

MASSACHUSETTS ORCHID SOCIETY

July 2009



July 14, 2009 Meeting

"How to Grow Great Slipper Orchids"

Learn all about the culture of Slipper Orchids and the different varieties you can grow from this month's guest speaker – Glen Decker.

pipingrockorchids.com

Glen began growing orchids at the age of 15 and holds the degree of Associate in Applied Science in Ornamental Horticulture. Glen is presently the owner of Piping Rock Orchids in Galway New York. He was the previous chair of the American Orchid Society's Publications Committee and is presently a Director of the Orchid Digest Corporation. Glen has won numerous AOS awards, including the Butterworth Prize, Nax Trophy, WW Wilson Award and the Carlyle A. Luer Award. He has appeared in Martha Stewart's Better Living Magazine and on a PBS TV special "Orchid Delirium". He recently rewrote the Slipper section of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden's "The Best Orchids for Indoors" and was the technical editor for the "Orchids for Dummies" book.

Editor's Note:

This humble new editor would like to thank George Bonoff for all his help and patience. MOS appreciates all the time he has spent writing this newsletter over the years. Any ideas would be appreciated.

Please contact me at:

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Paphiopedilum

PAFF-EE-OH-PED-IH-LUM

Paphiopedilums, the lady's-slipper orchids, originate in the jungles of the Far East including Indonesia. They are semiterrestrial, growing in humus and other material on the forest floor, on cliffs in pockets of humus and occasionally in trees. They are easy to grow in the home, under lights or in the greenhouse.

Light is easier to provide for paphiopedilums than many other types of orchids. They require shady conditions, as in the home in an east or west window, or near a shaded south window. In the greenhouse, shade must be provided. Give about 1,000 to 1,500 foot-candles. In the home, fluorescent lighting is excellent; suspend two or four tubes 6 to 12 inches above the leaves.

Temperatures for paphiopedilums cover a considerable range. Paphiopedilums are traditionally separated into two groups: the warm-growing mottled-leaved types and the cool-growing green-leaved types. A third, increasingly popular group is the warmer-growing strap-leaved multifloral paphiopedilums. Warm-growing types should be kept at 60 to 65 F during the night, and 75 to 85 F or more during the day. Cool-growing types should be kept at 50 to 60 F during the night and 75 to 80 F during the day. However, many growers raise all plants in the same temperature range with excellent results. The plants can stand night temperatures in the 40s if necessary (as when grown outside in mild climates), as well as temperatures to 95 F. Care must be taken to protect the plants from rot when cold (keep humidity low, and avoid moisture on leaves or in the crowns of the plants), and also to protect from burning when hot (shade more heavily and increase humidity and air movement around the plants).

Water must be available at the roots constantly, because all plants in this genus have no pseudobulbs. All of these plants need a moist medium - never soggy, but never dry. Water once or twice a week.

Humidity for paphiopedilums should be moderate, between 40 and 50 percent, which can be maintained in the home by setting the plants on trays of gravel, partially filled with water, so that the plants never sit in water. In a greenhouse, average humidity is sufficient. Using an evaporative cooling system in warm climates can increase the humidity. Air movement is essential, especially when humidity is high.

Fertilize on a regular schedule, but care must be taken to avoid burning of the fleshy, hairy roots. High-nitrogen fertilizers (such as 30-10-10) are recommended when potted in any fir-bark mix. In warm weather, some growers use half-strength applications every two weeks; others use one-quarter

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strength at every watering. It's important to flush with clear water monthly to leach excess fertilizer, which can burn roots. In cool weather, fertilizer applications once a month are sufficient.

Potting should be done about every two years, or as the medium decomposes. Seedlings and smaller plants are often repotted annually. Mixes vary tremendously; most are fine- or medium-grade fir bark, with varying additives, such as perlite (sponge rock), coarse sand and sphagnum moss. Moisture retention with excellent drainage is needed. Large plants can be divided by pulling or cutting the fans of the leaves apart, into clumps of three to five growths. Smaller divisions will grow, but may not flower. Spread the roots over a small amount of medium in the bottom of the pot and fill with medium, so that the junction of roots and stem is buried 1D 2 inch deep in the center of the pot. Do not overpot; an average plant should have a 4- to 6-inch pot.

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Paph. henryanum 'Haley Suzanne' CCM/AOS

1st Annual Picnic a Big Hit



Picture by Susan Flier

The days prior to the 20th were filled with weather angst but then Saturday dawned bright and clear. Some 55 MOS members and guests filled the lawn, patio and greenhouse on the last day of spring and fully enjoyed the summer weather. Bob and Marcia Richter generously opened their beautiful N. Reading home and grounds to us and we are enormously grateful.

For the 1st half hour guests enjoyed appetizers and both red and white sangrias. There then followed a brief meeting where a slate of officers and at large board members received a unanimous vote.*

A feast of burgers and franks prepared artfully by Richard Flier followed, accompanied by salads; side dishes and deserts supplied as always potluck style from the attendees. We may have overestimated the quantity of deserts required but there was no doubt that they were all terrific. On a personal note, this correspondent will be trekking to the Lakota bakery in Arlington real soon.

George Bonoff



Picture by Susan Flier

***Officers & Board Members**

July 1, 2009/June 20, 2010

President: Sasha Varsanofieva

V. President: Brian Leib

Secretary: Sheila Selby

Treasurer: Nick Pavey

Directors:

Lynn Hennessee

Susan Flier

Linda Abrams

Joan Blackett

Larry Kerpelman

Congratulations to all our incoming officers and board members, and a sincere thank you to all retiring officers for a job well done!

Upcoming Events

July 4th	The sun comes out!
Saturday, July 11 July 25	Northeast Judging Center Boylston, MA , Tower Hill Botanic Garden, 11 French Dr., Boylston, MA, Robert Winkley, rwickley@aol.com . Presentations begin @ 10:00 AM. Judging begins at 12 PM. Directions
July 14	MOS Meeting , Suburban Experimental Station, 241 Beaver St., Waltham, MA, 7:30PM
All of July	Happy gardening outside
mos@massorchid.org newsletter editor: Susan Johnston	

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.massorchid.org

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