



Central Illinois Orchid Society Newsletter

June 2014

Vol. 8 no. 6, June 2014

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Membership is \$15/person and \$25/couple. Please visit our home page for Membership form and mailing address.

CIOS Officers for 2014

Linda Bial, President
Ray Urban, Vice Pres.
Nancy Urban, Treasurer
Bettina Francis, Secretary

Mitzi Williams, Newsletter and Webpage content

President's message:

As usual, our climate in east central Illinois seems to go directly from cold to hot, without much in between. Here, on the cusp of summer, we're already into the hot portion, with temperatures on most days currently well into the 80s. So, although it's safe to put our orchids outside now without fear of temperatures dropping too low, care still must be taken to keep them safe from other factors.

In particular, orchids need to be kept out of direct sun, which would be too strong for them. In their natural habitat, most orchids tend to grow in dappled light, so find them a spot where they can have a bit of morning sunlight and then partial shade for the rest of the day. This can be provided by locating them under the branches of a tree, under an arbor or a shade cloth, or possibly the eaves of the house. It's best to ease orchids into outdoor light by starting them out in a shady spot and gradually moving them into a brighter location. This will help to avoid the shock of changing from indoor light intensity to outdoor.

Orchids will certainly enjoy the air movement provided by natural breezes outside, but that will also cause them to dry out more quickly than they do inside, so it's important to ensure they're getting sprinkled, sprayed, or watered enough. Plus some nice rainfall always helps, of course.

When to bring orchids that have spent their summer vacation outside back into the house for the winter? Obviously, a frost would kill them, but I keep mine out until night time temperatures start to dip down into the 40s.

The biggest issue, of course, involves the various critters that might infect or feed on the orchids while they're outside, as well as the effort to prevent pests from accompanying the orchids back inside when the weather turns cold. Outdoor orchid pest control is a whole other topic! Here is a link to a site with some good information: <http://everything-orchids.com/outdoor-orchids>

Have a wonderful summer, and enjoy next week's field trip to see Tim Fairchild's hardy orchids that live outdoors all year round.

Linda Bial, CIOS President

Next meeting:

- The next meeting is on **Monday, June 9**. The program is a field trip to visit the hardy orchid garden of Tim Fairchild. Meet at the south end of the parking lot at Champaign Public Library at 6:30 p.m. We will be sharing rides or caravanning to Tim's house so please be there on time. In case you will be late, his address is 2804 Wedgewood Dr, Champaign. If you are lost, feel free to call Mitzi at 217-840-7437. A blooming orchid will be raffled out to members before we leave for our mini field trip.
- Our July meeting is a pot-luck picnic on **Sunday July 20**. The picnic will be at 4:00 pm, held at Bettina and George Francis's residence in Urbana. The address will be sent to you by e-mail in July. This is the occasion where members share interests other than orchids, so hope everyone can come.

The main course (hamburgers) will be provided. Please bring a dish to share. Spouses/significant other are welcome also. Please send your response to Bettina when you receive the address information in early July.

Please note that in the 2014 Calendar section of our website, the date for the picnic **was incorrectly listed as July 13. The correct date is July 20th.**

Events in the area:

- Friday June 20th, 7:00 PM Prairie State Orchid Society meeting. Rochester Public Library, #1 Community Drive, Rochester, IL. Guest speaker will be **Russ Vernon** from **New Vision Orchids**. Russ is a hybridizer specializing in phalaenopsis and odontoglossum. He will speak about Oncidiums. Russ will bring plants to sell at this meeting.
- Also mark your calendar for Saturday, August 23, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm, for a seminar by **Fred Clarke** of **Sunset Valley Orchids**, hosted by the Prairie State Orchid Society at the same location as above. Fred has 28 years of experience in the horticultural industry as a professional grower, and is an accredited American Orchid Society Judge. Orchids from Sunset Valley Orchid have received hundreds of AOS awards, including 8 that have received the highest honor, the 'First Class Certificate'. This is one speaker you will not want to miss hearing. Fred will bring plants to sell at this meeting. A nominal registration fee will cover a lunch. For more information, visit: www.prairiestateorchids.org/index.html.
- Although many different orchids bloom throughout the year, the orchid shows seem to die down during summer. But this is a good time to visit some orchid nurseries as many plants are sold at great discounts. Some local orchid groups also continue to meet and hold sales. The American Orchid Society (www.aos.org) provides a list of local societies under its "Affiliated Societies" section.

So, while traveling this summer, why not look up orchid societies and nurseries, and visit them? You will find great bargains at many nurseries. Even if the plant is not in flower, if you see an old flower stem, it is a mature plant and will bloom at the next flowering time. Many orchids, once thought to be only winter blooming, do bloom in summer as well.

Orchid of the month 1: Phaius

A genus containing 45-50 species, Phaius (pronounced FAY-us) comes from Africa, India, southeast Asia, China, and Pacific islands. The most well-known species, Phaius tankerville, is also called the nun's orchid for its hooded appearance. Phaius and its relatives, Calanthe and Spathoglottis, are terrestrial orchids and prefer partial to full sun if grown outdoors where temperatures remain above 40°F (about 5°C). For northern growers, they should be potted in sphagnum moss or humus-rich compost. The potting medium should be kept moist at all times. The plant should be fed weekly from April to September, followed by two months of no fertilizer to promote flowering. The Phaius leaves are also unique in that they are large, thin, and fan-like.

Phaius is considered easy for a beginner. A large pot can produce several flower spikes, each bearing 15-30 flowers. Some have faint, sweet fragrance, and it can make quite an impressive display in mid spring. Unless the plant is divided and kept in small pots, however, it can become rather large and tall. Apparently, George Hausermann of Orchids by Hausermann, has been successful in hybridizing Phaius to produce

dramatic new colors and new crosses such as Phaiocalanthe. Their Phaius Microburst is a small hybrid which can be easily grown on a window sill.



Phaius Microburst 'Octoberfest' AM/AOS

Notes and tips:

- If you take your Phalaenopsis outside, protect them from falling debris and sunlight. The leaves are more tender than those of Oncidiums and Dendrobiums, and tend to get too much sun and/or injured by any little particles. If the leaves of your Phalaenopsis begin to be lighter and reddish, it is receiving too much light. Hanging them on tree branches often cause leaf injuries because of the debris from the trees.
- Rain water is very good for the orchids. If not collected in a rain barrel, you can easily collect rain water in buckets and bins. Now that summer is in full swing, fertilizer can be given weekly. Be sure to flush out the medium with clear water once every 3-4 weeks to get rid of the chemical accumulations.
- Summer is also a good time to treat your orchids with systemic insecticides, which is taken up by the plant so any sucking or burrowing insects will be prevented from damaging the plants. Systemic insecticide comes in liquid or granules depending on the manufacturer. Be care not to use a systemic insecticide which also contain fertilizer (such as Bayer all in one or 3-in-1 Insect killer).

Orchid of the month 2: Yellow lady slippers

During the first week of June, I visited the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum in Chahassen, MN, just outside of Minneapolis.

In their woodland garden, I found a cluster of large yellow lady slippers (*Cypripedium parviflorum*) in full bloom. They were among other woodland plants that are readily seen in our area, in dappled sun under tall tree canopies. They were on a slope (at about 45 degree angle) in the ground of thick leaf mulch with some pine needles on top. At the lower end of the slope were small yellow lady slippers, and on a flat bottom area across a small stream was a robust colony of Minnesota State Flower, Showy lady slippers (*Cypripedium reginae*) not yet in bloom. They will be blooming in late June - July.

In my "woodland garden" the Blettilas I planted last year were dug up by the squirrels in early spring, and despite several attempts to bury them back, they did not survive. The yellow lady slippers were spared of the critters' attention and came up to produce one flower! I have two beds of the yellow lady slippers, but actually seeing them in the wild and understanding the environmental conditions they live in gave me a much better idea of how to raise them.

