



Vero Beach Orchid Society



December 2016

December Meeting

With this being December, there will not be a speaker for our group. It's Christmas Party time at Marsh Landing. As you've read previously, the party will be on the 17th of December and the cut-off for signing up is December 10th. Lots of friend sharing a good meal and a gift at the end, what a great finale to another good year for our society.

Your choices will be Roast Turkey with gravy, Honey Glazed Ham, Herb Roasted Chicken, Fried Catfish. Each entrée will come with two vegetables, and hush puppies. There will be appetizers and salad before the meal and peach cobbler after the meal.

The price will be \$20 per member and \$25 per non member, and the member will receive an orchid at the end of the meal as a Christmas gift from our Society. We will also have a sale of any extra plants left over. Reservations, entrée choices, and payment, must be made by December 10h in order to attend. Our party is a great time to get acquainted with members you've not met before and visit with those you do know. Hope to see you all there.

Here is a map and the instructions to get to Marsh Landing.



Take either Rt 1 or I-95 to Rt 512 West (exit 156 on I-95). From Northbound I-95 you'll turn left onto Rt 512, from Southbound you'll make a right onto Rt 512. From I-95, travel distance will be 3.1 miles on Rt 512. (The sign on the right side picture will be at the corner where you'll turn Right, which is Broadway St.) There is a yellow flashing light there.

The address is 44 N Broadway St, Fellsmere, FL 32948. Marsh Landing is on the Left side of the street about half a block down. Parking is available on the street (both sides allow parking and it is a divided highway.) There is also parking available on the right side as you're facing the building. It's just to the right of the little curio shop.

Vero Beach Orchid Society Board Meeting Minutes
November 7th, 2016

President Judy Wagner called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. Because of a lost key, the board met at Applebees. Board members present were Treasurer Addison Marvin, Secretary Joan Kaser, Newsletter Editor Carolyn Greene, and Board Member Doug Mew.

The minutes of the last meeting were read. It was moved and seconded that the minutes be approved as read, motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Addison Marvin presented the Treasurer's Report for the month of October. Judy moved and Carolyn seconded to accept the report, motion passed.

Old Business: Carolyn had the cards for the Orchid Show in April to present to us for approval, they were very well done. We have 4 applications for the show already. The deposit to the city for the park will not be due until after the first of the year.

We will need plants for the Christmas party.

The speaker for November will be about hydroponics.

Judy moved that we adjourn, Doug seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 9:00.

The next Board meeting will be December 5th.

Respectfully submitted by Joan Kaser, Secretary

December in Your Orchid Collection

V. Arjuna 'Illumined' AM/AOS



December Climate Data

Average high: 77.5 Average low: 62.2 Average mean: 69.9 Average rainfall: 2.18"

December marks the beginning of the serious dry season in South Florida. While this additional dryness provides relief from the autumnal rains that can bring so many fungal problems, December is also the month of shortest day lengths. This contracted period of light, on the contrary, reduces severely the drying potential for our plants. Nature thus both gives and takes away from us in December. We must make sure, therefore, that we do not aid the dark side of the force by improper watering. In December, above all, one must stick strictly to the two cardinal principles of orchid watering: water early in the day so your plants have as many hours as possible to dry, and water heavily when you water, allowing longer intervals between watering to dry plants thoroughly. This practice maximizes the benefit of the drier air of December and minimizes the adverse effect of the shorter day lengths.

When nature has delivered a light overnight or early morning rain as she so often does in December at the leading edge of a cold front, add to her efforts by watering thoroughly that same morning and skip out watering for an extra several days afterward. With this method you can use the general dryness of December to give yourself much of the advantage of a greenhouse in terms of controlling watering. As in all aspects of orchid culture, keen observation is the key to success. In cooler weather your plants need much less water. Moreover cool air even at the same relative humidity strips less water from your plants because cool air has less water holding capability. Always be sure that your plants really need water before you roll out the hose in December. Remember to use at least one of the standard tests for dryness: the finger dug slightly into the media test or the newly sharpened pencil coming dry like a knife from a well cooked custard, or test by hefting a pot that you know the weight of, both wet and dry and be sure that it has attained sufficient lightness. When you are sure they are dry, water them until you are sure they are very wet, then let the drying air of December do its magic to ward off leaf spotting diseases.

Himalayan dendrobiums of the *nobile* and *Callista* (*D. aggregatum*, *chrysotoxum*, etc.) Sections require no additional water (beyond rain) in December. Remember, those of you who water (or, even worse, fertilize) these dendrobiums in December, will be punished by having your flowers taken away in the spring. Some growers, who have the space, isolate these dendrobiums along with other types that want hard drying such as *Catasetum*, *Cycnoches*, *Mormodes*, and *Calanthe*. Another strategy is to hang these plants high or at the edges of the collection reminding oneself to neglect them and also to avoid watering them by mistake. Some growers achieve the same result effect by turning the pots of these genera on their side in November or December, to avoid catching water from whatever source. Plants of some of these genera that have finished flowering can even be removed from their pots and stripped to bare roots in anticipation of re-potting them in new media when they break growth in the spring.

Most sympodial orchids are resting in December and require less fertilizer. Biweekly or even monthly applications of a balanced fertilizer or 15-5-15 are still desirable. Nitrate nitrogen is the most readily absorbed in cooler weather; therefore at least one more application of the potassium nitrate/magnesium sulfate (at 1 tbs. each per gal.) recommended in November is still a good idea. It's good stuff! *Vandas*, *Phalaenopsis* and other monopodial orchids should be fertilized right through the winter although both the amount of fertilizer and the frequency of application can be reduced. Remember reddening of the foliage is not natural, nor is it a response to the cold per se but rather a symptom of nutritional deficiency. The plants are asking for more potassium and magnesium. Give them the groceries.

December can be cold. Frost has occurred in the first week of the month and unforgettably, the coldest temperatures ever recorded in South Florida were registered on December 25,

1989. If you haven't taken some of the precautions outlined in the November Newsletter, get busy! Keep a close eye on the forecasts during this volatile month.

Remember that hard cane dendrobiums of the sections Spathulata and Phalaenantha are the most sensitive of commonly cultivated orchids. They resent temperature much below 60 degrees F. Phalaenopsis are next most sensitive, then vandas. Protect all these genera more carefully.

If you are getting a jump on Spring potting chores by re-potting sympodial orchids that have finished blooming, it is particularly important that you take extra care in securing them in their containers. These plants may not be sending out new roots for several months, enough time for them to be shaken loose from insufficient staking. Passing cold fronts can bring brisk winds in December. When new roots start to form on insufficiently secured plants, wind moves the plant and chafes the new root tips off. Improperly secured plants are never able to root properly and slowly pine away. If you love them you must tie them up, tie them down. This is also especially true of mass produced orchids sold in Home Depot, K Mart etc. The soft, peat based media used to grow these commercially produced plants in the controlled environment of a greenhouse often does not provide sufficient purchase to secure the plants in the rough and tumble of a South Florida orchid collection buffeted by harsh winter winds. You probably should have already re-potted these into more durable medium but until you do, tie 'em up!

Keep those vandas, phalaenopsis and hard cane dendrobiums as warm as you can. Merry Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanza!

Tasks for December

Water judiciously and well

Protect cold sensitive genera

Provide extra potassium and magnesium

Re-pot flowered out plants- be sure they are secure

Editors Notes:

Our very special thanks to Dave Murray, our surprise speaker for November. There was joking during the meeting that may not have been explained enough, but Dave had a speaking engagement with another group, and they told him the date was the 17th. When they hadn't contacted him, he decided to contact them, a place that had the word Beach in their title, but got us instead. Since the board hadn't yet selected as speaker for November, and time was getting tight, it must have been a matter of divine intervention. We had a speaker and he was still able to make the other engagement since the Melbourne Beach Garden Club meeting was on the 15th. It worked out very well for both of us, and we got to meet a very nice couple with an innovative way to grow. Thanks Dave!

Well, our elections are complete now too! Our new officers and board members for the next year will be: as President, John Odom; Vice President, Sherry Cauley, Treasurer, Addison Marvin, and as Secretary, Joan Kaser. Our board members will be Doug Mew (his last year if not re-elected), Howard Kramer, and Pat Mills (for 2 years to finish out the term left by Sherry Cauley). These fine folks will

be sworn it at the Christmas party

We would also like to extend our thanks and gratitude to our departing officer, and board member, Judy Wagner and Ronnie Meeks. They helped guide the society through a year filled with the tragic loss of Secretary and Vice President, as well as other key members from the society, and kept the society moving forward. Thank you both for a job well done.

We are still taking reservations for the Christmas Party through December 10rd. There are some final arrangement that need to be made between the 10rd and the party, which will be on the 17th, so get your reservation in by the 10rd. You can pay for your reservation by sending it to the post office box address, listed below.

Our future Vice President will be speaking at the Busy Bee Garden Center on Saturday, December 10th. If any of our members would like to attend and get some more basic information about growing beautiful orchids, pleas come see her. This is a great opportunity to learn extra tidbits and since everybody there will be at the same basic level of learning, you might just ask a question that somebody else wanted to know but was afraid to ask. They also provide drinks and breakfast snacks for you to enjoy during the talk. The seminar will begin around 10 am, but you might want to come a little early because these talks tend to be very popular.

We will begin collecting dues for next year at the next regular meeting. The cost will be \$15 for an individual membership or \$20 for a family membership, which includes spouse and children under 18 living in your household. You will have 2 months to pay our dues, but after the February meeting, if dues are not received, the membership will be canceled, and you will no longer receive a newsletter.

VERO BEACH ORCHID SOCIETY OFFICERS

President – Judy Wagner

Vice President –

Secretary – Joan Kaser

Treasurer – Addison Marvin

Board of Directors

Ronnie Meeks

Doug Mew

Sherry Cauley

Committees

Membership –

Hospitality –

Sunshine – Louise Martin

Show Chairman – Carol Marvin

Vero Beach Orchid Society

P.O. Box 543

Vero Beach, FL 32961

Newsletter Editor – Carolyn Greene

Newsletter email: vbosnewsletter@hotmail.com

VBOS Website: www.verobeachorchidsociety.org

DUES FOR 2017: SINGLE MEMBER DUES \$15.00

FAMILY DUES: \$20.00

OUR NEXT REGULAR MEETING WILL BE JANUARY 19TH, 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