



Central Illinois Orchid Society Newsletter

July - August 2016

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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 2016

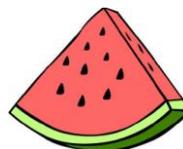
- Joanne Miller, President
- Linda Bailey, Vice Pres. /Secretary
- Terry Moore and Linda Bial, Show & Sale co-chairs
- Mark Williams, Treasurer
- Mitzi Williams, Editor, Newsletter & Webpage

From the President:

Happy July-August! Hope you are all enjoying your summer days. It certainly is in full swing, with the temperatures most days in the 90's! Orchids love being outdoors, even for an occasional bath on a rainy day, but sometimes you need to water them yourself instead of letting the frequent rains do it. It seems like it's either a downpour and too much rain, or just humidity and not enough rain! Whichever it is, protect your orchids from excess. You may have either too much moisture or too much heat. Protect them from too much sun also, or they will sunburn in the summer sun. They do however, like the variance of temperatures on those days that there is a 15 degree difference between day and night. The fresh air, light, and evening dew will revive plants that are forlorn after a long winter indoors. Putting them outdoors for two or three months is probably the best thing you can do for them. That time outdoors can make the difference between a plant that just survives and a plant that thrives indoors for the rest of the year.

I'd like to share some information about Catasetums to all of you who are trying to grow them this summer. This information is from Fred Clarke at Sunset Valley Orchids who is an expert on growing them. "This is the time when the plants are rapidly developing their new pseudobulbs. There is a surprising amount of growth that occurs in these summer months, in which the plants will double their size. Due to this, the plants require constant moisture and regular fertilization. In most cases, irrigation will be needed 2 or 3 times a week. A balanced fertilizer at full strength is suitable for this rapid growth. This is the time when the fruits of your labor will begin to pay off as the flowering season is underway." I see my plant has about a 2 ½ inch spike right now and I can't wait to see the flowers! I will certainly post a picture on CIOS Facebook page when it blooms!

Happy Growing!
Joanne Miller, CIOS President



Next meeting:

- Our next meeting is on Monday, September 12 at 6:30 p.m. at Hessel Park Church. Bettina Francis and Cindy Westfall will give a presentation on growing orchids under light. Orchids benefit from some artificial lighting, especially during the month of December through February, but there are many different options that may be considered for your specific growing area. This presentation will provide much needed practical information that can be applied to specific situations. If you have blooming plants, please bring them for show and tell. This meeting is open to non-members.
 - Mark your calendar for October 10, the member orchid sale day. If you have divisions that you want to donate to the society for this sale, please let Joanne know. Details will be provided in the next issue of the newsletter.
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Events in the area:

- Aug. 27, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Prairie State Orchid Society Annual Speaker's Day Seminar, Rochester Public Library, Rochester, IL. The speaker this year is Peter Lin, owner of Diamond Orchids. Peter specializes in miniature orchids, both species and hybrids, and has received numerous AOS awards. He will provide a full-day lecture and will bring a diverse selection of plants for sale.

Cost is \$20/person and will include a light continental breakfast and lunch. The registration information will be forthcoming in August. This may be another car pool event for CIOS members. Contact Mitzi if interested.

Notes and tips:

- AOS Webinar:
The American Orchid Society (www.AOS.org) offers webinars (online seminars) featuring well known speakers and great topics about all aspects of orchid culture. Some of them are for members only but many are open to anyone.

Webinars called Greenhouse Chat is an open seminar and answers questions that have been submitted by members. To see the upcoming and recorded webinars go to www.aos.org/orchids/webinars.aspx. You will be asked to register by entering your name and e-mail address, but open and seminars are free.

The webinar aired on July 14, 2016 is particularly interesting and useful as it addresses many common questions such as repotting while in flower, non-blooming orchids, brown sheaths on Cattleyas, wrinkled leaves on Phalaenopsis, etc.

- Recently, AOS created a Face Book page for the representatives of AOS affiliated societies. As CIOS's AOS rep, Mitzi is registered and is getting to know other reps. Regional societies, no matter what size, seem to have similar problems such as member recruitment, program speakers, shows and sales. Many societies seem to have picnics and take a break for a month or two in the summer. Any interesting and useful ideas from this group will be passed on to the CIOS board for discussion.

Orchids of the month 1: Encyclia (en-SIK-lee-ah)

Everyone has his or her favorite orchid genera. If you have not tried one yet, you may quickly find *Encyclia* (abbreviated as E.) and its hybrids to be a great plant to grow. This is a relatively small group of orchids (about 250 species) that comes from the "seasonally dry forests" of tropical America including Mexico, Central America, and northern South America. The plants are small to compact with flowers rarely exceeding 1.5 inches across. (1) Many of the species and hybrids tolerate temperature and moisture fluctuations, so if you are often away, they do not collapse as some of the more needy plants do. The best feature of this genus is that many of them are fragrant, with *E. cordigera* most well known for it. The long lasting flowers appear in late spring to early summer.

E. polybulbon, mentioned below in the feature article about Don McClure, is considered a miniature, though if given a sufficient growing platform, it can become a massive ball.



E. polybulbon



E. cordigera



E. tampensis



E. radiata

1. The illustrated encyclopedia of orchids, ed. by Alec Pridgeon. Portland, OR: Timber Press, 1992.

Member profile: Don McClure

Beginning with this issue, the newsletter will include a new column which features one of the members of our society. Who wouldn't be more suitable for the first column than Don McClure, the member who has been with the society the longest?



As a child, Don was always interested in plants. He recalls helping his father tending to various plants in their sizeable yard. Don's first orchid, was *Epidendrum X obrianeum* which he bought in the late 1970's. Though not very familiar with orchids at that time, he was able to bring this plant to flower after a few years, but lost it. One day in late 1987 at the Champaign Public Library, he spotted an informational display about the Central Illinois Orchid Society. He attended several meetings and subsequently became a member. His orchid "collection" began with *Rhyncostylis gigantea* that he received as a Christmas present from his parents also in the late 1980's. He still has the this plant, and has brought it to the meetings when in bloom! He manages to keep this plant small by cutting back the stem below a few top roots from time to time.

He became interested in miniatures when he visited Oak Hill Gardens in Dundee, Illinois around 1989. He began with *Encyclia polybulbon* and a *Tolumnia* hybrid, which used to be called *Equitant Oncidium*. Oak Hill Gardens, no longer in business now, was the go-to-place for anything unusual. The smaller species suits Don best because he does not have much growing space. He grows most of them under lights (regular fluorescent bulbs) but some also get natural light. Supplemental lighting is needed especially in winter.

As many of the members can attest to, Don has an amazing knowledge of plants and easily rattles off the genus and species names, as well as their general habitats. He says this knowledge comes from many books and orchid magazines that he read over the years. He finds libraries-- Champaign, Urbana, and U. of I.--rich with such materials.

His botanical interest does not end with orchids but extends to Tillandsias, Bromeliads and bonsais. In addition, he grows several different unusual fruiting plants such as Australian beach cherry (*Eugenia reinwardtiana*) and dwarf Barbados cherry (*Malpighia emarginata*). Apparently the cherry-like fruits of both these plants are quite tasty. He would like to get more woody as well as fruiting plants.

Beyond plants, he is interested in architecture, landscaping, applied art and design.



Rhyncostylis gigantea (pink type)



Barbados cherry



Australian beach cherry

Orchids of the month 2: Orchid Mantis

The second feature this month is not an orchid, but an insect called "Orchid Mantis", [Hymenopus coronatus](#), found in the rainforests of S. E. Asia, including Malay. But before you read any further, you must view a video listed below. If not linkable directly, copy and paste it in your browser. It is truly amazing to see this mantis.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QdfGCscTMak>.



In the article entitled "Unraveling the orchid mantis mystery" (www.sciencefriday.com/articles/unraveling-the-orchid-mantis-mystery/) author Julie Leibach states "The juveniles of this insect are white with pale to bright pink colors at various parts of the body [and so] it look like a flower, but there is no actual orchid flower which matches the insect in form. This insect was initially thought to be a carnivorous orchid (James Hingston 1879) turned out not an orchid but a mantis." (<http://theconversation.com/secrets-of-the-orchid-mantis-revealed-it-doesnt-mimic-an-orchid-after-all-36715>)

Editor's note:

It has been a rather long and hot summer. Time seems to stall or fly depending on what is going on, and it is hard to remember when I watered my plants last. Also, kept outside, some plants dry out much faster than when they were inside. So, I mark the date on a calendar when some groups of orchids were watered. Let's hope the temperatures will come down a bit and cooler nights give our plants a relief.

If you come across interesting articles or websites, please pass on that information so I can share it with everyone through the newsletter. Have a great rest of the summer, and see you in September. Click the following link for your musical entertainment. The ad will be over in a few minutes or you can skip it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iu-7DXBiVsA>