



Connecticut Orchid Society

Newsletter

Special Edition Mid-Jan. 2016
57 Years & Growing

Affiliated with the American Orchid Society and Orchid Digest

Next Meeting

Wednesday, Feb. 10, 2016, 7:00 pm
Farmington Senior Center
321 New Britain Ave., Unionville, CT

Rescheduled January Presentation:
Potting/Repotting 101
Q & A
Repotting Demonstrations

6:30 pm.: Doors open. Socializing begins. Come early and help set-up for the meeting.

7:30 pm: Business meeting begins

8:00 pm: Featured speaker and/or presentation begins.

For notice of last-minute or inclement weather cancellation, visit our website www.ctorchids.org.

Connecticut Orchid Society (COS) is an incorporated non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization founded in 1959. Please consider making a charitable contribution to COS. Most donations made to COS are tax deductible.

Our apologies to all the intrepid members who attempted to attend the Jan. meeting at the Cheshire Senior Center!!

We are so sorry that you were left standing out in the cold with your plants and food. Unfortunately, there was some sort of clerical mix-up and the COS meeting was never put on the Cheshire Senior Center's schedule. After all these years, you would think they would know our schedule by heart! This mid-month, special newsletter is intended to bring you all up-to-date with the shows and trips that we were unable to tell you about at the "meeting that never happened". This is our very busy time of the year. **We need your blooming plants for upcoming shows.** Please read on in the pages that follow....

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Note: February newsletter will be published as usual on the 1st of the month.

Connecticut Orchid Society Mission Statement

The Connecticut Orchid Society is an incorporated, non-profit association for the preservation and extension of knowledge concerning the conservation, ecology, science, cultivation, hybridization, appreciation and uses of orchids; and to carry on such activities as may be necessary or desirable to effectuate such purposes.

2016 Connecticut Orchid Society Officers & Posts

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Mentor List



The following COS members are available to answer your culture questions and help you with any orchid growing problems you may have:

Judy Becker judybecker40@att.net (860) 435-2263 (8:00--8:00 pm) Greenhouse growing methods: Wide variety of species & hybrids

Sam Hinckley samuelhinckley@comcast.net (860) 688-0943 (After 7:30 pm) Windowsill growing methods: Species & hybrids

Glenn McGeough mcgeough7@gmail.com (203) 482-3973. Specializing in Cattleyas.

Jeffrey Richards Jeffrey.richards@snet.net (Contact anytime). Greenhouse growing methods: Specializing in Paphiopedilums.

Sharon SmithDelisle editor@ctorchids.org (203) 744-1849 (Contact anytime) Under lights & windowsill growing methods: Bulbophylums, Cymbidiums, Dendrobiums, Paphiopedilums, Miltoniopsis & mixed genera.

David Tognalli dtog54@sbcglobal.net (860) 521-7249 (Contact evenings & weekends) Windowsill & outdoor growing methods: Warm growers, Cattleyas, Dendrobiums & mixed genera.

COS Membership Information : \$20/yr. Individual \$25/yr. Family \$200 Individual or \$250 Family Lifetime Membership (never pay dues again!) Visit www.ctorchids.org to apply for/renew membership. We accept Paypal. Contact Membership Chairperson Mary Rampone at www.COSMembership@earthlink.net for more details.

Membership Policy Membership is open to anyone interested in orchids. Members join the Society by payment of annual dues. Memberships may be individual, student, family, life or honorary. Honorary membership is for life and is made by nomination of the Board of Directors and majority vote of the membership present at a regular meeting. The newsletter is published each month except July and August. Annual membership includes electronic delivery of the newsletter.



Upcoming Events

Jan. 23 & 24 Cape and Islands Annual Show & Sale
Winter Wonderland of Orchids, The Resort and Conference Center at Hyannis. See pg. 8 in this newsletter for details.

Feb. 10 Connecticut Orchid Society Monthly Meeting, TBA, Farmington Senior Center, 321 New Britain Ave., Unionville, 7:30 pm.

Feb. 11-14 Deep Cut Orchid Society Annual Winter Show, Dearborn Market, Holmdel, NJ. Admission: FREE

Feb. 14-16 New Hampshire Orchid Society Annual Show & Sale, *Orchid Love Affair*, Radisson Hotel, Nashua, NH

Feb. 20 AOS Judging, Northeast Judging Center, Bartlett Arboretum and Gardens, Silver Educational Center, 151 Brookdale Rd., Stamford, CT, 12:00 pm. Send cut flowers to: John Sullivan, 299 Village Place, Wyckoff, NJ 07481

Feb. 22-23 Amherst Orchid Society Annual Show & Sale, Smith Vocational High School, Northampton, MA

Mar. 9 Connecticut Orchid Society Monthly Meeting, TBA, Cheshire Senior Center, 240 Maple Ave., Cheshire, CT

Content Acknowledgement All information, opinions, reporting and recommendations that appear in this newsletter are those of the editor (unless otherwise noted) and do not necessarily reflect those of the Connecticut Orchid Society. The editor is deeply indebted to the American Orchid Society for the free reprinting of articles, photos, tips & tricks, advice, checklists, etc. from its monthly magazine *Orchids* without which the COS newsletter, and its membership would be the poorer.





COS always has a booth at the Connecticut Flower & Garden Show every year. We need volunteers to staff the booth and talk to the public about orchids. The job is an easy one and gives you the opportunity to enjoy the show yourself, as well. Each day that you volunteer to staff our booth for a few hours, you will receive free entrance to the show. Visitors to our booth always have lots of basic orchid growing questions. If you don't know the answer, we suggest that you get a name and contact info, instead. One of the COS *Orchid Docs* will be glad to follow up and help anyone with culture questions.

Show Hours:

Thurs., 2/18 10:00 am—7:00 pm

We need coverage for the 10:00—2:00 pm shift and the 2:00 pm—7:00 pm shift

Fri., 2/19 10:00 am—8:00 pm

We need coverage for the 10:00—1:00 pm shift, the 1:00—4:00 pm shift, and then the 4:00 — 8:00 pm closing shift.

Sat., 2/20 10:00 am—8:00pm

We need coverage the same as for Friday.

Sun., 2/21 10:00 am — 5:00pm

We need coverage for the 10:00 — 2:00 pm shift, and the 2:00 —5:00 pm shift.

Please contact Cheryl at (203) 264-6096 or mainoffice@alcher.com. Our booth won't be a success without your help. Please consider volunteering a few hours of your time on one of the days listed above. Thank you for being a hero!

There is parking across the street from the show. If you are unable to keep your promised shift that you signed up for, please be sure to find a substitute to take your place.



The January 2016 AOS Corner — *From the desk of Denise Lucero, Committee Member, Orchid Society Membership and Affiliated Societies Committee*
(gbrodieaosmembership@gmail.com)

UPCOMING WEBINARS:

- **Brazilian Cattleya (Laelia): A Tour of the habitats**

Join us for a webinar on January 20, 2016 at 8:30 pm EST. Members only.

Please join Francisco Miranda, owner of Miranda Orchids, for a discussion and tour of the Brazilian Cattleyas and their habitat.

Register now! <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8841387774699307521> *After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.*



Dues are past due! Did you forget? Last chance!!!!

Please send your check to Membership Chair Mary Rampone today, if you haven't already renewed. You may also use Paypal on our website, which is a very convenient way to take care of this annual chore. Why not become a lifetime member (\$200 individual/\$250 Family) and never have to pay dues, again? Don't miss out on the newsletter, meetings, speakers, events and companionship of belonging to COS!



Cape and Islands Orchid Show and Sale
Saturday, January 23 & Sunday, January 24, 2016
The Resort & Conference Center of Hyannis
35 Scudder Ave., (Off the West End Rotary)
9 am—5pm, Admission \$10
Handicap Accessible

Bill and Sherry Pendleton are taking the lead with this show. They would be very happy if a member or two could help with transporting plants to and from the show; and helping with set-up and take-down. If you have blooming plants that you would like to loan for our display table at the show, or you can help with the show, please contact Sherry at (203) 272-3498 or WHPendleton@cox.net. Thank you!

Deep Cut Orchid Society Annual Show & Sale, Feb. 11 —14, Dearborn Market, Holmedel, NJ, 9 — 6:00 pm.

If you think you will have plants ready for display on our society show table, please register them by Sunday, Feb. 7th and contact Cheryl Mizak to arrange pick up by Tues., Feb 9th. Let Cheryl know if you are available to help out with set-up on Wed., Feb. 10th.



New Hampshire Orchid Society Annual Show & Sale, Feb. 14 —16, Orchid Love Affair

Dave Tognalli will take the lead on this event. Please register your plants by Sunday, Feb. 7th and bring your blooming plants to the COS Feb. meeting at Farmington Senior Center. Dave will take responsibility for bringing your plants to and from the show. Thank you in advance for helping us make our display table bigger and better by loaning your blooming orchids for the weekend.

Amherst Orchid Society Annual Show & Sale, Feb. 22—23

A volunteer is needed to take the lead with set-up, Feb. 20 –21 and take-down for this show. Please let Cheryl know if you are interested in volunteering for this important job or if you have plants to loan for our display.



Bus Trip to SEPOS Annual Show & Sale and Longwood Gardens:

We are planning a three-day, April 1-3, 2016 bus trip to the famous Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square,



Pennsylvania — close to Philadelphia. These famous gardens were created by Pierre du Pont in the 19th century. The gardens are composed of 1,077 acres
(Con't. next page)

with many paths that wind through extraordinary gardens, woodlands and meadows. In addition there are fabulous greenhouses full of orchids and other magnificent flowering plants. Our group will be given a private behind-the-scenes tour of the gardens.



The itinerary is as follows:

- **Fri., April 1st** Leave Waterbury approx. 12—1:00 pm. Spend the night at Homewood Suites Hotel near Kennett Square.
- **Sat., April 2nd** Spend the day at SEPOS Southeast Pa. Orchid Society Annual Show & Sale with option to leave mid-afternoon and go back to hotel for your own free time (King of Prussia Mall is only 3 miles away). SEPOS has fabulous vendors, seminars and free guided tours.
- **Sun., April 3rd** spend the morning at Longwood Gardens with a special behind-the-scenes tour of the gardens. Sunday afternoon return trip home to CT.
- **Cost: Single (inc. bus) 2 nights + breakfast, adm. To SEPOS \$421.00—does not include Longwood Gardens, food and purchase of any plants.**
- **Couple (inc. bus) Hotel room for two + breakfast, SEPOS adm. \$608.00 — does not include Longwood Gardens, food and purchase of any plants. (Prices based on 18 participants.) **Deadline= Feb. 1st (50% deposit by Feb. 10 at COS mtg. and bal. due by Feb.29.)****

Repotting Orchids

By Stephen R. Batchelor

Repotting is a necessary element of a wise health-care program. The organic media, in which orchids are rooted, decompose into humus, a material, by itself, unfit for orchid roots. In a decomposed medium, roots rarely have adequate oxygen to survive and function. **Repot before significant media decomposition occurs to avoid major root loss.**

Cattleyas, laelias, encyclias and other fast-growing sympodial orchids (those which grow horizontally by rhizomes) may need repotting before media decomposition. One of these that has grown beyond the edge of its container will require repotting and/or dividing before the rhizomes and roots become a tangled mess.

Knowing When to Repot Decide whether an orchid could produce new roots at the time of repotting. Most complex *Cattleya* hybrids are capable of forming new roots nearly any time. Even so, repotting a plant with an actively expanding pseudobulb just beginning or about to produce its own cluster of roots is ideal. Such practice often means quick establishment in the new medium. To wait until root development on the new growth is nearly completed is less ideal, because another such flush of new, penetrating root growth is unlikely, and those newer roots will be exposed, like



Emerging new roots with bright green tips signal that it is time to repot, but do so before the roots are 1 inch long to prevent breaking them.

the rest, to mechanical damage in repotting.

Proper timing of repotting also considers the flowering period of the orchid involved. Because a change in medium is to some degree a shock to a plant, repotting at a time when an orchid is in bud or flower is risky. Bud drop may result if repotting is done during the period of bud development. At the very least, some lessening in the ultimate size and longevity of the flowers is apt to occur. **Repot most orchids when new growths and roots emerge, which is typically after flowering.**

Timing repotting to coincide with a period of active root development is not always possible, due to dangerously decomposed medium. In this case, it is far better to repot before all roots are lost, and to encourage new root formation into fresh medium where there is a good chance of survival. Whether it be the result of higher oxygen levels, or a lesser chance of disease attack, orchids with few viable roots (and those with a good number) are generally more inclined to form new roots in a drier medium than one which is wet. After restricting water to bring this about, the trick then is to avoid severe desiccation during this tenuous root-deprived period. (Con't. next page)

Provide conditions which discourage high transpiration (water loss) rates (such as high humidity, lower light intensity) until new roots are formed and on their way toward establishment. Some growers will not pot a rootless orchid until new roots are initiated, keeping the plant in a bag, under a bench, or on a flat of moist medium to achieve these low-transpiration conditions.

It is fairly obvious when a sympodial orchid is about to out-grow its container and will soon need repotting. For monopodial orchids (those which grow vertically), this is not likely to be a reason for repotting. **Determining whether repotting is necessary because of media decomposition requires a bit more investigating. Naturally, as media break down and become less porous, they take up less space in a pot. A lowering of the level of medium is a good indication of decomposition.** An examination of any roots along the surface will reveal whether they have declined. Jiggling the plant in its pot will also indicate root condition. Any significant shifting of an established plant suggests substantial root loss. **Examining the resistance of the medium with a probing rod or finger is another method of assessing decomposition. If there is little resistance, it is likely major decomposition of the mix has taken place.**

How to Repot Assemble supplies before beginning a repotting project. Necessary items: containers, mix, stakes, wire, rhizome clips and sterilized cutting bladed. Select a firm surface on which to work. **Soak the medium in water prior to repotting.** Wear disposable gloves for each plant repotted. Spread newspaper on the work surface or swab the area with Clorox between pottings.



Step 2 Remove the old medium with care in order to preserve as many viable roots as possible (above). Some living roots will inevitably be broken. **After all the mix has been removed, sever damaged and dead roots with sterilized scissors or clippers. This reduces the likelihood of infection.** (Editors note: After trimming the dead and damaged roots, some growers like to sprinkle the root ball with cinnamon, which is a natural antibiotic) Groom the plant: remove dried pseudobulb and rhizome sheaths, dead or diseased leaves and pseudobulbs. **This is also a good time to decide if the orchid needs dividing.**



These photos show how to repot a *Potinara* hybrid (above). This intergeneric hybrid exhibits sympodial growth, which is typical of a cattleya or dendrobium.

Step 1 Remove the plant from its container (above). **This easier to accomplish when the medium is moist.** In addition, a moist mix more easily separates from the roots. **The roots themselves are perhaps more pliable and less likely to break when moist.** If the plant resists removal, a sterilized knife inserted and run along the inside surface of the pot may help to separate the rooted medium from the container's walls.



This potinara does need dividing (note vertical line in above photo) and could be separated into two divisions. Gently pulling the two pieces apart, and cutting the rhizome with a sterilized knife, yielded two plants (below).

(Con't. next page)



Step 3 Choose a sterilized container of the right size. **Do not over-pot orchids. Larger-than-necessary containers, while seemingly providing ample room for new growth and thus a longer time before the next repotting, are counterproductive.** Media in such containers last a shorter time than those in smaller pots because they remain wet longer. Drying more slowly, decomposing more quickly, such media are less aerated as well. The great majority of orchid roots avoid the relatively airless and wet interiors of a mix, preferring to grow nearer the interior surface of the pot. This tendency is more pronounced the larger the pot and the greater the amount of mix.

All these tendencies work against, not for, a plant placed in too large a pot. **The old rule -of- thumb applies: When repotting, the new pot should be large enough to accommodate no more (and no less) than two years of additional growth.** Because few conventional media last any longer than two years at a maximum, there is no point in using a larger pot.

Step 4 To further enhance the all-important drainage and aeration of a mix, whatever the size of the container, layer inert material, such as clay shards, gravel or foam packing chips, in the bottom few inches of the pot before inserting the plant and medium.



ALL PHOTOGRAPHS THIS PAGE: STEPHEN R. BATCHELOR

the side where new growth is most likely to occur. This is where the space will be needed. With Cattleyas, for example, this means placing the oldest pseudobulbs, the backbulbs, flush against the edge of the pot, in turn providing the largest area immediately in front of the most recent growth. **Once the plant is in position, its rhizome should be level with, or just below, the top of the pot. Vertically growing monopodial orchids, such as vandas and phalaenopsis, should be placed in the middle of the container.** This allows root growth to radiate evenly in all directions from the plant, and aids in plant and pot stability.

Step 6 Add the previously prepared and moistened mix. **While holding the plant in position with one hand, scoop in handfuls of mix with the other. When enough has been added to hold the plant in place, press the mix around the roots with both hands.** Tap the pot and plant on the potting surface occasionally to further settle the mix. This ensures



STEPHEN R. BATCHELOR

that no gaps in the medium will remain, and that the plant is secure. Add additional mix until the medium rises to the level of the rhizome, in the case of sympodial orchids, or well covers the area of greatest root production at the base of most monopodial orchids.

Step 7 The plant should be in its initial position and firmly in place. **An orchid that wobbles in the container cannot establish itself properly.** Stake tall (monopodial) or top-heavy (sympodial) orchids to provide additional support. Rhizome clips and upright support wires that slip onto edges of containers contribute support. *(Con't next page.)*



Rhizome clips used on clay pots.
(Photo credit www. Repotme.com)



Rhizome clips used on plastic pots.
 (Photo credit: www.repotme.com)



How to install a rhizome clip on a plastic pot.
 (Photo credit: www.repotme.com)

Fortunately, modern breeding, particularly with the *Cattleya* types, has brought down the height of most hybrids, so that staking for plants in bark mixes, a requisite for the giant hybrids of the past, is no longer usually required.

Step 8 Secure the name tag in the new container.

Step 9 Return the orchid to the growing area, unless many roots were removed. If such is the case, place it in a slightly shaded area where it can recuperate.

Although some shriveling may occur immediately after repotting, when done properly an outburst of new roots should soon result. These new roots should readily penetrate and establish in the fresh medium, enhancing the water and nutrient absorption so crucial for successful growth and flowering.

(Stephen R. Batchelor worked for the American Orchid Society, serving as editorial assistant [1979-1981], assistant editor [1981-1983] and acting executive director/editor [1983-1984]. This article was reprinted from *Growing Orchids, A Cultural handbook* Prepared by the American Orchid Society, 1993 Revised Edition, pgs. 30-33.)



**That's it for now.
 See you in February!**



BC Makai (wise)
 Grower: Sharon SmithDelisle
 One plant that didn't get to the Jan. Show Table



Lc. Hwa Yuan Beauty 'Spice Girl'
 Grower: Sharon SmithDelisle
 Another plant that didn't make it to the Show Table



City. Spring Fragrance 'Hawaii'
 Grower: Sharon Smith-Delisle
 3rd plant that didn't get to the Jan. Show Table.