

MASSACHUSETTS ORCHID SOCIETY

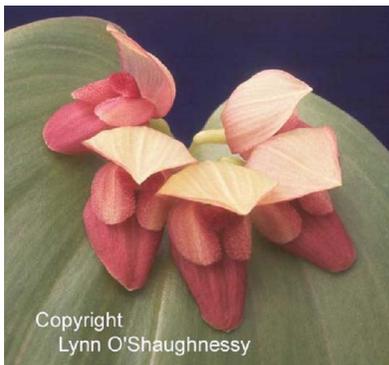


March 10th Lynn O'Shaughnessy on "Lesser known pleurothallids"

I have been a pleurothallid addict since 1997. I started out growing pleurothallids under lights in my basement and eventually moved to my new greenhouse in January 2000. With more growing space available, I have been venturing into hybridizing and growing seedlings from flasks and compots. I have over 2,500 plants in my personal collection in nearly every genera of Pleurothallids, including many divisions and kiekis. I am the newsletter editor for the Pleurothallid Alliance and the webmaster for their website. I am also an accredited AOS judge and have over 280 AOS awards - nearly all to pleurothallids.

I enjoy photography. I do awards slides for the Great Lakes Judging Center and some of the nearby shows. My photos have been published in *Orchids* and *Orchid Digest*. I also had a photo selected for the 2006 AOS calendar

http://www.pleurothallids.com/lynn's_pleurothllids.htm



Editors note

Your newsletter editor plans on retiring on or before publication of the June 2009 newsletter. It would of course be best for the incoming editor to have the aid of the current editor. If you have any interest in assuming this important MOS function please contact George at mos@massorchid.org or speak with Brian.

PS:

I have ordinarily spent about 2 half days a month working on the newsletter.



The MOS has always been pleased and excited when new members join with us. Just as exciting for us is the reappearance of lapsed or inactive members. It is nice to know that they have missed us as we have certainly missed them. In the past few months Susan Shapiro has rejoined the MOS. Susan had been a valued society member and a good friend. Welcome back! Also in the last couple of months we have heard from two prior members who plan on rejoining soon. Both were members with exciting ideas and great energy. We look forward to welcoming back to Millie Allan & Barbara Lawrence.

The Word for February – COLD

Ron McHatton - AOS Director of Education

Unless you are fortunate enough to live in the perpetual springtime of Hawaii, February is one of those months you have to be on your guard for cold. Our members in the northern parts of the country are well aware of how cold it can be, especially this year, but the problem isn't confined to our northern states and not just a matter of air temperature. During the winter months, growers in the deep south may be exposed to rapidly fluctuating temperatures; 80 F today and 35 F tomorrow night and along with those cold snaps come often powerful, dehydrating winds. Those who grow outside should always be mindful that sometimes only a degree or two (or an hour or two) stands between tolerating a cold snap and total disaster. It's always best to err on the conservative side, especially if your plants are wet when the cold arrives. Dry plants usually survive extremely low temperatures better than wet plants.

Those of you who grow your plants in bay windows or greenhouse windows should be aware of how cold it can become in those spaces. I once knew a grower in upstate New York who grew her plants on the floor of a bay window and, one particularly cold winter lost them when the pots froze because of poor insulation in the window floor. The plants looked okay for a few days and then died from the pot up. Along similar lines, think twice about drawing a curtain across the window to help keep the rest of the house warm at night. Doing so traps a layer of air between the curtain and the glass windows that can become dangerously cold as heat is lost through the window panes.

Even if you grow your plants in a greenhouse, you should be aware that the temperature of a wet pot can be significantly lower than the greenhouse air temperature especially if the humidity in the greenhouse is low or the heat source has a drying effect such as heated forced air. This is because the wet pots act as miniature humidifiers evaporating moisture into the dry air. Evaporation reduces the temperature just like perspiring helps make us feel cooler.

Under certain circumstances, the temperature difference can exceed 10 F. Cold roots can be extremely damaging to warm-growing orchids and if you are lowering your thermostats to save fuel, watch these plants carefully.

This brings me to warm or tepid water. Even if you live in an area where you are fortunate enough to be able to grow your plants outside year round be mindful that the temperature of the water you use can become an issue this time of the year. Cold water can be as damaging to the roots of our plants as cold air can be to foliage. How can you easily tell if your water gets too cold – put your hand in it? It's often said that if you are comfortable your plants will also be comfortable and that's true of water as well. If you can't comfortably hold your hand for an extended period of time in your water supply it's too cold.

Moth Orchids – Winter's Jewels



Doritaenopsis Chain
Xen Pearl 'Penny',
AM/AOS
(Ching Hua Spring x
Nobby's Pink Lady)
Photographer: Tek H.
Hia
Grower: A & P Orchids,
Swansea, MA

Winter is in full swing this month and so is the moth orchid (*Phalaenopsis* and *Doritaenopsis*) flowering season. These brightly colored, easily grown beauties help to take some of the edge off the gloomy winter season. Years ago when I first started growing orchids, *Phalaenopsis* were sort of like Henry Ford's early cars. You could have any color you wanted as long

as it was pink or white (black in the case of the Ford Model A). Today, phalaenopsis hybrids are available in virtually every color of the rainbow, including blue and green and every combination of spots and stripes you can imagine.

[Click Here](#) to read more



Masdevallia floribunda

Orchid Basics: The How and Why of Water

More orchids are killed by incorrect watering than by any other reason. There are two separate components to proper watering; when and how.

[Click here](#) to read more

Winter-Flowering Collector's Items

[Caularthron bicornutum](#)

[Rhynchostylis gigantea](#)



THE VANDACEOUS TRIBE from Juno Beach Orchids

The Vandaceous tribe includes *Aerides*, *Ascocentrum*, *Neofinetia*, *Rhynchostylis*, *Vanda*, etc., and their intergeneric hybrids [*Aranda*, *Ascf*, *Ascda*, *Kag*, etc.]. Diversity here, too ... Although distant cousins to the Phals, and originating in the same climates, they grow quite differently:

Light

These are our sun-lovers, but in varying degrees. The terete vandas [leaves are thin and round, like knitting needles] will enjoy full sun, and the semi-teretes can be acclimated to it. The strap-leaf types generally want 30-40% shade. *Rhynchostylis* and some of the miniatures want even a bit more shade than that.

Water

In high humidity, and especially in areas which, like ours, experience heavy rainy seasons, most vandaceous plants are best grown without potting media and watered daily in hot weather, every other day when it's cooler. *Rhynchostylis gigantea* is our major exception; we find this one does better with some potting mix, to keep it a little moister between waterings. The roots are actually "color-coded" -- they are white, or nearly so, when dry; they turn green when thoroughly saturated. Immediately after watering, they should be green; if they're not, you need to run more water each time.

Fertilizer

When watering every day, feed once a week; when watering every other day, feed once every two weeks.

Temperature

The majority of vandaceous plants like to be warm --55F is a good minimum. While some will tolerate cooler temperature, it tends to accelerate the loss of lower leaves, leaving unattractive bare stem, and we haven't yet found any that particularly want any winter chill. Many seem to actually enjoy our very hot summers; some will "stress out" in prolonged periods above 95F. A second watering each day during the hottest parts of summer ameliorates this stress [and won't hurt the others].

Upcoming Events

Saturday, March 07 April 04	Northeast Judging Center Boylston, MA , Tower Hill Botanic Garden, 11 French Dr., Boylston, MA, Robert Winkley, rwinkley@aol.com . Presentations begin @ 10:00 AM. Judging begins at 12 PM. Directions
March 10	MOS Meeting , Suburban Experimental Station, 241 Beaver St., Waltham, MA, 7:30PM
March 13, 14, 15	New England Spring Flower Show
March	Watch out Julius for the "Ides of March"
mos@massorchid.org newsletter editor: George Bonoff	

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

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