - Gregg Custis



**Home Grown**

1. My. *exasperata* - Bill Scharf
2. Tie Lc. Love Fantasy 'Sweet Dreams' - Sarah Spence  
Phal. Cat's Paw Firebird 'Montclair' - Gary Smith
3. Tie Lc. Angel Love X C. *skinneri* - Deborah Dade  
Phrag. Cardinale (above)- The Lundys

**Greenhouse**

1. C. Chocolate Drop 'Kodama' AM/AOS (center column, top)- Eric Wiles
2. Tie Epi. *eburneum* - David Smith  
Ren. Nancy Chandler 'Red Dragon' HCC/AOS - The Adamses
3. Paph. *spicerianum* - Jamie Riegel & Erin Hunt



**Cattleya**

1. C. Porcia 'Cannizaro' FCC/AOS (above)- Eric Wiles
2. Tie Epi. *porpax* - Bill Scharf  
Lc. Pumpkin Festival 'Fong Yuen' AM/OSROC - David Smith
3. Tie Blc. Glenn Maidment 'Aranbeem' (below)- Barbara Buck  
Lc. Mini Purple 'Princess Road' AM/AOS - The Adamses



**Phalaenopsis**

1. Phal. Hybrid - Bill Soyke
2. Dtps. Taida Salu X Phal. Fortune Saltzman - John Dunning
3. Phal. Ever Spring Light 'Crown' (above) - Gary Smith

**Oncidium**

1. Mtssa. Seattle Sunrise X Milt. Cast Glow - Eric Wiles
2. Onc. Twinkle 'Red Fantasy' - John Dunning
3. Onc. *taochicum* - David Smith

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## Orchid on the Run

As often is the case in a young orchid's life, the excitement of participating in a Show Table judging can leave an inexperienced orchid confused and disoriented, leading it to seek shelter in the closest available tray or box during end-of-meeting clean-up. Such is the story of my Phalaenopsis Cordova 'Orchidphile', entered in the November Home Grown class. If you have any information regarding the whereabouts of this misguided orchid, please contact Gary Smith.



Special thanks to Sarah Hurdel for the beautiful photos below of last month's show table plants!



**Paphiopedilum and Phragmipedium**

1. Paph. Ernest Read (above) - David Smith
2. Paph. Gloria Naugle - Val Lowe
3. Tie Paph. Hybrid - Cy Swett  
Paph. Alien - Laura Sobelman

**Dendrobium**

1. Den. Hybrid - Chris Zajac
2. Den. Nora Tokunaga - Eric Wiles
3. Den. Burana White - John Dunning



**Miscellaneous Hybrids**

1. Ctsm. Dragon's Treasure 'Gilberto' AM/AOS - Eric Wiles
2. Z. Louisendorf 'Rhen Harlekin' (above) - Jamie Riegel & Erin Hunt
3. Tie Asctm. (*garayi* X *ampullaceum*) - The Adamses  
Holc. *kimballianum* X V. *lamellata* - Gary Smith

**Species**

1. Coel. *ovalis* - Cy Swett
2. Lpths. *astrophora* 'Stalky' - David Smith
3. Tie Ang. *distichum* - The Adamses  
Zo. *atropurpuratum* - Eric Wiles

**Miniature**

1. Epi. *porpax* - David Smith
2. Tie Onc. *cheirophorum* - Bill Scharf  
Neo. *kisuzume* - The Adamses
3. Aergs. *luteo-alba* var. *rhodosticta* - Owen Humphrey

**First Bloom Seedling**

1. Paph. Hsinying Aljakun - John Dunning
2. Pyp. Butterfly - Bill Soyke

**Fragrance**

1. Onc. Sharry Baby 'Red Fantasy' - Laura Sobelman
2. Lc. (Persepolis X Starting Point) - John Dunning
3. Blc. Erin Kobayashi X B. *nodosa* - Chris Zajac

The Judges Choice of the Evening was C. Porcia 'Cannizaro' FCC/AOS, exhibited by Eric Wiles. The judges were Ann Lundy, Chris Zajac and Deborah Dade. There were an **unbelievable 162** beautiful plants displayed, our biggest show table ever!

**Got Gnats?** By Sarah L. Spence

You know those pesky little "fungus gnats" that flit around your orchids, particularly after you water your plants? Well, have I got a tip for you! Insectivorous plants! I have placed several "sundew" type insectivorous plants in with my orchids, elevating them slightly above my orchids in containers that hold about one inch of "distilled" water. The gnats are



attracted to the sweet sap that forms at the ends of tiny, sticky, red hairs. The gnats get stuck in the sap and are eventually digested by the sundew that is dependent on the insects for nitrogen.

Insectivorous plants, also known as carnivorous plants, are native to bogs and nutrient poor soils.

In the orchid garden, the Sundew requires lots of light, wet at all times, mineral-free (distilled) water and mineral-free soil (sphagnum peat moss and horticultural sand). There are other insectivorous plants like the Venus Fly Trap but I do not think the tiny gnat would trigger the sensitive hairs in the trap. The Sundew is doing a great job of removing the gnats in my orchid garden, thriving on the abundant nitrogen, even producing flowers.



Photo by Jim Osen

*local aos news*

Congratulations go to our own David Smith! His plant of *Acianthera sonderiana* 'Turnberry', CCE/AOS was awarded the 2010 Carlyle A. Luer Award for the most outstanding member of the Pleurothallidinae.

Valerie Lowe,  
Society AOS Representative

# Monthly Checklist for November and December

## Cattleya

Growers of just about every level of expertise will have begun to notice autumn conditions by now. Days are becoming shorter, hence cooler; the sunlight has less intensity as a result of the sun's lowering angle, nights are longer and generally cooler. Plants are responding by slowing and ripening their growth in preparation for winter.



The first cultural change noticed should be a reduced frequency of watering, as the plants dry out more slowly. This is a function of both the reduced day length and lower temperatures, as well as the plants' slowing growth rate. Reduced water needs signal a reduced need for fertilization. Note that the key word is reduced, not eliminated. Feed less frequently and at lower dosage, but feed. Growths, made during summer's heat, and relatively soft and green, will be ripening — hardening — in preparation for a brief period of rest (in many cases).

Many of these ripening growths will have a sheath, presaging the coming winter or spring flowering season. In some cases, these sheaths will have been evident since as early as July. (Early sheath development does not mean early flowering on plants with winter-spring seasons.) You may notice that some of these sheaths are showing signs of yellowing. This is not abnormal. Autumn's more pronounced temperature fluctuation can lead to water condensation inside the sheath, hastening the normal process of senescence, so yellowing sheaths can be left on the plant only so long before they must be carefully removed to preserve the bud primordia within. Water condensation left unchecked can rot the bud primordia. The sheaths can be safely removed by slitting open and peeling down toward the pseudobulb.

## Cool-Growing Orchids

One can almost hear a sigh of relief from all of the cool-growers, from masdevallias to odontoglossums. As day temperatures decline, one can see a noticeable improvement in these plants. Shorter days and lower light levels do not seem to bother them. Repot before winter arrives.

## Cymbidium

Finally we begin in earnest the main cymbidium season. *Cymbidium ensifolium* can give some early and fragrant hybrids, but it is now that the bulk of the crop will be flowering. The season lasts for about seven months, adding color to any collection. Miniature varieties will peak for the next three to four months. There are three important things to do: stake inflorescences ramrod straight for best presentation, watch for slugs and snails (especially just after a rain), and fertilize with a mild balanced formula regularly.

## Oncidium crispum Complex

This is the season for plants in *Oncidium* section *crispum* from Brazil to shine. Extremely vigorous hybrids come in wide varieties of markings dominated with chestnut and brown and butter yellow. Give plants high light to produce strong upright inflorescences. The pseudobulbs should be plump, so do not let the plants dry out while they are in bloom. Later, plants will enter a dormant period.

## Paphiopedilum

The flowering season for the "toads" or "bulldog" paphs is just getting underway. These cannot be grown everywhere, but where cooler summer nights allow their growth, there is no longer-lasting or more exotic display than these. *Paphiopedilums* are, in general, not heavy feeders, and it is especially



important with this type to reduce nitrogen levels now for best flowering and spike length. Be watchful for water accumulating in the growth around the sheath, or for the late-season warm spell, either of which can lead to the sheath's rotting. As the spikes emerge, do not change the orientation of the plant toward the light, as this can lead to a crooked or twisted spike.

While *paphiopedilums* rarely like to dry out entirely, water needs are significantly reduced beginning now. Overwatering at this time of year can quickly lead to root rot or erwinia problems. Now is the time to practice good sanitary practices in your greenhouse or growing areas, as pest and disease problems have a way of multiplying rapidly in the darker and more crowded conditions that generally mark the winter growing area. With *paphiopedilums*, especially, "cleanliness is next to godliness" and if the growing area is littered with old foliage, weeds and dying flowers, keeping the plants alive and flowering will be next to impossible.

## Phalaenopsis

Shortening days and cooler nights are the signals for inflorescence initiation in *phalaenopsis*. In more northern climates, or on the west coast, growers have already begun to see the early inflorescences that may be ready for Christmas. In the eastern areas, nights in the greenhouse will now be in the low to mid 60s, depending on the thermostat setting, so the first of our *phalaenopsis* will not begin to bloom until Valentine's Day at the earliest.

A reduction in nitrogen levels will go a long way to giving the best possible spiking, as will a boost in potassium and phosphorus. In other words, a "bloom booster"-type fertilizer is definitely

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# November Auction Huge Success

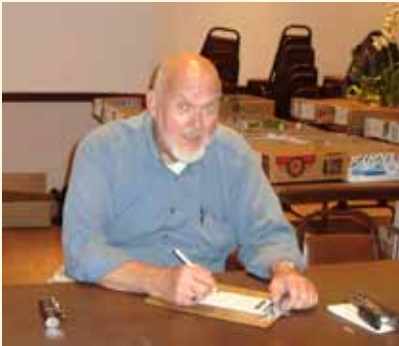
The Annual MOS Orchid Auction was a real success — even though we changed the date and the location. As in past years, donations contributed about half of our net proceeds, the proceeds being only slightly less than last year. The big donors we need to thank heartily are members David Smith, Mark Robbins, and Jamie Riegel, and non-member Mark Layton who recently closed down his greenhouse.

Our number of bidders was down about 25 percent from last year, but the number of lots sold was about the same. The new facility was spacious, and the warm food was a nice addition. The turnout of MOS members as volunteers was wonderful — everything got done in a timely fashion. A sincere THANKS to all who helped by volunteering and buying. Next year's auction should be even more successful, as more orchid growers learn the new date

(two weekends before Thanksgiving weekend) and location. And, of course, everyone's financial situation should be much more orchid-favorable by then!

Bill Ellis, Auction Chair







# New Members Join MOS

The MOS welcomes the following new members:

Dr. Thomas and Ellie Krajewsky  
Owen Humphrey

There were 52 members at the October meeting.

# Checklist continued from page 4

indicated in the next few months. Disease and pest problems are best dealt with now, especially as mealybugs hide in the bracts and flower buds. Once they have established themselves, they are difficult to eradicate, and flower damage or crippling results. Potential disease problems can be dealt with by the application of a copper-based compound to control/alleviate rot problems before they start. There is nothing more frustrating than to have shepherded your plants through a growing season, only to have them decline before your eyes.



## Vandaceous Genera

Whereas the general decline in temperatures is beneficial to cool-growing orchids, it is not for vandaceous plants. The only cold-hardy member is *Neofinetia falcata*. Orient your plants in such a way as to take advantage of as much light as possible. This can be a problem in northern latitudes.

Reduce watering and feeding schedules.

*The MOS and AOS thank Ned Nash and James Rose for this essay.*

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The *MOS Newsletter*, published monthly by the Maryland Orchid Society September through June, shares the latest news of our orchid community. Please submit your comments to [sobelman1@verizon.net](mailto:sobelman1@verizon.net)

We invite articles, notices, etc. for inclusion in our newsletter. The deadline for inclusion is first Sunday of the month.

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The MOS brings together people interested in orchids to promote and encourage orchid culture, preservation, education, propagation, hybridization, and all other orchid-related activities of interest to its members. Benefits of membership include a subscription to the Newsletter (e-mail and web), voting rights, borrowing privileges from the MOS Library, monthly guest speakers, local judging, valuable door prizes, and much, much, more!

If you are interested in orchid culture and would like to meet others with similar interests, we cordially invite you to join the ranks of Marylanders already enjoying the benefits of membership in the Maryland Orchid Society.

Visit us on the Web at [www.marylandorchids.org](http://www.marylandorchids.org)  
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