

# Houston Happenings

## The Houston Orchid Society's Monthly Newsletter

JUNE 5, 2003 MEETING

**Meeting Time:** 7:30 P.M.

**Plant Table:** Setup 7:00 P.M.

**Place:** Hermann Garden Center

**Speakers:** Bill Bergstrom, Bergstrom Orchids, Hilo HI

**Topic:** Bulbophyllum, Stanhopea, & Catasetinae

**Plant Sale:** Setup at 7:00 P.M.

Contrary to common belief, Bill Bergstrom didn't begin his career in orchids. As a young man he worked in the aerospace industry on shuttle rockets and started selling orchids that he collected in Mexico while taking vacation. He states that he was prompted to do this by George Kennedy who, at the time, was writing for **Orchid Digest**. He soon found that he could make twice as much money as the aerospace industry was paying by selling just a few Cattleyas. (Those economics may have changed now). Bill's early hits came from selling South American plants and Phragmidium besseae made him infamous on the West Coast. Suddenly, everyone knew his name.

After many years of selling on the West Coast where he's from, Bill decided to move to Hawaii - "not such a hot idea," as he reflects. His income from lectures went down as his travel expenses went up. His extensive knowledge of species and hybrid orchids, gained in part from his judging training and experience, led him to create an Internet sales site that is not only spectacular, but also closes the geographic gap created by living so far away. As he says, "Sometimes I feel like the Maytag repairman, tucked away here is Hawaii."

Bill's current interests are in Bulbophyllums, Stanhopeas, and Catasetinae, all of which grow exceedingly well here. Some Phrags, sadly do not.



**Bill Bergstrom and Sibelius (left, with short er whiskers) enjoy a moment together in their Hilo, HI home. Bill credits Sibelius with the marketing phrase, "Be the first to own this orchid." [www.bergstromorchids.com](http://www.bergstromorchids.com)**

Bill's faithful feline companion, Sibelius, has been credited with originating the advertising phrase, "Be the first on your block to own this orchid," - a phrase that has made him well known.

Bill will be bringing a nice selection of plants with him from Hawaii that will be offered for sale before the meeting. Come early for the best shopping experience. His reputation for quality plants, reasonable prices, and the unusual will hold true.

**Greg Scott**

### AUGUST WORKSHOP SCHEDULE ANNOUNCED

The Houston Orchid Society's Twenty-Fourth Annual Workshop features a lineup of outstanding speakers. Jerry Stephens, Workshop Chairman, announces the star studded schedule below:

Friday, August 8, 2003

2:00 PM Vendor set-up

5:00 PM Plant entry

6:30 PM Judging

7-9:00 PM Dessert, coffee, sales, silent auction (Proceeds to HJC - bids close 8:30 PM)

Saturday, August 9, 2003

8-9:00 AM Sales, Coffee, Silent Auction (Proceeds benefit HOS)

9:00 AM Welcome, Jay Balchan, Houston Orchid Society President

9:10 AM Vandaceous Orchids, Bob Fuchs, RF Orchids

10:00 AM Coffee Break

10:30 AM Breakout sessions

Bob Fuchs—Vandaceous Culture

Ken Wilson—Pests and Diseases

Anita Aldrich—Tolumnias (Equitant Oncidiums)

11:20 AM Cattleyas, Ned Nash, Cal Orchids

(Con't on p. 2. col. 1)



**Bill Bartlett (at door with arm raised), talks with Newcomers at his open house. His spectacularly landscaped patio 'greenhouse' is always a treat for new and experienced members.**

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to June and the beginning of the Houston HEAT!! One sure way to cool yourself down is by attending the "cool" meetings we're going to be having over the next few months. Starting with Bill Bergstrom this month, we will be bringing in out of town speakers for the rest of the year!!

It's going to be a very fun series of meetings with great speakers, a very diverse set of topics (everything from small bulbophyllums to huge schomburkias), and a lot of plant sales before and during the meetings. Don't miss any of them!

I also want to take this opportunity to say Thank You to everyone who either donated plants for our May plant sale or contributed their time during setup and sales! We had a very successful plant sale. We had a total of 727 plants for sale, including over 500 donated plants! That is fantastic and a true measure of the generosity of our members. I don't have a final tally on the money raised, but when I do I will pass it on. This money comes back to you in the form of the color Happenings you receive and the ability to bring in the out of town speakers we will be seeing in this and coming months.

Happy Growing and see you at the June 5th meeting.

**Jay Balchan**

## MAY PLANT TABLE

Again a beautiful plant table- thanks to all that brought these plants! We had a total of 75 hybrids and 32 species on the plant table this month. The Hybrid winner for this month Lc. Park Ridge 'Granier,' JC/AOS owned by Richard Champagne. The Species winner was Angraecum sesquipedale, owned by Jim and Melba Butler. Don't forget to vote on your favorite hybrid and species on the plant table each month! Renee Gerber announced the hybrids and the species were announced by Marvin Gerber – thank ya'll very much!

**Pam Vinson**

## WORKSHOP SCHEDULE (Con't from front pg.)

- 12:10 PM Lunch
- 1:00 PM Silent Auction ends
- 1:30 PM Andy Easton—Update on AOS activities
- 2:20 PM Break out sessions
  - Andy Easton--Culture
  - Marvin and Renee Gerber—Potting, repotting, and dividing
  - Bill Tippitt—Phalaenopsis species
- 3:10 PM Wrap-up

For those not familiar with Bob Fuchs, Andy Easton, or Ned Nash, bio's will appear in next month's **Happenings**. Theregistration form is on HOS's web site, and copies will be available on the entrance table at the June and July meetings. As usual, first come, first serve. And there is a late registration penalty after July 31st.

**Jerry Stephens, Workshop Chair**

## JUNE NEWCOMERS MEETING

The June Newcomers Meeting will be moved up to the second Sunday of June due to a conflict with Father's Day. On June 8, 2003, we will meet at Jay Balchan's house. The address is 1925 Banks Street, Houston, Texas 77098. His number is 713-942-2298. The house is located in the Museum District, inside the loop 610. Jay specializes in Lady Slipper orchids but also has numerous other varieties of orchids. Please plan on joining us.

In May, about 38 Newcomers met at Bill Bartlett's and enjoyed his lush patio filled with fragrant orchids. His newest creation of equestris kikis baskets offered quite a display and were a big hit.

**Theresa M. Riggs**

## HOUSTON JUDGING CENTER

Web site: [www.hjc.houstonorchid.society.org](http://www.hjc.houstonorchid.society.org)

May 17, 2003.

There were 22 plants entered for judging with 19 considered and 4 awarded:

1. Rnctm. Rio's Minishoo 'Amherst' (Ren. Imshootiana x Asctm miniatum) AM 81 points, owned by Don Ghiz, Houston, TX
2. Den. mutabile 'Vera Cruz' (species) provisional CHM 81 points, owned by David Hunt, Houston, TX
3. C. Granier's Pride 'Mallory' (Minerva x walkeriana) HCC 79 points, owned by Ervin and Carol Granier, St. Gabriel, LA
4. C. General Cadorna 'Gran Blueberry' (Mrs. Myra Peeters x C. warszewiczii) HCC 75 points, owned by Ervin and Carol Granier, St. Gabriel, LA

There were 14 Accredited Judges, 3 Probationary Judges, 2 Student Judges and 1 Clerk present with 32 people attending.

The next regular judging will be held on June 21, 2003 at the B. J. & Margaret Bradshaw Wellness Center, 7731 Southwest Freeway (Highway 59 South). It is requested that all plants be entered before 11:30 A. M. so that they may be properly researched prior to judging.

**Marg Putman**

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

July 18-20. International Phalaenopsis Alliance (Symposium & Show), Green Oaks Hotel, 6901 West Freeway, Fort Worth, TX 76116. Contact Kathy Baxley, [Kbaxley@academicplanet.com](mailto:Kbaxley@academicplanet.com) Phone 817-551-7363, Postal 45 Chelsea Dr, Fort Worth, TX 76114

August 1-3. Terrebonne OS Show. Southland Mall in Houma La. Contact Mr. Ashley Matherne, [Abmatherne@hotmail.com](mailto:Abmatherne@hotmail.com). 985-594-4050

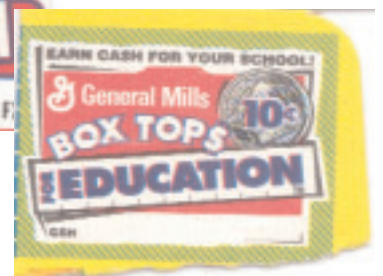
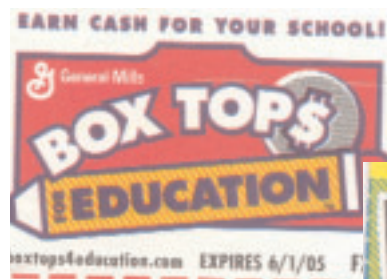
August 8, 9. HOS 24th Annual Workshop. Greenway Holiday Inn Select. A must for all orchid growers and lovers. See schedule on front page of this month's **Happenings**.

**Mavis Klehm**

## CLASSIFIEDS

PAPHS FOR SALE- rothschildianum, bellatulum, vini and flame crosses plus adductum x Laser and one plant of Rattlesnake Skin (lantha Stage x sanderianum) that is NBS. Full list/photos of plants at <http://hometown.aol.com/elpaninaro/myhomepage/index.html>. Or call Tom at 713-688-1779 evenings or leave message during the day. Limited quantities.

**DON'T FORGET: Plant Raffle Tickets for Boxtops**  
**[www.boxtopsforeducation.com](http://www.boxtopsforeducation.com)**



## THE RIGHT POT FOR YOUR ORCHID

In the Philippines many growers tie their orchids to a half coconut shell. In Florida some attach orchids to Tree Fern Plaques. In fields near Singapore tall Vandas are grown in ground rows with cut grass clippings piled around their roots. At our meetings we see orchids in clay pots, outside clay pots, in plastic pots and attached to pieces of cork bark. A few months ago, while visiting a grower friend's greenhouse, I noticed a Vanda hanging on stout cord. Plenty of long roots dangled in the air and were almost touching the ground. So, which is the best way to grow orchids?

In nature orchids will be found growing on certain trees, rocks or other objects like banana trees. Orchids receive small amounts of nutrients from these chosen objects. However, since we provide an abundance of nutrients in our water, almost all of the orchid containers and their media are simply objects and materials that orchids use for support and attachment. Some materials will hold water and nutrients lessening the frequency of watering and allowing orchids a longer drink. Other materials serve as support only. You must choose the method that best suits you, your orchids and your environment.

### Cork Bark

Strips of bark pulled from the cork trees in Portugal, Spain and some parts of South America are called cork bark. Small amounts of nutrients are available as the bark slowly erodes, but not enough for our culture. Tie or attach the plant solidly to the plaque, as the roots, trying to attach, will push the plant up into the air. A small tuft of sphagnum moss around the roots will aid the plant until the roots attach. Water daily as evaporation dries the bark and plant quickly. It is next to impossible to over water. Plaque roots develop thick layers of velamen around them and absorb water and nutrients slowly. Spend lots of time and water well and thoroughly. Disease occurs rarely due to the dry conditions. If you tend to over water potted orchids, perhaps a plaque will favor your culture. Many jungle-collected plants do best on plaques.

### Clay Pots

Clay pots grow well and have been the traditional means of culturing orchids, especially in the Houston area. Water will seep through the walls of the pot and evaporate cooling the pot and plant. Intermediate growing plants like some cymbidiums and Sophronitis hybrids do better in clay pots. Large pots can produce problems due to a wet center and dry outer areas. A small inverted pot put in the middle of a large clay pot will keep the center of the pot dryer. Enlarging the drainage hole or cutting slots in the bottom of the pot can increase airflow. Clay is heavy which prevents the plant from falling over, but the weight is expensive if you pay shipping. Clay pots break easily. Also, clay will salt up due to the seepage of nutrients through the walls of the pot. Salted up clay pots will kill roots retarding growth of orchids. Used clay pots, as well as, all used pots must be soaked in a Clorox solution to prevent disease transfer. Soak two or three days in a 1 in 10 ratio consisting of one part clorox, nine parts water and a small amount of soap. Leach out the Clorox by soaking with fresh water for a day or two.

### Plastic pots

Plastic, large or small, provides a uniform wetness throughout the medium preventing central root rot. Plastic pots have found favor with more growers recently because they are cheap, ship light, resist breakage and clean easily for repotting. Use azalea pots or pots with many holes in the bottom for good air circulation. An old soldering iron can be used to punch more holes in pots.

(Con't next col.)

## RIGHT POT (Con't from previous col.)

### Tree Fern

Tree fern is not recommended for the Houston area. Some local growers like it and seem to grow well with it. Some orchidists think that the

# ORCHIDS & FERNS

7802 BELLAIRE BLVD

HOUSTON, TEXAS 77036

713-774-0949

## WE ARE HAVING A 25% OFF ORCHID PLANT SALE

(Summer Special)

## WE KEEP AT LEAST 2,000 ORCHID PLANTS IN OUR SHOP

water in Houston does not produce good results with the slowly decomposing tree fern. It is more popular in Florida.

### Wood baskets

Wood baskets grow well, must be watered every day and have very little disease. They tend to be expensive and will deteriorate during a three or four year period of use. Teak, cedar and some South American oaks are the most commonly used woods. The wood soaks up some of the water and nutrients and slowly waters the roots. Many growers make their own baskets. Some of our orchids insist on wood baskets or cork bark. Vandaceous orchids with large slow drinking roots do best in wood baskets. When a basket begins to deteriorate tie it in a larger basket without disturbing the roots. Some species like *Cattleya dowiana* and *Cattleya aurea* will rot in a pot after flowering, but grow well in a basket.

### In Conclusion

We have covered pots, cork bark and tree fern and wood baskets. There are advantages and disadvantages for each. Except for phals, orchids do not like to be repotted. They sit for days or months growing very little. Realize that maximum absorption of water and nutrients occurs where roots grip the medium, pot, cork or basket. Orchids will grow slowly after a repotting or disturbance until the roots reestablish contact with medium, pots, baskets or cork.

**Joe Fields**

## BUYING AND GROWING YOUR FIRST PAPH.

(Continued from the May Issue of Happenings)

Again, a very special thanks to Bob & Lynn Wellenstein, co-authors of this article and owners of Antec Laboratories. Visit their site at [www.ladyslipper.com](http://www.ladyslipper.com).

### Light

The first point to consider with light is that it is better to err initially on the side of too little than too much. It is easy enough to slowly increase the light level to the proper level with no trauma to the plant, whereas placing it where it may suddenly get direct sun or too close to a high intensity discharge light may damage the plant. Under fluorescent lighting, it would be difficult to give the plant damaging light levels, although you can certainly cause unsightly but not fatal burning of the leaf tips if they touch the bulbs.



Checking light levels by judging the intensity of the shadow cast by your hand.

One can gauge the light intensity of greenhouse or HID grown plants by placing a hand about 10 inches above the plant and looking at the shadow cast upon the plant. You should see a slight shadow; if it is a very pronounced shadow, then your light levels may be too high, whereas no shadow would suggest a light level that is too low.

Paphs that are growing in too strong light will generally exhibit bleached looking leaves, i.e. very light green or

approaching whitish green, and will mature smaller and smaller growths, and may put out multiple, tiny growths at the base of the plant. Inflorescences will also tend to be short, and the flowers may be small and hard. Too little light, and the leaves of your Paph will be relatively dark green in color, overly long, perhaps floppy and/or lacking substance. Growths will mature slowly, and the plant will take longer to flower than if it were grown in higher light---perhaps the plant will take 1.5 years to mature a growth to flowering size, for example, rather than the expected 10 months. If you believe that you have too much light or little light for your Paph after a period of time, make the changes to the correct conditions slowly and over a period of time so that the plant can become accustomed to the new conditions. This way it will not suffer trauma during the transition---in other words, don't take a dark green, floppy plant and place it in a bright south window and hope that you can thereby speed up its growing and flowering. It will only burn in this too high light, and you may end up losing the entire plant in a very short period of time. Generally, you can expect the species Paphs to flower every year, pretty much on a set schedule, with the exception of the previously mentioned cochlopetalum species and hybrids, which can flower successively over several months. The Maudiae types can easily flower twice a year under the right conditions.

Windowsill growers need to be aware of the amount and duration of light available at the window, as well as the temperature fluctuations where they plan to grow their plants. Some people have had limited success with northerly facing windows, and this can work if the window is large, or there are sliding glass doors at this site, and there are no trees further obstructing the sunlight reaching the plants. If the Paph is placed on the windowsill, and you live in the north where the winters are frigid, you will have to maintain extra distance between the pot and the glass of the window. Bear in mind

that temperatures next to the window glass can be close to freezing if that is what the outdoor temperatures are! Be careful not to overly chill the roots of the plant, which might just slow down the plants growth, but could also freeze it to death if the temperatures plummet. If possible, it might be best to place the plant during the cold winter months on a table close to the window where it will get sufficient light, but will also stay closer to the temperature of the room itself. If the north facing window is less than large, supplemental lighting could be added in the form of a 'shop light' with 2 fluorescent bulbs hung over the plants on the windowsill or table placed next to the window. Single bulbs sold as 'grow lights' are, in our opinion, not worthwhile. Generally, quality and quantity of light is better for Paphs at east or west facing windows. South facing windowsills can be a challenge to grow in, because of the light intensity and accompanying heat from mid day sun, especially in the summer. Growing in a south window is possible, though, if you can place the Paph back some distance from the window, say around 12 inches or so. When the sun is strongest at this location, place your hand on the leaves: if they have become warmer than your hand temperature or feel hot, then the light (and the heat) may be too strong and the plant will need to be moved back. Alternatively, if it is not excessively hot, increasing air movement may help dissipate the heat at the leaf surface. If these solutions are not possible or successful then it may be necessary that the plant be moved to a different window. Alternatively, you could place your Paph in this window if there is a plant in front of it that can withstand this stronger light and heat, and will thus shield the Paph somewhat from the harsh conditions. Use of sheer curtains may also work as long as they do not excessively limit the total amount of light that reaches the plants leaf surface. You may have to experiment with the curtain for several days, pulling it several inches either way, before you feel that you have it arranged 'right', so that the plant's leaves will not get hot to the touch, but it will also get enough light so that it will get flowers.

Under a two 40 watt bulb fluorescent light set up with standard bulbs, you will want to get the plants leaves within a few inches of the bulbs. We prefer C50 (5000K) bulbs, but you will probably be able to do fine with almost any of the commonly available bulbs. When you are ready to optimize your fluorescent set up, we suggest Philips C50 Ultralume bulbs, which have a substantially higher lumen output than standard C50s and will allow you to do better with some of the higher light requirement Paphs, such as Paph philippinense and other multiflorals. If you have a 4 bulb fluorescent set up you will probably be able to place the plants 6 to 8 inches below the bulbs. Remember that the bulb output is greatest near the center and diminishes towards the ends, so arrange your plant placement accordingly. Also, growing under fluorescent lights will automatically provide some of the day/night temperature differential of several degrees that most plants appreciate, as the lights go on and off.

HID (high intensity discharge) lights (high pressure sodium or metal



High Intensity Discharge light fixture.

(Con't on pg. 5, Col. 1)

## YOUR FIRST PAPH (from pg. 4)

halide) put out considerably more lumens per watt, so care must be used in plant placement with them. It is indeed possible to burn a Paph if placed too close or directly under one of these lights, so using the light shadow rule, start below and to the side of the light, gradually moving the plant into higher light until you have it in a position where the leaf color is ideal.

Paphs do not appear to be particularly photoperiod sensitive and the plants suggested for starting with are not among those that require higher light intensities. A photoperiod of 12 to 14 hours should work very well with these plants. Windowsill growers unable to provide this longer photoperiod in the winter months may not experience as rapid growth without supplemental light, but the plants suggested here nevertheless should grow and flower for them.

### What to do with long inflorescences

Some Paphs, both species and hybrids, can produce extremely long inflorescences that can be difficult to deal with especially if you are growing under fluorescent lights. Also, as the inflorescence grows in length, it will at some point actually touch the bulbs, which will inevitably kill the bud by drying it out. Therefore, any Paph in spike must be moved out from under the lights when the bud starts to get too close to the bulbs. 'Too close' is a bit difficult to define, because humidity, and air movement, and density of potting mix and its speed of drying, will have some affect on the outcome, but for safety's sake, remove the plant from under the fluorescents by the time the bud is within a few inches from the lights. Now, what to do with the plant? Well, the inflorescence and the resultant bud will grow in the direction facing the source of the light (think back to grade school science experiments and sunflower seeds and closets and light bulbs). You have basically 2 choices at this point. You could move the plant off to the side on a table, or on to a crate, or some other stable object, and place the developing inflorescence facing the closest fluorescent light. Place it probably not more than 24 inches from the light source, as you do not want to encourage the plant to produce an outrageously long inflorescence. You want the plant to funnel the majority of its resources into the flower, not the stem length. Or, you could place the plant close (but not too close!) to a bright window and allow the inflorescence to develop there.

### Temperature & Humidity

We are fortunate that most of the Paphs on the beginner's list will grow just fine at temperatures and humidity levels with which we ourselves are comfortable. Ideally, Paphs probably would like maximum temperatures not above the 85F range, but can tolerate much higher temperatures with minimal stress, and can go down into the higher 50's F if necessary without suffering leaf or flower damage. The Paphs listed as beginner plants would prefer to stay mostly in the 60-80F range, preferably with a day night differential of 8-10F, but again for this particular group this is an ideal, but not an essential at all. The day/night differential is fairly easy to attain, either when growing under fluorescent lights when the lights go off, or on a windowsill when the sun goes down. Again, ideal relative humidity would be in the 70 to 80% range, but these plants if otherwise cared for properly (i.e. you've maintained a good root system through having an open potting mix, and a reasonable watering schedule) will tolerate lower humidity in the 40% range very well. Do keep a careful eye out for spider mite damage if you do grow in the lower humidity range, and especially if you grow under fluorescents. Spider mite damage will appear most often on the upper sides of the leaves, and will look like fine red dust, and you may also see a dull grayish minutely pitted surface to the leaves and slight webbing on the undersides of the leaves.

### Air movement, etc.

Air movement accomplishes many things in orchid culture. In warmer, high light conditions, it helps prevent heat build up on the leaf surface. In cooler conditions, it dries leaf surfaces after watering and thus limits pathogen growth capable of flourishing on wet surfaces, and under all conditions it helps limit a plants' pathogen exposure by keeping spores from settling on leaf surfaces. A few well-spaced plants on a windowsill will probably do fine without supplemental air movement, as thermal currents should provide enough. However, this gentle sort of air movement is easily disrupted as more and more plants are crowded together. Under these circumstances,

or when plants are clustered together especially under fluorescent lights, it is a good idea to provide a small fan to keep the air moving around the plant foliage. Care should be taken in placement of the fan so that it does not force air directly onto the leaves of the plants, but rather pushes the air around and adjacent to the plants. The problem of direct air flow from a fan in windowsill and underlight cultivation is that the closest plants may dry out extremely fast due to their proximity to the fan, while plants that are somewhat shielded from the fan, or are further away, may take considerably longer to dry out. This condition could make figuring out when and what to water difficult. An ideal situation is when you can place 2 fans that blow the air circularly around the plants, perhaps with one fan placed higher than the other, with the upper fan tilted slightly down to push the warmer air down, and the lower fan tilted up to push the colder air up into the warmer air, thus making the temperatures in the growing area more uniform. There are some cases, when you are growing certain Paphs, that you will actually want the warmer or cooler microclimates that are created in your growing area, either by proximity to a window or light source where the temperatures are warmer, or closeness to the floor on a table or lightstand, where the temperatures are cooler. The fan(s) should be run both day and night.

### Repotting

When and how often should a Paph be repotted? The short answer to this question is an easy one: you repot the plant when it needs it, whether it's spring, summer, winter or fall. Unquestionably, ideal times for repotting are when the weather is going to be warm for some time to encourage new growth, but if the plant needs repotting, it's best not to postpone it. Most plants appreciate, and need, repotting annually if they are in standard bark mixes. Plants that are grown in the 'new' coconut husk mix probably can go longer, perhaps up to 2 years or more if necessary, as the coconut husk chips do not break down at the same speed as the bark mix does. Seedlings can benefit from twice yearly repotting if you have the time, as they definitely experience a growth spurt in the new medium. Generally, it's helpful, but not absolutely necessary, to water these newly potted adult plants (not the seedlings) a little less often than your other plants, to encourage roots to grow and seek water and nutrients in the mix.

Any Paph that looks unthrifty, sickly, wilted, is falling over in the pot, is starting to grow up and out of the pot, has overgrown it's pot with an excessive number of growths, has any sort of wet or damp rot visible on the leaves, has extremely pale leaves, or has excessively wrinkled leaves should be repotted. These conditions can be strongly correlated to poor roots and/or poor growing conditions that caused root loss, with the subsequent loss of



ability of the plant to absorb water and nutrients. If the plant does have evidence of bacterial or fungal problems, remove these infected areas either by tearing off the affected leaf or leaf area, or use very carefully a small, sharp knife to excise the infected area. Wash your hands before handling the plant after you have done the 'surgery'.

A proper repotting job in an appropriate mix is essential to good root growth.

(Con't on pg. 6, Col. 1)

## YOUR FIRST PAPH (from pg. 5)

What should you use for a potting mix? The one that works best for you and your conditions! You can grow Paphs in any number of different types of potting mix; you can even grow some of them mounted if you have the right conditions. The basic needs are ample ability for holding air and water, ability to stabilize the plant, and not too high a salt retention. The most traditional mixes for the past several decades have been based on fir bark, with various additives such as perlite, aliflor, sphagnum moss or rockwool. Mixes utilizing coconut husk chips and lightweight aggregates are becoming more popular, and are our preferred mix. For more information see "Use of Coconut Husk Chips as a Potting Mix Base Superior to Bark" and "Coconut Husk Chips Followup to FAQs".

Next you need to choose a pot. To a certain extent, determining pot size will take into consideration your growing conditions, growing medium and watering habits, but as a general rule you do not want to 'over pot' Paphs. Rather, pot them so that the roots just comfortably fit into the pot, like a hat on your head: snug enough to stay on but not uncomfortably tight. The other consideration in a pot for Paphs is that it has sufficient drainage. Many pots designed for other types of plants do not drain well enough, so it may be necessary to enlarge existing or cut new drainage holes in your pots. The choice between clay and plastic also depends on your circumstances. Plastic pots are available readily in more sizes, lightweight and relatively inexpensive, and are easily modified to increase drainage if necessary. Clay pots dry faster and are more stable on the bench, but also tend to accumulate salts. They also tend to cool the root zone a bit, which can be either a benefit or a detriment depending on your climate.



Small Coconut Husk Chips (CHC). We have found a mix based on CHC and a light aggregate (in our case Aliflor) and charcoal works best for us.

Now that you have your mix and your pot, you're all set to repot. First, to unpot your Paph: firmly hold the pot upside down, and with one hand hold onto the pot, and with the other hand grasp the plant at its base, and slowly pull it out of the pot, allowing all the old mix that adheres to the roots of the plants to be gently removed. If you have to struggle to remove it, you will probably do more harm than good by removing it, as you will damage the roots. Now, carefully hold the plant in the proper position in the pot with one hand (so that the base of the plant---where the roots come out---is just below the lip of the pot), and start to gently work mix in and around the plant's roots, gently packing it in place with your fingers. Make sure that as you add the mix, you get the mix all the way to the bottom of the pot. Once you have the mix in place, press down very firmly with your fingers all the way around the top of the pot, making sure that there are no empty spaces that could be occupied by mix. It is not likely that you will press with enough force to seriously injure the roots. If the mix condenses with the pressure of your fingers to considerably below the base of the plant, you'll want to add more mix so that newly emerging roots will have something to grow into. You want the mix level to come up just to the junction of the base of the plant with its roots. If the mix is built up higher onto the base of the plant, you will be inviting rot.

If the plant is not stable in this position, despite your efforts, you can fashion a wire into a U and insert it over the crown of the plant and into the pot to add stability until the plant grows more roots and anchors itself. Now, let the plant rest a day, and then you can water it.

Finally, don't be afraid to take a plant out of its pot, once you own it, to check on the condition of the roots at any time. It's better to have to unnecessarily repot a healthy plant, than suffer the consequences of waiting until you have a serious problem with your plant, and have to nurse the plant back to good health and good roots.

### Finished Flowering

When your plant is done flowering, generally, it's fine to let the inflorescence fade on its own ---it will slowly dry out and turn a brownish color after the flower has dried up and fallen off the plant. Simply snap the stem off, using your first 2 fingers and the thumb on opposite sides of the stem, close to where the inflorescence emerges from the plant. Another way to remove the stem, especially if it hasn't turned completely brown and dry, is to grasp it close to the base and your first two fingers and thumb, and give it a quick twist in one direction. Most stems will be easy to remove, but there are some plants, Paph. venustum, Paph. tigrinum, and Paph. fairieanum come to mind, that have very fibrous stems and they really need to be severed from the plant with a knife or razor blade. Remember to flame sterilize your instrument of choice after you have removed the stem. If you've chosen one of the cochlopetalum beginners plants, you will want to wait until the stem is definitely showing signs of turning brown before removing it, as these are sequential bloomers and can surprise you with another flower. If there is any question in your mind as to the health of your Paph and/or its root system, and it is in flower, it is best to cut the flower stem off. This will allow the plant to concentrate its energy in growing new roots and new growth for the next flowering.

Paphs only produce one inflorescence per growth (there have been recorded instances of 2 inflorescences growing from the same growth---we had 2 grow out of a single growth of a Paph. fowlei, but it is quite rare), so now it is up to you to grow the next growth up to flowering size. When you have grown a Paph and flowered it, the plant is "yours". Do not be discouraged if you are not completely successful with your first plant, it may take a little while to get the hang of growing them properly, but it will come if you carefully observe your plants and how they are growing. If you are observant enough, the plants will start to "talk" to you and tell you what is going on. Also remember that all plants are individuals, and it is possible to get the occasional clone that is just a stinker to grow.

Finally, an important concept to keep in mind is one of balance or harmony with regards to the amount of light, fertilizer, heat, pot size, and water that your plant receives. All aspects of orchid culture are closely interrelated. As you may have noticed in the information we've presented, a change in one set of conditions will probably result in the necessity to change other aspects of culture. A complete understanding and appreciation of this concept develops with experience with your Paphs, and attention to detail in your growing.

It is our hope that we have given you enough information in this article to get you a quick and easy start into growing Paphs. If you have further questions, you may be able to find the answers in our Paph. FAQ. As your interest and collection of Paphs grows, you will want to delve deeper into their culture needs, and read our more detailed articles on various aspects of culture. It is our hope that we can help you be a successful Paph grower, and as a result gain greater joy from this hobby.

Editor's Comments: This completes this article on Paphs. Again, Thanks to Bob & Lynn Wellenstein, co-authors, and a special thanks to Mrs. Ruth Gee for the kindest note to me about the Happenings and this article. Mrs. Gee was one of HOS's first to have a 'Slipper Orchid'.

## ORCHID CULTURE TIP - COMPLEMENTS OF ODOM'S ORCHIDS

www.odoms.com

Adequate light is important for healthy growth and abundant blooming. Bright indirect light is vital, and filtered sunlight is preferable. They can not tolerate the direct rays of the sun during the hot part of the day. The leaves will indicate if they are getting enough light. They should be a medium green color. If they are a dark green color and have weak foliage that indicates not enough light. If you have trouble blooming your cattleyas, it is usually a result of inadequate light. The light intensity of a full sun on a clear day is approx. 10,000 footcandles. Light meters can be purchased from most camera shops.

## IDEAL LIGHT RANGES IN FOOTCANDLES:

Brassavola.....	2,000	to	4,000	footcandles	Masdevallia.....	1,000	to	2,500	footcandles
Brassia.....	2,000	to	3,500	footcandles	Miltonia.....	1,000	to	3,000	footcandles
Cattleya.....	2,000	to	3,500	footcandles	Odontoglossum.....	1,000	to	2,500	footcandles
Cymbidium (standard).....	2,000	to	4,000	footcandles	Oncidium.....	2,000	to	4,000	footcandles
Cymbidium (miniature).....	1,000	to	3,500	footcandles	Paphiopedilum.....	2,000	to	3,000	footcandles
Dendrobium.....	1,500	to	4,000	footcandles	Phalaenopsis.....	1,000	to	1,500	footcandles
Epidendrum.....	1,500	to	3,500	footcandles	Phragmipedium.....	2,500	to	3,500	footcandles
Laelia .....	2,000	to	3,500	footcandles	Sophronitis.....	1,500	to	3,000	footcandles
Ludisia .....	1,000	to	2,000	footcandles	Vandas.....	2,500	to	4,000	footcandles

### Reminder: Thank the Following for the June Refreshments Table

Coordinator:	John Van Domelen
Punch/Drinks:	Jay Balchan
Sheet Cake:	Jay Balchan
Cookies:	Jay Balchan
Snacks:	Kevin Perry
Snacks:	John Beck

Please volunteer for coming months.

### AOS CORNER

Why is AOS Judging Important to You?

Every month you read the results of the Houston Judging Center's activities. Or maybe you don't. Maybe you think you'll never get an award, it's all a big mystery practiced by a select few, or perhaps you don't even want to enter your plants for appraisal. So why should you care about judging?

The AOS judging system is the most highly regarded system in the world of orchids. Our judges, all of whom serve without compensation, are the major force in determining the direction of orchid breeding in this country and many others, as well. When a hybrid is recognized by the judges with an award, some hybridizer will surely rush to make crosses with it, knowing that an awarded parent will often result in a superior hybrid, which will allow him to increase the price of the plant. At the same time, this superior hybrid will raise the standards in a particular genus.

The same is true of species. When the judging system awards a new species, hybridizers begin to wonder, "What can that species add to the gene pool? Will it impart some quality that will improve known plants?"

The 29 judging centers in the United States (Shreveport, Louisiana is the newest, opening November 2002), offer each of us the opportunity to learn about quality in hybrids, species and cultivation. Our hobby can become expensive. Why give precious bench space to a poor plant, when the judging system allows us to choose from quality and participate in the latest trends in hybridizing?

If you haven't visited the Houston Judging Center, come on down! We meet the third Saturday of each month at the Wellness Center, 7731 Southwest Freeway, just north of Memorial Hermann Southwest Hospital. You'll see great plants, make some new friends, and the refreshments aren't bad, either! Everyone is welcome and encouraged to view the judging procedures and ask questions of the judges. We hope to see YOU there!

*Donna Craig for  
Karin Luhnau*

### Houston Orchid Society 2003 Officers and Committee Chairs

#### Officers

President	Jay Balchan	713-942-2298
1st Vice President	Greg Scott	936-447-3232
2nd Vice President	Pam Vinson	281-589-6719
Recording Sec.	Kelly Moseley	713-480-1062
Treasurer	Bill Bartlett	713-523-5031
Membership	Claudia Hanson	281-395-8575

#### Chairs

Guest Hospitality	Carol McDonald	713-667-8756
Happenings Editor	Don Ghiz	713-661-1885
Newcomers Group	Theresa Riggs	281-496-2296
Librarian	open	
Petals and Wings	Jim and Melba Butler	281-492-1437
Plant Raffle	Ted Baenziger &	713-525-3146
& May Sale	Dennis Tomjack	713-789-1748
Refreshments	John Van Domelen	281-464-9245
Silent Auction	Emily Lam-Jones	713-524-3055
August Workshop	Jerry Stephens	713-529-0808
Webmistress	Nina Rach	713-461-8605

#### Directors

Jim Butler	Melba Butler
Karin Luhnau	Julius Klehm
Joe Fields	Dolores Fields
Marvin Gerber	Renee Gerber
Theresa Riggs	Jerry Stephens
Rick Hepler	Emily Lam Jones
Clark Whiteside	Charlotte Randolph

#### Representation

AOS Representative	Karin Luhnau
H.G.C.A.B. Representative	open
IPA Representative	Clark Whiteside
SWROGA Director	Mavis Klehm
SWROGA Director	Julius Klehm
Pluerothallid Alliance	C J Maciejeski
Encyclia Enthusiasts	Alice Barrios

Web-site: [www.houstonorchidsociety.org](http://www.houstonorchidsociety.org)

Unauthorized use of articles and/or information in this publication is prohibited, unless permission from HOS is given. Please contact the Editor.

FIRST CLASS MAIL

JUNE 2003 ISSUE



Hybrid Table winner, Lc. Park Ridge 'Granier', owned by R. H. Champagne. Wow!



Species Table winner, *Angraecum sesquipedale*, owned by Jim and Melba Butler. Way to go!

HOUSTON JUDGING CENTER'S MAY AWARDS (See Pg. 2 for full descriptions). No pic for #3

