



Central Illinois Orchid Society Newsletter

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In this Issue

- From the president
- Next meeting
- Events in the area
- AOS
- Notes and tips
- Orchids of the month
- Cyripediums for sale

Contact us at:

www.ciorchidsociety.org

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Central Illinois Orchid Society Newsletter is published monthly. Subscription is through membership in the Society.

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

CIOS Officers for 2017

- Joanne Miller, President
- Linda Bailey, Vice Pres. /Secretary
- Terry Moore and Linda Bial, Show & Sale co-chairs
- Mark Williams, Treasurer
- Mitzi Williams, Editor, Newsletter & Webpage

From the President:

Happy Spring! I hope you are enjoying the flowering trees, the crocus, daffodils, tulips, robins and all the other signs of spring! I sure am!

Did you know that April 16 is the National Orchid Day? Wikipedia notes that Orchidaceae and Asteraceae (Asters, Daisy & Sunflower family) are the two largest families of flowering plants, with between 21,950 and 26,049 currently accepted species. That's something to celebrate! The creators of National Orchid Day, Mike and Faith Young loved volunteering at an orchid reserve in Mexico in 2010 and the experience was so rewarding that they named their daughter "Orchid Faith" when she was born. Unfortunately their baby died during labor, and since then, they have been trying to find ways to honor her short life.

Since they owned some honeybee hives, they decided to start a campaign offering pre-orders of the backyard honey (The Humble Bumbles Honey) for sale with the goal of funding this new idea of promoting National Orchid Day, dedicated to Orchids and the beautiful life they lost. They now care for and spread awareness about orchids and plan to do so for the rest of their lives. They hope to keep the memory of their little daughter alive by doing this and also hope that orchids will be appreciated a little bit more. In 2015 Mike had a Cattleya orchid be designated and named the "Radiant Faith" orchid through Chadwick and Sons Orchids, Inc. It has been officially registered and recognized by the International Orchid Register of the Royal Horticultural Society in England. Information on the Radiant Faith Orchid can be found on line. They also have created an official website: www.nationalorchidday.com. On this website they talk about throwing an orchid-themed garden party, baking and decorating delectable orchid treats, making your own orchid vase, sharing the joy of orchids, and enjoying a cup of vanilla tea. The vanilla bean comes from the *Vanilla planifolia*, an orchid species native to Mexico. Some of our members have this orchid. You can also enjoy orchid tea made from wild, edible orchids!

Well, have fun learning more about the fascinating world of orchids. And if you try any of these ideas, be sure to let us know at the next meeting.



Happy Growing

Joanne Miller, CIOS President

Next meeting:

- Our next meeting is on Monday, April 10, at 6:30 p.m. at Hessel Park Church. Paul Wilson will give us a talk about his experience in attending the 14th World Orchid Conference, held in Glasgow, Scotland, and also add his visit to Eric Young Orchid Foundation in Jersey, Channel Island. Please also bring your blooming orchids for Show and Tell.
 - There is no meeting on May 8, but we are joining the sale hosted by the Grand Prairie Friends on May 13 from 8 am to 1 pm at Lincoln Square Mall in Urbana. Joanne Miller and Mitzi Williams will be in charge of this sale, which will include both tropical and native orchids shown on page 4. As usual, we will need volunteers. If you can help, please contact Mitzi.
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Events in the area

- April 8-9, 2017 University of Illinois Plant Biology Conservatory and Greenhouses: Plant sale. Includes orchids, herbs, caladium, succulents and cacti, perennial and native plants, and miniature plants for terrarium.
 - April 22 - 23, 2017 Central Indiana Orchid Society Spring Show, at the Garfield Park Conservatory, 2505 Conservatory Drive, Indianapolis, IN.
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American Orchid Society

The AOS website has a chock full of very useful information. There are many pages that are open to the non-members, such as Beginner's Newsletter, Orchid Question and Answer (Leaf Tip Dieback, Divide or Repot, etc.,), Culture Sheets, Video Library, etc. etc. etc. Some of the pages are for members only, but the majority of information is open to non-members. Check it out at AOS.ORG.

Notes and tips:

- A new book, Orchids: the success of beautiful cheats, a life-size guide to six-hundred species from around the world, authored by Mark Chase, Maarten Christenhusz, and Tom Mirenda. Ivy Press, UK or University of Chicago Press for the U.S., 2017. 656 p. 2400 color plates; 7" x 10-1/2" Cloth \$55.00 ISBN: 9780226224527; E-book \$33.00. ISBN: 9780226224664

It is described as "a luscious coffee-table tome" by Nature, and " a superb production, reminding us of the astonishing diversity of these plants" by Times Literary Supplement.

Orchid of the month: Tolumnia

Tolumnia (pronounced **tuh-LUM-nee-ah**), have gained popularity in recent years for their relatively easy care, showy flowers, and compactness of the plant itself. Often planted in the tiniest pot, Tolumnia reminds us of a circus elephant on a ball. Those plants (about 6 inches tall at maturity) are rather top heavy, especially in flower, and are often placed in another larger pot to prevent toppling over. The flowers range in

colors from white to yellow, orange, red, pink, and purple. In most cases, the flowers are speckled or splashed with contrasting colors. For the orchid hobbyists with very limited spaces, this is the plant to have.

Tolumnia is a sub-tribe of Oncidiinae, and used to be called "Equitant Oncidium" because the leaves overlap at the base, but was separated into its own genus name in 1986. A large group of this orchid is native to the Caribbean islands, but some are from Mexico, South and Central America.

Being an epiphyte, Tolumnias like to be grown with their roots hanging out in the air. They do best in mid to warm temperatures (60°F to 85°F), with humidity of about 50% with good air circulation. To meet its needs for fast water drainage, it is often grown on mounts, but if potting is necessary, use the smallest possible clay pot with large pieces of potting media to facilitate fast draining and drying.

We are lucky to have Don McClure and Linda Bial among us because they have a lot of experience growing them, and can advise you on these little giants. Some of the images below are from Linda Bial's collection.



Above left: Tul. #195. Above right: Tul. Genting Orange; Below left: Tul. (Aleka 'Peaches' X Orchidom Bulls Eye).



Above center: Tul. silvestre; Far right: Tul. variegata var. scandens. Images courtesy of Orchids Limited.

Native orchids for your garden:

Are you interested in growing native orchids in your garden? Then our Society has several potted *Cypripediums* (lady slipper orchids) for sale for \$50/pot. Each pot has at least 2 noses (flowering growths) but many have more than 2 as shown in the image below. These plants were potted on March 1, and have been outside for about 2 weeks. Some are showing the buds already! The price may seem high, but it is half of what is sold by commercial growers whose prices are often equal or higher for a bare root plant with just one (1) nose (or growth). If you have a partially shaded spot that drains well, then you can grow these native lady slipper orchids. If you have a woodland garden, *Cypripediums* would be a great addition because they bloom in late May to June (yellow) and late June (pink).

We have two types: tall yellow lady slipper orchid (*Cypripedium parviflorum* var. *pubescense*) and showy lady slipper orchid which has white and pink flowers (*Cypripedium reginae*).

Both types of orchids require partial sun (4-5 hours of morning and late afternoon sun preferred), and well drained neutral soil with sand and loam in the mix. The yellow lady slippers are a bit easier to grow in our area than the showy lady slippers because the latter requires cooler and wetter surroundings, which may be difficult to create in some back yards. To provide good drainage, some growers plant them in raised beds.

These plants will be at the May sale at Lincoln Square Mall, but if you are interested in obtaining a pot beforehand, please contact Mitzi.



The yellow lady slippers shown above center are in Mitzi's garden and have bloomed and multiplied the last 3 years. The pink lady slipper is in its first year in the ground so is yet to bloom this year. The flower image shown above is from Vermont Lady Slipper Company's catalog.