

Central Illinois Orchid Society Newsletter

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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 2015

Joanne Miller, President

Bettina Francis, Vice Pres. /Secretary

Mark Williams, Treasurer

Mitzi Williams, Editor, Newsletter & Webpage content.

From the President: My first Orchid

Growing orchids is an awesome hobby to have. It takes time and patience but so rewarding! And when they re-bloom for the 2nd time, you know you must be doing something right.

I have loved orchids since my mother visited Hawaii and sent me a picture of the lei she received when she landed on Oahu. I never thought about growing them back then, but they were not so prevalent 40 years ago. One day, years later, I saw a Phalaenopsis on my friend's kitchen island and she told me it was a flower that would last for 3 months. I couldn't believe it! In another 10 years I was fortunate to visit Hawaii for myself. I saw them everywhere - on the hotel counters, in the airport, in restaurants, and even wild in the landscape. When I came home I started seeing them in the plant stores here in Champaign.

I purchased my first Phal one cool day in November and was worried I wouldn't get it home without freezing it to death. But it made it and bloomed for about a month until the flowers fell off. The next year a friend took me out for a birthday dinner and gave me an orchid for a birthday present. I was so thrilled, but still didn't know much about orchid growing.

About 4 years ago I happened to see the Central Illinois Orchid Society Show advertised at the Champaign Public Library, and decided to go see the show. I was blown over with excitement, took pictures and picked up all the culture care flyers I could see. This piqued my interest, thinking I could get those 2 Phals of mine to re-bloom, if I read the instructions. And low and behold, soon one started to send up a spike! Now I was hooked and decided it was time to join the Orchid Society. I have met a wonderful group of orchid hobbyists and enthusiasts and each meeting I have enjoyed learning more about different kinds of orchids. I am certainly glad I bought that first orchid!

Welcome to our new members, Sharon Bailey and Rosemary Trippe. We are so glad to have you! And welcome back to Shyamala Balgopal to our group.

Joanne Miller
CIOS President

Next meeting:

- May is a busy month for our Society. Not only have we managed to have another successful sale a few weekends ago, we will take a field trip to Hill Top Orchids in Cloverdale, Indiana on Saturday, May 23. The owners, Dick and Sandy Wells have operated Hill Top Orchids for over 30 years, and produced countless award winning hybrids. Dick is an AOS judge as well as an interesting and passionate speaker. His greenhouses were given the designation of the cleanest in all of Indiana.
- Our next regular meeting will be a members only "potting party" held on **Monday, June 8, at 6:30**, our normal meeting night. Please note the location change: **Mark & Mitzi Williams house, 3208 S. First Street, Champaign, IL**. Please bring your orchid that needs repotting. The Society will provide enough bark mix for one medium size pot. If you need a new pot, the Society has free pots of both clay and plastic (about 4 inch), though supply is limited. Disposable gloves and alcohol swabs will be provided as well.

If you have more than one orchid that you want to repot, please bring potting mix as well as any pot(s) you may need. The Society will also provide insecticide sprays (Seven and Marathion), but if you have a preference, you may want to bring your own.

Please bring your own scissors or pruning tool so we can avoid cross contamination. If you'd like to buy a bag of bark, we will have that on hand. If you don't have an orchid that needs repotting, please just come and enjoy the social atmosphere, along with refreshments and an orchid raffle. As usual, a show and tell of blooming orchids would be welcome. Hope to see you there!

Though most of us can be under a covered pergola, everyone is encouraged to do a little NO-rain dance for this day! If any questions about this event, contact Mitzi.

- Mark your calendar for our annual picnic on **Sunday, July 12, 4pm**. Details forthcoming.

Events in the area:

As we head into summer, orchid shows and events are dwindling in number. This is a good time to visit nurseries to find that ONE SPECIAL plant you have been wanting to add to your collection. Also, as you plan your vacations and visits to family and friends for the coming year, look for the shows that may be held in the area where you will be visiting, and plan your trip with that in mind.

Sale at Lincoln Square:

The sale on May 9th at Lincoln Square was a huge success. We were one of the six botanical groups that participated in the sale, which was spearheaded by the Grand Prairie Friends and the C-U Herb Society. We had almost 40 plants, including several pots of Cypripediums (yellow and pink lady slipper orchids) and a pot of Chinese ground orchid. As you might have guessed, we sold out within a few hours! Thanks to all the officers and Tammy Lambert for helping with the sale. Also, thanks to the members who showed up to say hi, and even buy some orchids! Images below: the sale tables are set up and ready to open!



Notes and tips:

- Some people ask, if the orchids spend summers outside, how to avoid insects and other critters that might harm the orchids, or worse yet, might come into the house when the plants are brought inside in the fall. A few things can be done to keep the bugs and other critters at bay, if not totally prevent them:

- ◇ Keep them off the ground and raised. This is very important if you have rabbits around--they will eat your plants down to the core.

- ◇ Provide some air space under the bottom of the pot. This not only helps the plant, but prevents some of the crawling critters such as centipedes from entering the pot.

- ◇ Spray the plants, top and underneath with insecticides about once a month, and several times for a few weeks just before they are to come inside.

- ◇ Dip the pot in a bucket of insecticide a few days before bringing them inside to get rid of whatever is in the potting mix.

- ◇ Insecticides such as Sevin and Marathion, properly mixed as directed, can be effectively used for orchids. Systemic insecticides such as Bayer 3 in 1 Insect, Disease, and Mite Control has been used by some folks, but others seem to be concerned about their damage to the buds.

Why all this fuss, and is it worth it, you ask? Unless you have a green house and can provide ideal light, humidity, and air movement, the answer is an emphatic "Yes." You will be rewarded by a healthy, robust plant whose bloom will make you proud.

Orchid of the month : Angraecoids

By Terry Moore



Author with a hybrid Ang. Emily
(upside down)

Angraecoid is the informal name of several varieties of orchids from the vandaceous subtribes of orchids, Angraecinae and Aerangidinae (This just means that the term "angraecoid" includes two subdivisions of the much larger family of orchids.) ie, Angraecum, Aerangis and Aeranthes being another, although there are several other species that fall under the named angraecoid. There are approximately 700 angraecoid orchid species. These vary greatly in plant size, flower size, growth requirements, natural habitat and distribution. The majority of angraecoids are found on the African continent, Madagascar and nearby islands. There are other species scattered elsewhere.

Angraecoid orchids are much prized for their sparkling flowers, distinctive growth habit, and floriferous nature. Most angraecoid orchids have white, star-shaped flowers. In addition to white, the flowers can be varying shades of green, brown, orange or pink. The flowers also have a long, tubular corolla structure--also known as a nectary or spur.

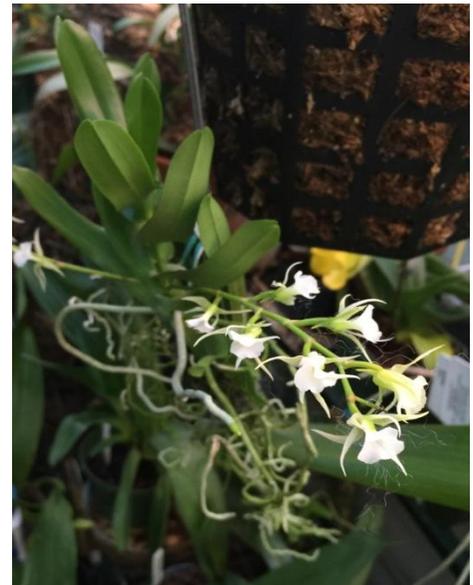
Nearly all species are fragrant in the evening or nighttime hours. The fragrance is strong and sweet--easily detectable by a human nose. Many angraecoids provide nectar to pollinators, but in such a way that the pollinator must press its body against the pollinia in order to drain the last drop.



Aerangis modesta



Jumellea arborescens



Oeoniella polystachys

Most angraecoids are pollinated by moths. Flowers with long nectaries are pollinated by a select group of long-tongued hawk moths. The moths themselves are generalist foragers, but many of the orchids have specialized pollination systems that appeal to a single species of pollinators. The correlation between the long flower nectaries and the long-tongued moths has fascinated biologists for more than a century.

The plants themselves are primarily epiphytic, meaning they grow attached to trees and shrubs. (The orchids are not parasitic.) A number of angraecoids are lithophytes (grow on rocks) or terrestrial (grow in the soil). In the wild, these orchids can be found in rain forests, on mountain tops and in arid lowlands. They are a remarkable group of plants producing beautiful flowers.



Aerangis ellisii



Aeranthes arachnitis



Angraecum longiscott

The most important point to bear in mind, as in the cultivation of any special group of plants, is that the three essentials of culture - light, humidity, and temperature should be in correct balance with each other. A good balance between the different features is the key to success and flowering.

Most angraecoids orchids come from tropical regions and almost all are shade loving. In my south facing greenhouse I have my angraecoids mostly in shade during the heat of summer and move them to spot with a bit more sun in winter when the days are shorter.

Like most orchids, these plants need a free flow of air over their roots, hence most resent repotting (especially if the plant is mature and has flowered) and will tolerate it only when the media used is loose and permits passage of air up through the pot. So most *Aerangis* but not all prefer to be mounted. *Angraecum* species can be potted or mounted but the larger species, *superbum*, *longicalcar*, *comorensis* and *giryamae* are too large and it's not practical for them to be mounted. *Angraecum* species also can take higher levels of light and can stand considerable chilling and near frost temperatures without harm.

Aeranthes species prefer potting, usually in finer mixes, like it moist and a little less light. Again most mounted angraecoids will need more frequent watering, in summer usually several times daily, even up to 4 to 5 times - depending on the humidity. Few will prosper on a once or twice a week watering schedule.

I fertilize my angraecoids much like I do the rest of my orchids in my collection tapering back on fertilizer after the period of active growth stops which generally is around the beginning of fall and then after fall and then after flowering I give them a slight break from watering usually 10-14 days rest or until I see new growth. □

(Editor's note: Many thanks to Terry for this informative contribution!)