



# Vero Beach Orchid Society



April 2016

## April Event

Our April meeting will be all about the Show.

While many of you are familiar with the preparations and activities that go into putting on an orchid show, the society gets new members who may not be familiar with all the work and activities that take place. I thought I would write a few things about the show for the newsletter in case you've missed something at our meetings or are new to orchid shows. As usual, our show will be held in Riverside Park in Vero Beach.

The most important thing is that we make the show a fun-filled society event where we all enjoy the surroundings and the journey that takes us there. For those that are new to orchid shows or those old-timers that want additional insight into where they can help out at the show, here's a list:

1. If you find yourself at the show with nothing to do, ask the show chair what needs to be done
2. Set up for the show begins Friday at 8:00 A.M. By afternoon, everything is in full swing with societies and vendors putting in their exhibits and vendors setting up their sales tables.
3. Many vendors appreciate help in bringing plants in from their truck to their vendor sales area and some appreciate help with unpacking orchids that were shipped. Don't hesitate to ask if they'd like your help.
4. If you do some orchid shopping on Friday, please be mindful that vendors are busy putting in their orchid exhibits and setting up their vendor space. They may not have the extra time to talk to you in detail about an orchid. What you can do is put the orchid aside with your name on and talk the vendor later in the day when they are finished with their exhibit and vendor space. Also if you find a plant you'd like and the vendor is gone for the day, just put your name on it and pay for and pick it up on Saturday.
5. If you are entering orchids in the show, please try to bring them by 10:00 A.M. on Friday. There is an entry process for orchids, which you need to follow. If you are not familiar with entering an orchid, other society members will be around to help you. We will also have entry sheets and necessary information available for you.
6. Please remember to sign up for specific items that are needed for hospitality. A sign-up sheet is available at the society's monthly meetings. You also can call the Hospitality ChairPerson. Remember that we do not have access to the kitchen. We will not be able to serve hot dishes unless you bring some

warming device. Please plan accordingly.

7. There are quite a few things that you can do on Set Up Day. They include:

- help with hospitality,
- help register orchids,
- help vendors bring in orchids, and
- run errands.

8. On Saturday morning, ribbon judging starts at 9 a.m. If you're a clerk, please be at the Judges Tent by 8:00 a.m. In the afternoon, your help may be needed to put the awards with the correct plants.

9. If you'd like to be a clerk to help with the judging, just ask the Show ChairPerson to direct you to the registrar. Clerking is a great way to find out what make up an award winning orchid, and how the judges decide amongst all the beautiful specimens.

Clerks help locate the orchids on the list for a specific class(es) of orchids. They listen to the judges discuss which they deem worthy of an award or ribbon, and write the information about the awarded plant on the back label of the ribbon. They ask one of the judges to initial the back label and put the ribbon on the plant.

10. If you find yourself at the show on Saturday or Sunday with nothing to do, please help out at our societies' tables, raffle tent, or with show tent security. You can talk to newcomers about the American Orchid Society, Orchid Digest, the Vero Beach Orchid Society, talk about orchids, and more.

10. Show breakdown starts on Sunday, at 5 P.M. The park is clean in about 1 hour or less. We understand it's not a glamorous part of the show, but it must be done. Please help out since clean up goes faster with a lot of people helping.

And one last thing, just know that the show committee appreciates your help at the show.

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## **VERO BEACH ORCHID SOCIETY BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

### **March 7, 2016**

The VBOs meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm, March 7th at the Garden Club. Members present were Judy Wagner, Carolyn Greene, Bob Greene, Ronnie Meeks, Doug Mew and Sherry Cauley, Addison Marvin.

The January board meeting minutes were read, approved by Carolyn, then Judy and passed.

February meeting minutes approved by Carolyn, then Ronnie and passed.

Treasurer's report was read, approved.

All minutes and treasurer's reports are kept by the Secretary, and are available for review each monthly meeting.

#### Old business-

1. Doug gave an update of progress for the upcoming show. All the vendors have replied and one additional application sent out yesterday. We have 10 orchids vendors and a total of 17 vendors. Awards have been ordered and Diane O'Neil and Louise Martin are planning the raffle tent. Carolyn and Sherry are organizing plant registration duties.
2. Plants for member potting and growing contest have been chosen and ordered for the March meeting. Funds of \$150 approved for purchase of plants. We have enough supplies from the previous growing contest to supply what is needed for this event. Judy Wagner is donating small pots for the plants to be potted in. Approved by Ronnie and Carolyn. Passed.
3. Addison and Doug are organizing the renewal of the VBOS mailbox.
4. Letter to the bank is ready and Judy and Addison to make an appointment at bank to sign all the needed forms for Judy and Addison to write checks for the society this year.

#### New Business-

1. We have received the sad news that Marilyn Row our Secretary is very ill and not expected to recover. Sherry has contacted the family to alert them that Marilyn has the society records. Judy will ask for a new volunteer for the position of secretary at our next meeting.
2. Bob asked for approval to spend \$10 on a microphone that can be used during our speakers presentations. Approved by Doug and Sherry. Passed.
3. Judy is going to ask the members to please silence or turn off all cellphones before meeting starts. Interruptions are becoming to frequent.
4. Because very little business is done for the society during the summer, it is being considered that no executive board meeting will be held during the months of July and August. Business for the summer will be reviewed at the June meeting. The board will only meet during those months if a need is determined.
5. Sherry received and excepted an invitation for the society to attend Customer Appreciation Day at Busy Bee. This included meeting the public and answering questions that customers may have about orchid growing. We will offer information about the society and membership.

The meeting was called to a close at 8:00 pm by Doug and Ronnie. Approved by all present.

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**April 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*, *Cynoches*, *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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### EDITOR'S NOTE

Our big event of the year is coming up in only 2 weeks. Since putting on the show requires a lot of different work, we'll need a bunch of different people to help us. Thank you to all who have already volunteered to do things for our show.

Please be thinking of how you'd like to help to make our show a big success. There will be people needed to work on setup activities, the raffle tent, setting up the tablecloths in the show tent, helping provide goodies for hospitality on setup day, helping our visitors, if anybody needs it, working with the judges (this is an interesting and educational job), security in the display tent during the day, and finally teardown on Sunday. This may not be all the jobs, but I'm sure that's most of them. We don't expect anybody to spend the entire time working the show, but a few hours from all of us will make a light load on everybody.

Also, we will be having the mini-niches on display also. Even if you don't have an orchid to enter into the regular judging, this is a great way to participate. These are fun little projects for displaying small flower arrangements of orchids. We will be passing around the sign up sheet at the meeting for people who want to reserve a box for their display.

And of course, don't forget we all need to increase our collection of beauties. We have such great vendors all of whom put their hearts into providing beautiful, healthy plants for us to acquire for our collections. This year we'll have a couple new vendors, some orchids, some other wares.

So many of our members have already pledged to sponsor awards for the show that there are none left. THANK YOU ALL!

Next, we still are in need some volunteers for the Society, in general. We need a Refreshments Volunteers, and a Membership committee or person. None of the jobs in the society are difficult or very time consuming unless you're on the board. Even then, there's not that much extra time that you need to devote.

The **refreshments** committee duties are to arrange for others in the society to bring snacks to the meetings. As the chairperson or committee member you can solicit snack donations any way that works for you. In the past, we have passed around a sheet on a clipboard and asked people to sign up for a particular month. As chairperson or committee member, you'll make coffee for the meeting and clean up the leftovers, wipe down the counter, and take out the trash.

**Membership** committee consists of participating in recruitment new members, always with other society members, into the society. We do have some outside activities where applications for membership are handed out such as GardenFest and the Busy Bee Customer Appreciation day. At any speaking events to teach about orchids and their care, we make sure there are applications available to be distributed. Once you have an application, you'll collect their dues, and send the form and the monies to the treasurer. The newsletter editor makes the changes and additions to the society roster, so only the new members' information needs to be sent to the editor. An email will work for the editor, but the money and the application either need to be sent, or can be given to the treasurer at a meeting.

Joan Kaser has been generous enough to volunteer as our temporary secretary. Thank you so much Joan!

I will mention the May event here since some of you may not have your May Newsletter before our picnic. We will be holding our picnic on May 7<sup>th</sup> at Riverside Park, but not under the oaks where the show is held. We will be beside the bridge, down where the fire department and restaurant buildings are. There is no cost for the picnic, but you're requested to bring a side dish or dessert to go with the meat and liquid refreshments that will be provided. The picnic starts at 11:00 am, just be sure to bring a chair of some kind. It's a fun time and the Society's way of paying back to the members yet again.

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**VERO BEACH ORCHID SOCIETY OFFICERS**

President – Judy Wagner	<b>Board of Directors</b>	<b>Committees</b>
Vice President – Bob Greene	Ronnie Meeks	Membership –
Secretary – Joan Kaser	Doug Mew	Hospitality –
Treasurer – Addison Marvin	Sherry Cauley	Sunshine – Louise Martin
Show Chairman – Doug Mew	Newsletter Editor – Carolyn Greene	
Vero Beach Orchid Society	Newsletter email: vbosnewsletter@hotmail.com	
P.O. Box 543		
Vero Beach, FL 32961	VBOS Website: <a href="http://www.verobeachorchidsociety.org">www.verobeachorchidsociety.org</a>	

DUES FOR 2016:    SINGLE MEMBER DUES \$15.00                      FAMILY DUES: \$20.00

THIS MONTH REGULAR MEETING WILL BE APRIL 21TH, 2016, AT  
GARDEN CLUB OF INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, 2526 17TH AVENUE VERO BEACH, FLORIDA  
32960. THE MEETING WILL START AT 7:00 PM