



# Vero Beach Orchid Society



April 2017

## April Speaker

**Sherry Cauley & Beryl Steiner** will be speakers at the meeting this month. Both are long time members of our society and stellar growers.

Sherry will be talking about how to prepare your plants for display at home or at a show where they will be judged.

Beryl will discuss creating a niche box display for the judging at shows. She has been doing niches for a very long time, and knows what makes a niche arrangement award-winning.

We will not have plants for sale since Sherry & Beryl are not commercial growers, so if anybody is interested in having a table at our meeting to sell some of their own orchids, please contact Sherry Cauley @ 772-321-6614, so we can have the table set up for you in advance.

We will have raffle plants available for sale, and we will have another raffle for a ticket to the Cattleya Symposium in Ft. Pierce this summer. Many of you already know about the symposium, hosted by John Odom. It is a weekend filled with some of the most renowned and awarded orchid growers in the world.

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## VERO BEACH ORCHID SOCIETY BOARD MEETING MINUTE

March 6, 2017

President John Odom called the meeting to order at 6:50. Board members present were Treasurer Addison Marvin, Secretary Joan Kaser, Vice-President Sherry Cauley, and Board Members Doug Mew, Howard Kramer, Pat Mills, and Carol Marvin, Orchid Show Chairman.

Secretary's Report: minutes of the last meeting were read. It was moved by Doug and second by Carolyn that the minutes be approved as corrected, motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Addison Marvin presented the Treasurer's Report for the month of February. We are within our budget for this year. Moved by Doug second by Carolyn that the report be accepted, motion passed.

Old Business: Sherry reported that this week-end went well. We had 12 people show up to help, and it was a nice display. We did not get an award but we had a very nice display.

Port St. Lucie is sticking to the 100 foot display, so we will not be entering the show this time. We told them maybe next time.

We are looking for plants for the June meeting where we will show the members how to pot their plants. John has plants. It was suggested that the potting event should be a separate event from the meeting.

New Business: John will donate a \$175.00 ticket for a separate raffle to attend his symposium which will be held the first week-end in August. We will sell the ticket for \$5.00 each every month up to July when we will choose the winner. This will be separate from the raffle table.

John has made contact with a man that is very knowledgeable about insects. It might be possible to arrange for him to come as a speaker. The extension office also has speakers for a reasonable price.

We need to give out handbooks to the new members. We need a signature page signed and returned to show that they have received the handbook. Carolyn will take care of this.

We will need plants for new members that did not show up at the last meeting.

At the Busy Bee customer appreciation day we can hand out cards for new members like we did at the Garden Fest .

We will need a person for the picnic. Doug will do the cooking if we can get a grill. Carol mentioned that they might have one we can use. The picnic will be Saturday the 13th of May.

Show Business:

Doug mentioned that we could rent a 15 X 15 tent for \$160.00 to take the place of the tent that is so difficult to put up. That tent is old and this tent will be bigger than the old one.

John received an e-mail from Leslie Monroe working from the University of Florida. She would like a spot at the show. We need to find out what they are expected to do. If they are there to give out information that would be fine, if they are planning to sell something then they would have to be treated as a vendor.

John showed us some very nice little trinket boxes donated by Kathryn Hendron from her store in Jupiter. It is a very nice box with a decorated top. John has two and can get one more and we will give them to the winners of the niches. We are working on getting the judges names and Beryl will be arranging for the judges for the niches. They will be taken out to lunch to the Riverside Cafe.

Carolyn and Doug will get together for the sponsors for the awards. It will be \$30.00 to sponsor an award; the categories will be decided as we go.

John would like someone else to sign the checks as it is difficult for him to come from Ft. Pierce to do this. Sherry, as vice President, will take on this responsibility.

Addison has a letter from the Treasure Coast newspaper (T.C. Palm) stating that there will be a \$15.00 service charge for each digital ad.

Doug mentioned that they will give us a small ad on Monday, Tuesday, a half page on Wednesday for 2 weeks. Saturday and Sunday will be expensive. Ten percent of the people have told us that they found out about the show from the Newspaper.

At the show we can have a table for attracting new members like we did at the GardenFest, offering them a free plant.

It was moved by Doug second by Carolyn to adjourn the meeting at 8:10. The next Board meeting will be April 3, 2017.

Respectfully submitted by Joan Kaser, Secretary

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## **April in Your Orchid Collection**



***Vanda testacea***

## April Climate Data

Average high: 83.8

Average low: 67.6

Average mean: 75.7

Average rainfall: 3.36"

Far from the cruelest, April is the kindest month to South Florida orchid growers. The weather in April is definitely settled into warm, even deliciously hot, with passing cold fronts only adding the delight of a pleasant change in temperature. The clean, bright days brimming with abundant sunlight and the low relative humidity create the high drying potential that orchids love. Now we can get our orchids off to a great start on the growing season by practicing our very best watering skills under ideal conditions. Water heavily when you water and allow the plants to dry thoroughly before watering heavily again. Drying 'hard' in the Spring will produce benefits all season. We want to get our plants well launched while leaving all the fungi high and dry.

The new shoots of Oncidinae, grammatophyllums and dendrobiums are quite cup-like; care must be taken that water does not stand too long in these immature growths. Water these types very thoroughly with two or three applications of water spaced 10-15 minutes apart. Water should run freely through the pot on each application. Saturated thoroughly in this fashion the plants will need only weekly watering. Even more care should be taken with the soft plicate leafed genera like *Catasetum*, *Mormodes*, *Cycnoches*, *Gongora*, *Calanthe* and *Thunia*. The new growths of this type are rolled together (the fancy word is convolute) like a collapsible drinking cup. These should be grown in water retentive media that should be saturated at each watering to permit the developing roots to have abundant water but allow the vulnerable new growth extra time to dry. Feel the weight of a pot when you have finished watering. Be sure it is heavy with water. If it's not water one more time. With plants properly spaced, good drying should not be difficult in the hot dry air of April. But do be careful to water early enough in the day to allow the tender new growth to thoroughly dry by twilight.

With vandaceous orchids grown in slatted baskets, most growers find that they dry altogether too well in April. *Vandas* can be watered almost every morning in April. Indeed, a second light watering or misting in mid-afternoon in April and early May is often beneficial provided the crowns and leaf axils of the plants have time to dry completely by nightfall. Another strategy under high drying conditions is to bend the rules, at least occasionally, and water heavily in mid to late morning. Late waterings on weekend mornings (you didn't want to get up early any way) provide relief for plants that are more stressed on week days with their owners absent. Very occasionally, one needs to break the rules absolutely and water thoroughly (not just mist) in the mid to late afternoon so the plants can slowly absorb the water across the cool hours of the night. This is the season that one must be sure that *Vanda* roots have turned overall dark green when we have finished watering. Two applications of water to the point of runoff spaced several minutes apart should accomplish the required color change from white to totally green. Saturated roots are absolutely necessary to provide the plants the moisture the plants need to withstand the heat and dry air typical of April. Sometimes, particularly at this season, the roots will not change color even after the second or third application of water. This lack of response to water is because the roots have become so dry that they are repelling rather than absorbing water. They are behaving like a cork in a wine bottle. The grower must exert special effort to re-saturate the roots. Often this will require 4 or 5 waterings to the point of run-off spaced 15 minutes apart. Once the roots have been changed to the healthy overall green, normal applications of water should bring them around in future.

With increased heat and light and the onset of growth, fertilizer becomes more crucially important to the plants. Balanced time release pellets (13-13-13) can still be applied to potted plants provided the duration is 180 days or less. Most time release fertilizer breaks down faster under South Florida conditions and should be exhausted by October when we will want our plants to slow down. The brand marketed at retail as "Dynamite" is generally considered by professionals as superior in reliability to other types. In April, 15-5-15 can be applied to most genera at the rate of 2 tsp. per gal every two weeks. *Vandas*, *ascocendas*, *aerides*, et. al. will benefit from a full tablespoon of 15-5-15 weekly during this high energy period. One can also apply high phosphorus 'Bloom Booster' fertilizer once or twice at this time to stimulate them to flower for Mothers' Day or failing that to win those trophies and A.O.S. awards at the Redland International Orchid Festival the next weekend. High phosphorus (we use Millers' Solugrow 8-48-12) also stimulates root action and is important in getting all genera off to a good start on the growing season. This is one of the few times that high phosphorus is perhaps beneficial. During the rest of the year it is to be avoided particularly with our alkaline water. Current science recommends fertilizers lower in nitrogen, much lower in phosphorus and higher in potassium, magnesium and calcium. Peter's Excel 15-5-15 is now the standard for year round use.

The warmth of April, alas, stimulates the growth of bugs as well as plants. Both thrips and mites thrive in the dry heat of April. Liquid dishwashing soap (at 2 oz per gal) will control both but be mindful that soap should not be

applied to plants that are suffering from drought stress. Be sure that your plants are well hydrated before you apply soap. Water them extra hard the day before. To be effective soap must be used profusely. The plants should be washed in the solution to the point of wetting every nook and cranny of both the plant and its container. Only such thorough treatment can reach the reclusive thrips and be sure to touch all of the ever prolific mites. A second treatment at 7-10 days is necessary to control mites and a miticide such as Kelthane might be advised. Orthene which is the insecticide of choice for thrips (because of its residual action) is compatible with many miticides. Check with your county agent if in doubt.

April is the classic month to catch up with all the re-potting which you meant to do across the winter. New roots form fast in April; don't rot them off by over-potting or break them off by allowing the plant to wiggle in the pot. Tie them up: tie them down!

April is a month for great moral decisions. When turning on the air conditioner for the first time, consider how much better an orchid grower you would be if you set the thermostat 2 or 3 degrees higher. You will find that you spend more time with your plants when you are accustomed to slightly higher temperatures and it is the master's shadow that makes the plants grow. Besides spending more time enjoying your orchids, when the FPL bill arrives, you can celebrate with some splendid additions to your collection.

April is a great month for naturalizing orchids in the garden. Perhaps it's time to think of new homes for some of our burgeoning collection.

### Tasks for April

- Full speed ahead with repotting
  - Water heavily and well
  - Don't forget to fertilize
  - Spray for mites and thrips
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### Editors Notes:

A big thanks to Joe Bryson. Always an interesting speaker, Joe never fails to hold your attention. Thanks Joe.

Our show is almost here. All sponsorships for awards have been taken. Thank you all for your eagerness to support the show. For those of you who have volunteered THANK YOU! Those of you who have not yet, you still have time, even if you just show up at the park for setup, teardown, or during the show to help. We appreciate all of you who give of your time. Setup will begin at 8:00 am on Friday and teardown will be at the close of the show at 5:00 pm on Sunday. Things are shaping up really well, so it should be a wonderful show again this year. Even if you can't help, come down to support our vendors!

Our next regular meeting will be on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017 @ 7:00 pm. However, the May meeting will not be our regular meeting, but our picnic. It will be held on May 13<sup>th</sup>, in Riverside Park. All Members are invited. It will not be under the trees where we hold our show, but next to the bridge where Riverside Cafe and the fire department are located. The picnic will be from around 11:00 am, until we're all done socializing. Be sure to bring your own chair, and a side dish or dessert. The Society will provide the meats, and condiments, as well as non alcoholic drinks. And it's free.

Upcoming Orchid Shows:

**April 15-16, 2017 Flamingo Gardens Orchid and Bromeliad show. [3750 S Flamingo Rd, Davie, FL 33330](#)**

**April 21 - 23, 2017 Pan American Orchid Society Show, R.F. Orchids, Inc., 28100 SW, 182 Ave., Homestead, FL**

**April 22-23 Vero Beach Orchid Society at Riverside Park in Vero Beach.**

**April 22-23 Greenthumb Festival 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Walter Fuller Rec. Center, 7891 26th Ave. N., St. Petersburg FL. Free Parking and Free admission. Largest Garden event in Florida over 200 vendors occupying 300 vendor booths. <http://www.stpeteparksrec.org/greenthumb/>**

**April 29-30 Mounts Botanical Gardens Spring Plant Sale 559 North Military Trail West Palm Beach, FL 33415 Sat 9-4 Sun 9-3**

**May 5-7, 2017 Platinum Coast Orchid Show**

Each current member who has not yet picked up their name badges should do so at this meeting.  
Here are some pictures that were taken of the Martin County show:



Before



After

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**VERO BEACH ORCHID SOCIETY OFFICERS**

President – John Odom  
Vice President – Sherry Cauley  
Secretary – Joan Kaser  
Treasurer – Addison Marvin

**Board of Directors**  
Doug Mew  
Howard Kramer  
Pat Mills

**Committees**  
Membership –  
Hospitality – Joyce Jackman  
Sunshine – Louise Martin

Show Chairman – Carol Marvin  
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VBOS Website: [www.verobeachorchidsociety.org](http://www.verobeachorchidsociety.org)

DUES FOR 2017:    SINGLE MEMBER DUES \$15.00                      FAMILY DUES: \$20.00

**OUR NEXT REGULAR MEETING WILL BE APRIL 20TH, AT 7:00 PM AT THE GARDEN CLUB OF INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, 2526 17TH AVENUE VERO BEACH, FLORIDA 32960. THE MEETING WILL START AT 7:00 PM**