

Southern Tier Orchid Society

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April 2019 NEXT MEETINGS:

April 7, 1:00 First United Methodist Church
SPRING AUCTION!!

Downstairs in the church

April 27-28: Orchid Show: Roberson Center May 19, 2:00 First United Methodist Church

IN THIS ISSUE

Don't miss our April 7th meeting!

** ORCHID AUCTION!! ***

We'll be meeting *downstairs* in the church, so please use the rear parking lot.

Meeting NOTES

**Note: In the event of a weather emergency, please check your email the morning of the party! If nothing is received from STOS, the party is on. Likewise, those who receive the newsletter by regular mail will receive a call from one of us. If any questions, members may also call one of the Board Members.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Contributions, including pictures, to the STOS newsletter from members are welcomed. Contributions must be submitted by the 5^{th} day of each month to the editor.

If you have difficulties with the electronic format of this newsletter, please contact the webmaster at: southerntierorchidsociety@gmail.com

President Message

Members of the Southern Tier Orchid Society will be appearing on a radio talk show Thursday April 4th at 6:30 PM to 7 PM. Scheduled are Luis Matienzo, Linda Mandeville, Dominic Ponzi, and Grant Lindhorst. Speaking about Orchids in general, the auction, and the Orchid Show at Roberson. They can be heard live online at https://whrwfm.org/listenlive/ or locally at WHRW 90.5 FM.

Spring has sprung.

Soon the grass will green up, and common flowers will be rising up. But for us Orchid lovers that means our Spring auction is here. Sunday April 7th we will be having our special auction. The blooming orchids will be available and highest bidding takes your prizes home. It is a great idea to bring boxes. There are over 40 orchids ordered. Often at times like that, bidding is irresistible. Our Orchid Show is at Roberson Museum on April 27th and 28th, and your auction purchase can be exhibited at the public show. We look forward to signing up more members at the show.

Regrettably, my failure to remind a stand-in note taker, minutes were not taken at the meeting. Of the notable conclusions for change is that we will discontinue the practice of "white elephant items" for fund raising raffles, and limit things to only Orchid related items.

Please review clothing order information and email me (<u>bcabot@gmail.com</u>) with your orders.

The club will arrange the purchase based on your order, and you will need to pay Jane Trey, treasurer, before getting your embroidered clothing.

The library sign out process is working on the honor system. A notebook is in the locking library closet, and you simply sign out what you take, and sign it in when you return it. There is much knowledge in those books.

John Dunkleberger gave a great presentation at the March meeting on travels to Ecuador, and the orchids there.

Carol Bayles has stepped up to be this year's Orchid Show person. Please contact her at cjb4@cornell.edu or call at 607-275-9090 and offer your assistance to the team. The show dates have been secured. Set up until 9 PM April 26th. The event is free to the public on Saturday April 27th and April 28th noon to 5 PM. At Roberson Museum and Science Center, 30 Front St., Binghamton, NY. We must leave the Museum by 5 PM.

Auctions are fun Shows are fun Raffles are fun. Orchids are a challenge.

May the best be yours, Ben Cabot 607-348-6239 At 1PM April 7th we will be setting up for the Auction at First Methodist Church at 53 McKinley Ave., Endicott. The time schedule is loose, but after the displays have been seen to everyone's satisfaction, and bidders have registered we will have a discussion of the upcoming show. Then let the bidding begin. Pease enter from the back parking lot, the auction will be in the downstairs room.

Ben Cabot - President 607-348-6239



Reminder--Membership Dues

Just a reminder---there are a few members that have not yet paid their membership dues for 2019. Annual membership dues are \$20.00. If you have not turned in your membership for 2019, please take this opportunity to do so. January 1st was the due date and all dues are past due. If you have any question whether or not you've paid-up, please see either Linda Mandeville or Jane Trey. **NOTE: You'll need to have your dues paid-up in order to participate in the April Auction...

April 7th Meeting—Orchid Auction and Pre-Show Meeting!!!

You won't want to miss our April 7th meeting —it's our **SPRING AUCTION**! Pete O'Connell has been worked very hard to obtain some beautiful orchids for our April auction! This will be a wonderful opportunity to obtain some flowering beauties —both large and small--for your collection!!

The auction list will be published on the website next week, so you can preview some of the lovely plants that will be up for bid!!

*NOTE: Orchids purchased at our auction on April 7th can be used for display at our Show! We encourage you to please bring your flowering orchids in for our STOS Orchid Display, or create a display of your own!

We will also spend time at the meeting to discuss the last-minute details for our Show, and then start in with the Auction. We'll need many helping hands for our Annual Show, so anyone who can pitch in, with even an hour or two of their time, would be greatly appreciated! No experience is necessary! Our April meeting will start at 1:00, to allow enough time for both a short meeting and then the auction.... Please come and support your club!

Update on 2019 STOS Orchid Show

Our STOS Orchid show will be held on Saturday, April 27th and Sunday, April 28th, with set up on Friday, April 26th at the Roberson Museum and Science Center. The event is free to the public from noon to 5 pm on April 27th and April 28th. Our STOS Orchid Show Chair, Carol Bayles, indicated that we will be needing volunteers to man tables and help with setup and cleanup. There will be a sign-up sheet at the April 7th meeting. Please check your calendar before you come and plan on signing up now.

WANTED:

Activity table volunteers

Do you like to talk to kids? Would you like to lead kids in an activity at our April Show? Ideas for activities accepted. Qualifications for the position:

- 1. Willingness to share your enthusiasm for orchids
- 2. Willingness to engage kids in learning about orchids

All experience levels welcome.

If you are interested, please let me know (Bernice Magee) at our April 7 STOS meeting! Thanks,

Bernice Magee

SOME DETAILS ABOUT THE PLANT DIVISION, MOUNTING AND REPOTTING SESSION

During the May meeting of STOS a clinic of how to repot, mount and divide plants will be conducted. All current members are welcomed to participate but a few guidelines must be clarified prior to the meeting:

- 1) As usual, STOS will provide some seedlings for members in good standing to repot and take home along with them
- 2) Excess seedlings will be available for purchase from STOS to defray costs of the plants
- 3) Materials such as sphagnum moss, plant mounts, plastic pots, labels and some orchid bark will be used but these are purchases through funds of STOS
- 4) Any member wishing to learn to divide and report his/her own plant will be required to bring appropriate pots and pre-soaked bark for personal use
- 5) The suggested method of preparation of orchid medium for repotting a plant or division is to place the bark in a container, add a few drops of dish detergent and then water and let it stand for at least an hour prior to potting a plant or a division. Orchid bark or mixes and additional plastic pots can be purchased from Lowes, Home Depot or Agway stores
- 6) Members are encouraged to donate some divisions of their plants to a raffle with the proceeds going to STOS
- 7) Members are requested to help with the clean-up after the meeting is concluded.

Luis J. Matienzo

Feed Me: The Basics of Choosing a Fertilizer and Application

If their other requirements are met, orchids will grow and flower for fairly long periods without fertilizer. Witness the people in tropical areas such as South Florida who grow them mounted on trees and let nature do the rest. Indeed, that is how epiphytic orchids grow in nature. But hobbyists generally try to give their orchids more than the bare minimum so that the plants flower at or above their potential.

There are many different points of view on how to fertilize orchids and what fertilizer to use. Everyone has a favorite fertilizer or supplement. There are so many variables that how and when you fertilize depends on what kinds of orchids you grow and how and where you grow them. This article will offer a brief explanation and general guidelines on fertilizing orchids. For more specific application, join your local orchid society and ask someone there who grows the same kind of orchids as you. It is unlikely that you will kill any orchids with orchid fertilizer so following the recommendations here will provide your plants needed nutrition.

If you are a gardener, you are probably familiar with the N-P-K listings on fertilizer bags. Orchid fertilizers have them too. Let's go over these three elements and see how they affect plant growth. Nitrogen (N) helps make plants green and helps them grow faster. It is the element responsible for vegetative growth (the leafy parts). Phosphorus (P) is good for root growth, disease resistance, seed and fruit growth, and especially for blooming and flowering. Potassium (K) helps with increasing root growth, drought resistance and disease resistance.

OPTIONS: There are three main types of fertilizers used for orchids: balanced, high nitrogen and bloom booster.

- ♦ Balanced fertilizers have been traditionally recommended for use with orchids potted in inorganic potting media such as lava rock and Aliflor, and tree fern (which has fallen out of favor due to conservation concerns). Plants mounted on cork bark or other substrates also benefit from using a balanced fertilizer. An example of a balanced fertilizer would be represented by the numbers 20-20-20.
- High-nitrogen fertilizers have long been recommended for use with orchids potted in fir bark or fir bark mixes. The reason for extra nitrogen is that the bacteria that cause the bark to decay use up much of the available nitrogen, thus depleting the orchid. This practice has recently come into question. Nonetheless, using a high-nitrogen fertilizer, especially in the spring at the beginning of the growing season, can promote strong vegetative growth under ideal conditions. An example of high-nitrogen fertilizer would be 30-10-10.
- Bloom or blossom-booster formulas are high in phosphorus. Typically, high-phosphorus fertilizers are applied every other week for four to six applications the season before expected bloom. For winter-spring blooming orchids, bloom booster is usually applied in the autumn. Vandaceous hybrids and other orchids that bloom throughout the year can be given bloom booster every third or fourth fertilizing. An example of a bloom booster would be 10-30-20. Fertilizers used on orchids should contain little or no urea. This is because soil organisms must first convert the nitrogen in urea to a form useable by plants, and because orchids do not grow in soil, this conversion does not occur efficiently.

APPLICATION: How fertilizer is applied varies as much as orchids themselves. Typically, plants are fertilized once a week during spring and summer and every two weeks in the autumn and winter. Regardless of the fertilizer that you choose, most experienced growers use ½ the label-recommended strength. Remember, in nature epiphytic orchids' roots are exposed and the only nutrients they receive are from bird and animal droppings, decaying insects and detritus. The old saying about fertilizing orchids is: Feed them weekly weakly. Fertilizer is best applied in the morning on sunny days. For mounted orchids, or orchids with exposed roots, such as vandas in empty baskets, many growers routinely first water the plants and then follow with fertilizer a half hour later. The watering before fertilizing prepares the spongy velamen of the orchid roots to better utilize the fertilizer. Orchids in pots are usually not watered first but some growers have their own techniques.

There are requirements specific to certain orchids. For instance, do not fertilize nobile-type dendrobiums after early autumn. This rule actually applies to all orchids that have decided rest periods and all deciduous orchids. Fertilizing them while in their rest period keeps them in continual growth instead of resting before producing flowers. In other words, you may get a lot of growth and no flowers.

There are also many secret recipes growers use that supposedly produce stronger plants or more flowers. Certainly, vitamins and micronutrients are as essential as the building blocks of plant growth mentioned above. Elements such as magnesium, boron, calcium, carbon and others are required for strong plant growth. All in all, although there are certain practices that are documented as being helpful, it has not been proven that supplements actually contribute to improved growth in orchids — but it probably doesn't hurt to use them.

---Article Prepared by the AOS Education Committee/Photographs by Greg Allikas; Originally published in ORCHIDS magazine April 2013

Upcoming Meetings

April 7 ~ Spring Auction!

April 27-28 ~ Orchid Show @ Roberson!

May 19 ~ Reporting Clinic June-July ~ Summer hiatus

<u>Please remember that these are tentative and subject to last minute change.</u>

