



The Informer

Newsletter of the Greater Omaha Orchid Society

PO Box 241871 Omaha, NE 68124 greateromahaorchidsociety.org June 2011

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Submission deadline for the **July**

Informer: July 5, 2011

Omaha Orchid Society Membership Information

Annual Dues:

Single: \$15.00

Family: \$20.00

Annual dues are paid to the treasurer by January 1 of each year and are delinquent the day after the February meeting. Dues for new members joining after July 31st are one-half the annual rate.

Dues should be made payable to G. O. O. S. and may be mailed to the G. O. O. S. post office box: G. O. O. S., PO Box 241871, Omaha, NE 68124.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS MEETINGS

(NOTE: All GOOS meetings are held at Monthly Meeting at the Douglas/Sarpy Cty Extension Office, 8015 W. Center Rd., Omaha, NE unless otherwise indicated)

June 8, 2011

7:00 PM new growers group

7:30 PM Program - Guest

Speaker John Stubbings

of Clown Alley Orchids.

Topic: Unusual Relatives of

Cymbidiums

Refreshments: Ann Donovan

Greeter: Linda Schroeder

June 22, 2011

7:00 PM

Board meeting, location TBD

July 13, 2011

7:00 PM new growers group

7:30 PM Program - Guest

Speaker Doug Martin,

President, Mid-America Or-

chid Congress "The Birds,

The Bees and the Orchids"

Refreshments: Linda

Schroeder

Greeters: Jack & Vi Thraen

EVENTS

June 5, 1:00 to 4:00 pm

Shady Choice Hosta
Society Annual Plant Sale.
Sarpy/Douglas County
Extension Office, 8015 West
Center Road, Omaha.

July 8-10, 2011

Santa Barbara Orchid Estate
International Fair, Earl
Warren Showgrounds, Santa
Barbara, CA. Contact: Alice
Gripp, 1250 Orchid Dr., Santa
Barbara, CA 93111; (805)
967-1284; sboc@sborchid.
com.

July 31, 2011

Central Iowa Speakers Day,
Camp Dodge Recreation
Center, 7105 NW 70 Ave.,
Johnston, IA. Contact: Carson
E. Whitlow, 22957 280 St.,
Adel, IA 50003; (515) 993-
4841; slipperguy@aol.com.

August 5-6, 2011

Houston Orchid Society
Workshop, St. Thomas
University, Crooker Center,
3900 Graustark, Houston, TX.
Contact: John Stubbings, 3701
Coral Reef Dr., Seabrook,
TX 77586; (832) 693-8140;
jdstubbings@comcast.net.

August 17-18, 2011

Wisconsin Orchid Society
Show, Mitchell Park
Domes, 524 S.Layton Blvd.,
Milwaukee, WI. Contact:
Kusa Ann Haag, 1840 N. 23rd
St., Sheboygan, WI 53081;
(920) 980-6979; tthaag@
charter.net.

September 23-25, 2011

Chicagoland Orchid Festival,
Oak Hill Gardens, 37W550
Binnie Rd., West Dundee,
IL. Contact: Greg Butler,
37W550 Binnie Rd., Dundee,
IL 60118; (847) 428-8500;
oakhillgardens@sprintmail.
com.

JUNE PROGRAM:

"UNUSUAL RELATIVES"

We have a guest speaker, John Stubbings of Clown Alley Orchids in Pasadena, TX. His talk is: "Unusual Relatives of *Cymbidiums*". Unusual relatives – we all have them but the *Cymbidiums* have some real strange ones. The list contains probably a number of orchids unfamiliar to the newer growers: *Galeandra*, *Catasetum*, *Clowesia*, *Cycnoches*, *Mormodes*, etc.

Catasetums are familiar to some members. Our Mel Bates of Lincoln grows these as do a few other members. They have waxy flowers and most *Catasetums* have flowers that are either all male or female. Moreover, the male flowers are quite different in appearance from the female flowers of the same species. (Most orchids have both male (pollen) and female (seed producing) parts in a single flower.) *Clowesias* are similar to *Catasetums* but they have "perfect" flowers – flowers containing parts of both sexes.

Cycnoches are generally known as "swan orchids" due to the curved column in the male flowers. The genus *Galeandra* has some very attractive flowers, whilst the flowers of plants in the genus *Mormodes* can be quite strange. Hybrids between the various genera

can yield some unusual results. John will have a lot more to tell about these fascinating orchids.

Some business matters relating to the meeting. We will have a pizza dinner with John Stubbings at the Extension Office beginning at 6 pm. Cost is \$7.50 per person. The pizzas are from Sortinos and include four meat pizza, stuffed crust pizza, Italian sausage, pepperoni and mushroom pizza, and all cheese pizza. Several people have already signed up but if anyone else is interested contact either Jim Pyrzynski (jpyrzynski@cox.net, 402-734-4112) or Jacque Lewzader (jlewzader@msn.com, 402-573-2217) NO LATER THAN TUESDAY, JUNE 7 EVENING.

One more issue – parking. There are about 7 parking slots facing West Center Rd (on the north side of the building) which have been designated as “RESERVED.” They are reserved for Extension Office vehicles and are not to be used by other people. Also do NOT park in handicap parking slots unless your vehicle has appropriate identifications.

REMINDER CIOS SPEAKERS DAY

It's not too late to make plans to attend the Central Iowa Orchid Society Speakers Day July 31. There will be 2 excellent speakers, loads of food to enjoy, and plants to buy. It's only about a two-hour drive and the cost is \$25.00 (\$30.00 at the door). There are two speakers Norito Hasegawa of Paphanatics Unlimited, one of the premier Paphiopedilum breeders and Ivan Portilla of Ecuagenera, the largest orchid grower in Ecuador. Ecuador is generally considered to have the highest biodiversity of plant and animal species in the world and about 4000 species of orchid have been found here.

Norito Hasegawa will speak

on “What's New in Paphs” and “Multifloral Paphs. Ivan will speak on “Orchids of Ecuador in their Natural Habitat” and “Cattleya maxima and Its Different Forms.” In between the talks will be plant sales, lunch and dessert. The day starts with a continental breakfast at 8 a.m. and the talks begin at 9 a.m. You may pre-order for plants from the speakers' websites. See <http://c-we.com/cios/ciosspk.htm>.

There will also be AOS judging. So if you have one of those summer blooming orchids that you want to have an AOS judging committee look at, here is your opportunity. Plants for judging need to be in place by 10 a.m.

The day ends with a plant raffle – be sure to buy plenty of tickets. There will be a reward for the society with the most members in attendance at the event - so the more GOOS members there, the better. A registration form is on page 6. NOTE: The event is at Camp Dodge Iowa and a photo ID is required for entrance. Driving instructions are at <http://c-we.com/cios/camp-dodgemap.htm>.

HINTS FROM FIRST RAYS

Flushing Potting Media

To folks that are experienced mostly in growing terrestrial plants - whether that is houseplants, gardens, or even lawns, trees and shrubs - the concept of “flushing” the potting medium is foreign. Those plants take their nutrition from the minerals in the soil, with or without the occasional supplement of a granular fertilizer, and the grower merely adds water to the process, allowing the minerals to dissolve and become ions in solution - the only way the plants can absorb them. As orchids generally don't take their nutrition from the medium in which they're growing, but get that directly

from the nutrient solutions we provide, the “game” is changed, so we have to approach things a bit differently.

When we feed our plants, we start by taking fertilizer minerals and dissolving them in water, again so they are ions the plants can absorb. Those minerals are often in a powder or granular form, but if you use a liquid fertilizer, it just means that the manufacturer already did that for you, and you're just diluting it further, to “usable” strength.

When we pour the dilute solution over and through the potting medium, some of it gets absorbed by the plant immediately, but far more of it is soaked up by the medium, to be available for the plant in the near future - as long as it remains a solution.

Unfortunately, the water evaporates, which results in the concentration of those dissolved minerals getting greater and greater, and eventually, when their solubility limits are reached, they precipitate out of the solution as solids on the surfaces and in the pores of the potting medium. When you water with fertilizer solution next time, some, but not all of the minerals will redissolve, which means that the solution is now stronger than what you intended to apply, and as we don't really know which minerals redissolved most, we don't know the formula of that solution either. What's worse, however, is that as the stronger solution dries, the buildup in the pot gets worse and worse. Repeat that often enough and the potting medium becomes so mineral laden that it throws off the osmotic balance in the roots, and is actually toxic to the plants.

Flushing periodically with clear water goes a long way to removing the buildup, and most growers find that flushing the pot thoroughly every fourth watering does

the trick. It never gets rid of all of the buildup, but it keeps it to a minimum, so it usually is not an issue during the normal life of the medium, and when you repot, you're basically starting with a “clean slate”.

One thing to keep in mind has to do with your water quality: if your water supply is high in dissolved solids - calcium- and magnesium carbonates being the most common - they will build up in the potting medium as well, so may shorten the time period between necessary repotting.

http://www.firstrays.com/free_info.htm

AOS QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. What is the best way to re-root orchids that have lost their roots for one reason or another? Specifically I'd like to know about re-rooting phals and plants in the Cattleya Alliance. - P.J. Hatcher

A. Traditional wisdom dictates that plants can be encouraged to root by providing a moist atmosphere while keeping the medium on the dry side. This enables the plant to remain turgid (not wilted) until the roots naturally come to support the foliage. In practice, this can be done by repotting the plants into the smallest container that will accept the root mass and encasing the entire product in a plastic bag. The bag can be supported off the foliage by making a wire loop and inserting the ends of the wire into the pot. The plant should be watered into the medium, covered with the bag and left in a shady spot until root growth is evident. Depending on the season, this may take days or weeks. As days shorten after late September until January, it will take longer than in spring and summer as days lengthen. - Ned Nash

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Catasetum

kat-ah-SEE-tum

This unusual group of orchids offers fascinating, waxy flowers that often have the peculiar habit of discharging their pollen masses (pollinia) onto pollinators. Almost always deciduous, the pseudobulbous plants have strict growing and resting periods. Most flower before entering a dormant period when they drop their leaves.

LIGHT should be strong, especially near the end of the growth period. Early in the annual growth cycle, plants will tolerate less light, from 1,500 to 3,000 foot-candles. Plants grow best with light levels of 3,000 to 6,000 foot-candles, or one-half to three-fourths full sun. As pseudobulbs mature, harden them by giving slightly more light.

TEMPERATURES reflect the fact these orchids are native to hot tropical areas and grow during the rainy summer months. During this growing period, day temperatures of 80 to 100 F and night temperatures of 60 to 65 F are beneficial. After growths mature, temperatures can be reduced to 55 F at night, with day temperatures of 70 to 85 F.

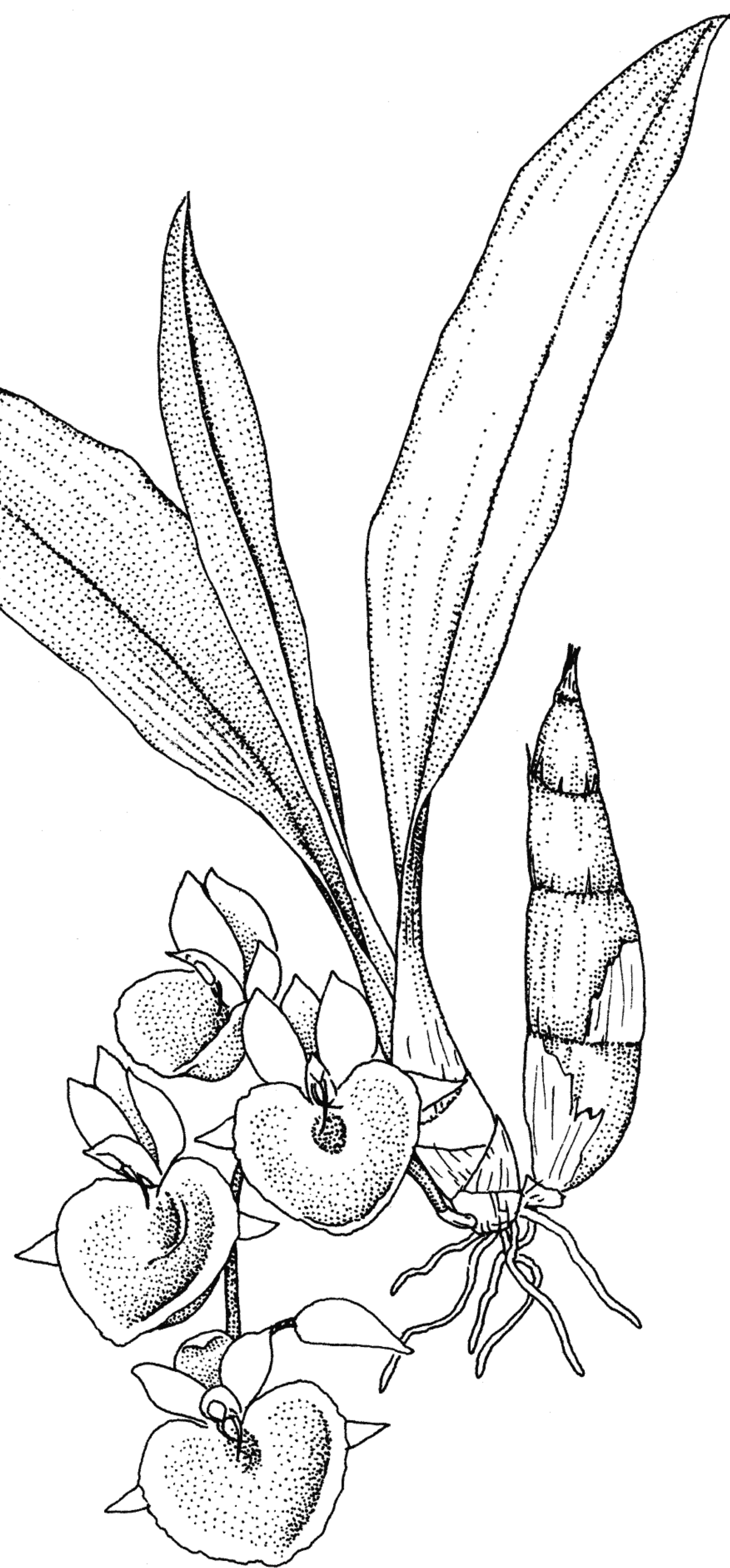
WATER is a critical factor for the production of large pseudobulbs that result in best flowering. A great quantity of water must be stored by the plant in a relatively short growing season. Water heavily as new leaves are forming. As the pseudobulb matures, gradually reduce watering frequency. Leaves will yellow and drop. At this time, watering should be stopped completely until new growth begins. Water during this dormant period only if the pseudobulbs shrivel severely.

HUMIDITY should be 40 to 60 percent. This can be provided in the home by placing the plants on trays of gravel, only partially filled with water so that the plants do not sit in the water. Air should always be moving around the plants to prevent fungal or bacterial disease, especially if high humidity or cool temperatures exist. In the greenhouse, the humidity is best increased

by use of a humidifier. Evaporative cooling increases humidity while cooling the air.

FERTILIZE and water regularly to produce strong pseudobulbs. Use a high-nitrogen formulation (such as 30-10-10) while plants are in active growth, slowly tapering off as pseudobulbs form. A blossom-booster formulation (such as 10-30-20) should be used in the autumn, except for plants that normally bloom in the spring. Frequent applications of a dilute concentrations of fertilizer are more effective than occasional applications of strong concentrations.

POTTING should be timed to coincide with the initiation of new growth, usually in the spring. New roots will be produced quickly at that time, and plants will experience minimal setback. These plants have vigorous root systems and require a rich, moist potting medium during the growing season. Many growers bare-root their plants during the resting period to ensure dryness at that time. Fine-grade media are common for smaller pots; medium-grade media are used only in larger pots. Sphagnum moss is used successfully for plants in many areas, as it provides tremendous water- and fertilizer-holding capacities. Some plants can be grown on slabs of tree fern or other material, which makes it easier to keep them dry during dormancy; however, it is harder to keep them moist while growing. When well grown, these orchids can be divided down to one mature pseudobulb and will then flower on the next mature growth. Spider mites are a common pest of these orchids



when in leaf. Control spider mites by keeping humidity high or spraying with recommended miticides.

The American Orchid Society invites you to join us and learn about the world's most fascinating flowers and plants. Your membership entitles you to our monthly magazine *Orchids*, a free copy of the *AOS Orchid Source Directory*, a 50-percent discount coupon good toward the purchase of one of our cultural publications, a 10-percent discount on items purchased through our Web site's electronic store and reciprocal benefits at more than 200 botanical gardens and arboreta associate with the American Horticultural Society through its Reciprocal Admissions Program. All this and much more can be yours as a member of the AOS.

American Orchid Society

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Maxillariella tenuifolia (Lindl.) M.A.Blanco & Carnevali

Like *Brassavola nodosa*, *Maxillaria tenuifolia* is one of those orchids that belongs in every collection. While small plants remain compact, it may also be grown into a specimen in a rather short period of time. The grasslike foliage makes an attractive houseplant even when not in flower. Being a widely distributed species, it is adaptable to a broad range of growing conditions. Also known as the “coconut orchid”, this *Maxillaria* will perfume the home or greenhouse with its coconut-scented flowers and delight family and visitors.

The genus as we have accepted it in the past has undergone considerable transformation. A new classification system proposed by Mark Whitten PhD and Mario Blanco in the February 2011 issue of *ORCHIDS* should lend clarity to what was once a large and diverse genus. While the names change, the orchids stay the same for us to enjoy in our collections. If you are one who likes to be on the cutting edge of orchid taxonomy, you may change your nametags for this species to *Maxillariella tenuifolia* which is fortunately, not a major name change to remember. It is a pity that this group of orchids is not better known outside a dozen or so popular members. There are many fine species, both large and small, well worth growing and suited to all types of culture from cool to warm, shady to bright.

This species was discovered near Veracruz, Mexico by Karl Theodore Hartweg and described by Lindley in 1837 in the Botanical Register. It is primarily a low elevation species found from Mexico to Costa Rica at elevations up to 1500m (4921ft). The best temperature range for cultivation is warm to intermediate, providing temperatures no lower than 50 ° F (10° C) day or night. The long rhizome makes for a somewhat straggly plant that wants to “climb” out of a pot, but a good sized plant can be easily kept in a six inch pot. It will eventually start to droop over the edge as it grows up but by that time, you should plan to repot it anyway as it will take a couple of years to reach that stage by which time the media will need replacing. Basket culture is an optimal solution to accommodate this growth habit and a slab of tree fern will work equally well, although not offer as tidy a presentation. Most elements of *Max. tenuifolia* culture are quite forgiving with the main consideration being the avoidance of stale or soggy media. We have grown it in all sorts of media including osmunda, fir bark, coconut husk fiber or chunks and of course, fir bark mixes. The paramount quality of the media is that it does not stay consistently wet so sphagnum may be the least suitable choice. Plants should not be watered again until dry, or just approaching dry. Fertilize along with your other orchids every week or two using a half strength solution of balanced fertilizer. Light tolerance is broad for this species and it can be grown in a bright greenhouse, or with “Phals” on a windowsill. Lower light will produce long whip-like foliage and a more straggly plant as it reaches for the light. Should your plant not flower, you will need to give it more light. Flowering season is March-April and flowers last for a week to ten days or longer if kept cool. Flower color is typically oxblood red with a spotted lip, but yellow color forms are known to exist. Plants propagate easily and are always readily available in the trade so there is no excuse to not have one in your collection.

Greg Allikas - April, 2011

This essay is dedicated to the memory of Eric Christenson, PhD who passed away in early April. Eric was a noted authority on *Maxillaria* and was continuing to describe new species up to his death. While outspoken, Eric was always willing to make suggestions to improve articles I wrote for web and print. His broad knowledge, accuracy and attention to detail held my writing to a very high standard. I only wish he were able to edit this because I am sure that I made a mistake somewhere. An article covering his contributions to the orchid world is in the works for a future issue of *ORCHIDS* magazine.

REPORTS

Greater Omaha Orchid Society General Meeting
May 11, 2011

The meeting was called to order at the Douglas/Sarpy County Extension Office at 7:30 pm.

President Roberta Ginavan welcomed visitors and members to the meeting.

The minutes of the April meeting were approved.

Sandy Rome gave the Treasurer's report. Filed for audit.

Roberta read a letter from the Kansas City orchid society and another from Mark van der Woerd thanking us for the hospitality during our March show.

A signup sheet for greeters was circulated.

Coming events. Roberta reminded attendees of the Central Iowa Orchid Society Speakers Day in July and the Omaha Council of Garden Clubs bus trip in June. Information and registrations forms were in the newsletter.

Lauritzen Gardens Spring into Spring. Roberta discussed the plant sale at the Lauritzen Gardens on May 14 and 15. GOOS will have a sale table and a volunteer signup sheet was circulated.

June meeting. The meeting will have a guest speaker (John Stubbings of Clown Alley Orchids) but time will be tight for a dinner with the guest and pre-meeting plant sales. Suggestions were to order pizza or have a potluck dinner and have the meal at the Extension Office. The preference was for pizza ordered in. Roberta reminded attendees that the deadline for pre-ordering plants in June 6 and plant pre-orders have a 10% discount.

Native orchids. Tim discussed the showy orchis (*Galearis spectabilis*) plants he found in Neale Woods and the ways others could see them.

Incorporation paperwork. Roberta advised that the changes to the Society's incorporation papers had been published in the Omaha World Herald on three weekends as required. The next step is to work with the federal government (IRS) on required paperwork for 501(c)(3) status.

Program. Dave Taylor gave a question and answer program on pests and diseases.

Refreshments were provided by Marilyn Hawes.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Pyszynski, Secretary

Greater Omaha Orchid Society Board Meeting
May 25, 2011

The Greater Omaha Orchid Society Board met at Sandy Rome's home at 7:00 PM. In attendance were: Roberta Ginavan, Sandy Rome, Jacque Lewzader, Eric Stoiber and Jim Pyszynski.

Spring into spring. Sandy gave a report on the sales at Spring into Spring; \$180 was the gross sales amount (14 plants (Bletillas), 7 bags of bark and 2 bottles of fertilizer). Roberta read a letter of appreciation for our participation from the Gardens. It was recommended that we promote our presence at Spring into Spring at other events including our show and the Qwest Home and Garden Show.

May meeting discussion. The May meeting was the first time we used stick on nametags and greeters. It went OK. A suggestion was made to have the attendance sheet and nametags at the entry table. The greeters need to be listed in the Newsletter.

June meeting. Jim will remind members on the deadline on pre-orders. Since John Stubbings had to make his own reservations for one leg of his flight (airline security requirements) we will have to reimburse him for that (approximately \$80). We will have Pizza at the Extension Office; the board decided to order pizza from Sortino's. Vicki Shallow will be away for the meeting period so a replacement will be needed. Jacque Lewzader will obtain the menu options which will then be discussed via emails among board members. Jacque will order and pick up the pizza.

July meeting. Doug Martin from the Orchid Society of Greater Kansas City will be the speaker. There was a discussion of dinner arrangements and a recommendation to possibly order sandwiches from Jimmie Johns. Eric Stoiber will pick up menus for the next board meeting.

August meeting. Two orchid vendors were suggested as possible sources for plants for auction (in addition to what members bring in: Carter & Holmes and Oak Hill Gardens. The range of \$300 – \$350 was suggested. Eric will explore what the vendors have to offer. Oak Hill is probably closing at the end of 2012 and we need to bear that mind for additional purchases of bark potting mixes.

September 2012. There is interest among some of the societies that we share speakers with on having Tom Mirenda of the Smithsonian speak during the September 2012 time frame.

Extension Office Agreement. There was discussion of the Agreement paperwork that we were given at the May meeting. Unless we sign the agreement and make the damage deposit of \$100 we will not be able to use the kitchen, not even to obtain water. Use of our own coffee pots is not permitted (fire hazard) and the only way to have coffee is to pay for their coffee (and cups, etc.) and use their coffee pots. Since we will need to have access to the kitchen for the next few meetings it was decided to pay the deposit and sign the agreement. It was noted that in the past we have found the kitchen in less than desirable conditions and cleaned it up before we used it. Refund of the damage deposit is contingent in part on the condition we leave the kitchen. Jim recommended photographing the kitchen before and after the meeting as proof. The board members present agreed that there needs to be further review of our future use of the Extension Office for our meetings.

Judging Center donation. Jim requested the treasurer issue a check for the Mid-America Judging Center (St. Louis) donation. There was some discussion about supporting the Great Plains Judging Center (Oklahoma City) since we have been getting very good support from them for our shows. This will be discussed further.

Website. Roberta discussed something that was mention at the recent MAOC about possible website scams in regards to request for links to other sites (such as we had from someone recently). Jim said he had some thoughts on what links we should have and recommended that we have links only to “non-profit” organizations. Links to businesses would imply an endorsement of that company’s product or service. The issue about vendor links that we have during orchid shows, etc. was raised. Jim suggested that those links would only be for a temporary basis in support of that event and would be deleted later. Roberta asked Jim to come up with a proposed policy that could be placed before the membership.

Miscellaneous. The treasurer will send another check to MAOC to cover the full membership count of the GOOS. Jim had sent out an updated copy of the By-laws that will be placed in the Yearbook. There were no problems noted. He also discussed whether or not to include the library list in the Yearbook. He noted that this would require several pages and the list is online. He recommended and the board agreed that a printed library list would be a Yearbook addendum for members who do not have email/internet access. The rest should use the website although comments regarding the library would appear in the Yearbook. Tax status. The society now has a new Employer Identification Number (EIN) and the next step is to file for 501(c)(3) status with the IRS.

Meeting adjourned

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Pyrzynski, Secretary

Directions to Camp Dodge

Because of road construction on Merle Hay Road, the following is suggested: From I-35/I-80, take exit #129 (NW 86th Street). Go north approximately 2.4 miles to stop sign at NW 70th Avenue. Turn east (right) onto NW 70th Avenue. Go approximately 1.2 miles to stoplight. Entrance to Camp Dodge will be to the left. Once through the gate, follow signs to meeting place. Note: You MUST show a photo ID (driver’s license easiest) to get onto Camp Dodge.

Central Iowa Orchid Society Speaker’s Day, July 31st, 2011

Registration Form

To help us plan for Speaker’s Day, we encourage you to fill out this registration form and return it to: Central Iowa Orchid Society, c/o Leo Schlunz, 422 S. 5th Street, Chariton, IA 50049-2402. We would like these returned by July 17, 2011 if possible.

Please make checks payable to the Central Iowa Orchid Society. \$25.00 per person (\$30.00 at the door).

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ ZipCode _____