

Central Vancouver Island Orchid Society Newsletter

March 2011



Masdevallia Adrian Kalb 'Dylan' AM/AOS 81pts
(*Masdevallia triangularis* x *Masdevallia rimarima-alba*)
Exhibitor: Donna McDonnell Photo: Judith Higham

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Meetings are held September through June on the Saturday before the 4th Wednesday of each month at the Harewood Activity Centre, 195 Fourth Street, Nanaimo, in the hall on the second floor, doors open at 11:30, with the business meeting starting at 12:00 noon.

Coming Meeting Dates:

March 19, April 23, May 21, June 11, Sept 24, Oct 22, Nov 19, Dec 17

Program for March 19th

Live 50/50 Auction

All lots must be registered in by 11:00 am

First lot will start at 12:00 am

Please do not come too early for viewing 11:00-12:00

Coming Events:

CVIOS 50/50 Auction March 20, 2011

CVIOS Show and Sale, Country Club Center, April 15th – 17th 2011

CVIOS Summer Picnic Date to be announced at Shirley and Ernie McClare's home in Yellow Point

Editorial:

Well here we go on our second 50/50 auction. Remember to invite some of your friends to this interesting event. We don't just want to recycle our members funds we would like and infusion of funds from others as well, and all with a good time and some nice snacks. More or less come one and come all.

The Victoria Orchid Society Show and Sale was a great success. Please read the report farther on in the Newsletter. Now we just have our own to work through and the Spring show season is over. It is only a few weeks off so start grooming your plants. Remember every member with a flowing plant is welcome and needed to contribute to the display. The last two shows have had low numbers of contributors I think because of weather. When you can bring your own plants to the show it makes it all very much easier.

There will be an H&R pre-order for delivery before the may meeting. You CAN NOT ORDER FROM THE WEB SITE LIST. I will send you the list you can order from in the next few days. Please read the instructions I send out with the list.

Mike

Minutes of CVIOS General Meeting
February 19, 2011

President Bryan Emery called the meeting to order at 12:04 pm with 28 members present.

- 1.** Maureen Hawthorn moved that the January minutes be accepted as circulated Rainer Hartmann 2nd and motion carried.

- 2.** Correspondence this month included Orchid Digest and the AOS Bulletin. In addition Jerry Sullfolk brought a Dendrobium supplement and Phal. Alliance magazine that will be added to the library.

- 3.** Treasurer Shelley Rattink presented the financial report for the month ending January 31, 2011. She moved acceptance of her report, Bev Morrison 2nd and motion carried.

- 4.** Programs: Nancy Miklic indicated we will have guest speakers Chuck Taylor in April and Harry from H&R in May. H&R will only bring pre ordered plants.

- 5.** Don Miklic reported the website fee has been paid for another 4 years and new additions to the 'Orchid Doctor' are Dealing with Mealy Bugs and Hydrogen Peroxide Use.

- 6.** 2011 membership cards are available.

- 7.** The Vancouver show went well with Anne and Rainers Phrag. winning best in show, Donna's Masd. getting an AOS award, and Mikes's display getting the award for best visiting society display. Don commended Mike on his efforts of getting all of our orchids safely to the show and putting together a great display.
The Victoria show will take place March 5&6 at the University Student Union Building. Judging will take place on Friday the 4th. Donna and Angie will be taking our plants down the morning of Thursday the 3rd in to set up our display. Donna will be the drop of point for plants for those living north of Nanaimo. Plants of members from Nanaimo and south can be dropped of at Lauries on Wednesday.
We still need volunteers for our show and sponsors for prizes. Anne passed sign up sheets around.

- 8.** Our March auction will take the place of a meeting and everyone is reminded to bring items for the auction. You may donate them or share the proceeds with the society 50/50. An 'orchid wiz' program has been donated for the auction. Everyone is also reminded to bring a friend and spread the word.

- 9.** Thank you to Connie, Linda and Anne for bringing goodies this time. For the March auction DONNA, SANDRA, MARGARET, and BEV will be bringing goodies and HILLARY will be making SUSHI.

- 10.** The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 followed by Bryan and Donna's tour of our show table and Don's very interesting presentation on propagation.

The Auction and how to play the game and win.

All items for the auction **must be brought to the hall between 10:00 and 11:00**, No items brought in late will be accepted as it takes too much time to process everything. Viewing is from 11:00 till 12:00 and the Auction starts at 12:00.

With plants, if you supply a picture of the flower and some cultural information it will make them easier to sell and will bring greater profits to you and the Society.

You will be met in the outer hall and issued your paddle (Paper Plate) with your bidding number on it. To bid you will hold it up and will be recognized by number not name.

Those of you with items for the auction will progress to the registration table just inside the hall proper and deal with Donna and Anne. **NO PLANT WITH PESTS WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR AUCTION.** The rest of you will progress into the hall and get your seats and look at the lots on offer.

Until 12:00 you can all look over the goodies and figure out where your money is going.

To bid you hold up your paddle and will be recognized by number by the auctioneer.

The winning bid and paddle number will be recorded and will be sent to the cashier, Shelley and her assistant, before the end of the auction. We ask you to bring a pen or pencil and record the lot number and price on the back of your plate so we have a double record of what you will pay in the end.

When an item is bought it will be taken by the runners to the cashier's tables. We will try to have all items bought by one person end up together on the tables.

At the end of the auction the bidder will bring their paddle to the cashier and pay the total amount owing and the cashier will sign the paddle paid in full and then the bidder can collect his or her goodies.

Carry bags or boxes would be great to have in your cars to hold and carry all of what you buy. It will make it easier for you to move them.

The payouts will be sent to the seller after the cashier has been paid for all the items. The cheques will be mailed out promptly after the auction.

Any item not bid on is considered the property of the member who brought it and must be removed by that member at the end of the auction.

The Victoria Orchid Society Show and Sale



Frontal view of our display, Photo: Don Miklic

The Society display in Victoria attracted a lot of attention winning the Best Visiting Society Display Trophy. Donna and Angie designed and built a very natural mounded mossy creation that showed off the 49 plants of our members well. Contributing plants to the display were Anne & Rainer Hartmann, Donna McDonnell, Jerry Suffolk, Laurie Forbes, Mike Miller, Don & Nancy Miklic, Maureen Hawthorn, Bryan Emery and Dora Glover. The plants gathered 14 first place ribbons, 10 second place ribbons and 7 third place ribbons. There were four Best of Class rosettes awarded to plants on our table, Laurie's *Coelogyne flaccida* won Best *Coelogyne* and Donna cleaned up with Best *Bulbophyllum* with *Bulbophyllum saltatorium* var. *albociliatum* 'Goat', Best *Pluerothallid* with *Masdevallia Monarch Highland Gold* x *Masd.* Jerry Sedenko #8 and Best *Vanda* Group with a 'Glorious Little Purple Thing' that had no name. And then Anne and Rainer with *Phragmipedium Paol Eugene Conray* took Reserve Champion of the show. Their *Paphiopedilum philippinense* was nominated by the judges but not awarded.

On a single table display which was to be Bryan's but ended up being plants of several members and his were on the main table also won some glory. There were only 10 plants, but they were decorated with two first place ribbons and three third place ribbons as well as Best *Oncidium* Group with Jerry's *Ada keilliana* and a nomination ribbon on Flo's *Dendrobium ruppianum*. All in all a good showing.

There were only 14 plants nominated and only 4 awards given out by the AOS judges.

The crowd was good until late Sunday afternoon and most vendors were fairly pleased with their sales. Another weekend of food friends and good times.



Back view of our display, Photo: Don Miklic

AIR-FERTILIIATION OF ORCHIDS

Reprint of a November 1941 article in the Orchid Digest

No Author Given

For orchid growers and breeders it is very desirable to devise some method to accelerate the growth of their plants, especially of young seedlings under three years of age. These youngsters are, very susceptible to attacks of insects and pathogenetic fungi and it requires continuous and sometimes laborious care to keep them free from these troubles and growing strongly. A decided check from any cause during these early years is apt to be disastrous.

Plant physiology teaches us that in an average condition of light temperature and moisture, the only other factor that limits more vigorous photosynthesis is the available supply of carbon-dioxide in the air. The normal concentration in the atmosphere is small-0.03%-too small for the average plant to display its full capacity. If the amount of carbon-dioxide is doubled the intensity of photosynthesis is also doubled and this relationship holds true up to certain limits. In fact it has been proven that the concentration of CO₂ may safely be raised to 5.0% providing temperature and light are sufficiently strong. Therefore it would seem that plants are always suffering from a deficiency of carbon-dioxide during an average day and that additional amounts could be used to advantage.

The idea is not a new one. Strangely enough, although the first record we have of air-fertilization occurred in 1760, little was done during the next 150 years. Since that time experimenters have achieved truly remarkable results with other types of plants. In 1917 Riedel piped CO₂ into well ventilated greenhouses and secured increases of 275% with tomatoes; 175% with cucumbers and as high as 290% with other vegetables. The Vermont Agriculture Experiment Station has produced a decided improvement in cyclamen-more flowers and larger corms. It has even been used for field crops with decided success. Yet, relatively little experimental station along these lines has been attempted in the field of orchid culture.

The Imperial University of Tokyo carried on a limited experiment with *Cattleya* seedlings, eight months old. The seedlings were planted directly from the flasks, where they had been raised asymbiotically. into special containers. One group was aerated with ordinary air and two others with air enriched to contain 0.1% and 1.0%. respectively, of carbon-dioxide. Two months later there was no difference in these culture vessels. All grew well forming new roots and leaves. After three months the, expected results began to appear. Seedlings cultivated in the enriched air commenced to show a very stout appearance, the leaves became very thick and dark green and new leaves and roots formed on every plant. Those using ordinary air besides being somewhat smaller, still showed the same tendency that all seedlings raised on artificial media do-namely slender, somewhat torsional leaves and a certain amount of etiolation. As time went on these differences became more marked until after some five months an unfortunate accident put an end to the experiment.

Thus it would seem from the evidence at hand that decidedly beneficial results may be expected from air-fertilization but to what ultimate extent can only be determined by continued experimentation along these or similar lines.

If we assume as an established fact the beneficial effects of an artificial supply of carbon-dioxide, then we must also consider the actual concentration of CO₂ in the air of the greenhouse, during an average twenty-four hour period. We may suppose that the concentration is somewhat reduced in the day-time, below that of outside air. Therefore, the plants may use up the available gas and actually starve when the action of photosynthesis should be most actively conducted. Actual measurements show that the amount of carbon-dioxide is greatest during the night-as would be expected-and builds up to a peak in the early morning hours after which it gradually diminishes to a low during the middle of the afternoon.

It is also well known that the leaves of plants are always surrounded by a thin layer of air which is static and is not disturbed to any great extent except by a reasonably strong draft. The carbon-dioxide in this layer is probably quickly exhausted by the leaf and a further supply of the gas can only be maintained by a very slow diffusion from the more remote air. Thus it follows that the general atmosphere of the greenhouse should contain much more than the average content of carbon dioxide in order to supply the minimum needs of the plants, and that air-fertilization may be most effectively applied during the afternoon.

For those who wish to try air-fertilization in its simplest form, dry-ice is the answer. A one-pound coffee can insulated by wrapping well in newspapers and having several holes punched in the top, will serve as a fairly efficient generator. About six of these cans should be used in a small greenhouse. The actual amount of dry-ice to use will have to be determined by actual trial but it is well to use less than deemed necessary and increase the amount later if desired. More elaborate adaptations of this idea will readily suggest themselves. Acid generators can easily be made but are inclined to be dangerous and not recommended except to those experienced in handling strong acids. Perhaps the most efficient and easiest controlled method would be to purchase the gas in tanks from which it can be released at a predetermined rate.

Orchid Digest, April 1966

SUMMER TREATMENT OF CYMBIDIUMS

By Lt. Cmdr. Collett

Reprinted from The Orchid Review May 1966

For four years in succession I have placed all my mature Cymbidium plants out-of-doors for the summer months. I am sorry now that I did not keep a fair proportion of them under glass, in their normal quarters, for comparison. I have been very well satisfied with the results obtained and am going to continue the practice in future.

I am not going to advocate the practice or lay down any rules for growing Cymbidiums out-of-doors, I am only a beginner at the game myself, but some of these observations may be useful to other growers who have tried the same thing.

Date of commencing the outdoor treatment

This must depend on the district of England in which you live. The Ice Saints, St. Pancras, St. Gervase, St. Boniface, do their fell work on May 12, 13 and 14, but in Gloucestershire Dahlias and Runner Beans are still apt to get nipped in the bud until nearly the end of the month. Furthermore, Cymbidiums, if they have been reacting properly to the spring sunshine since March, will have made a lot of lush growth and a sudden check would be disastrous if they were put out-of-doors too soon.

So far June 7 has been my earliest date for putting plants outside. Obviously in Torquay one might safely anticipate this by three weeks, but in Birmingham and further north the date would be correspondingly retarded. As a preparation for going outside, my Cymbidium house has full air on all night from end March, unless we get a really cold spell.

The site to be chosen and the aspect

First and foremost stand the plants clear of all trees and overhead foliage. I would prefer full sun all day, but by force of circumstances at Maisemore and Cedar of Lebanon casts its shade on the pitch from 3 to 5 p.m. Shelter from direct winds is- desirable so that the pots will not be blown over. As a base I have used rough homemade duckboards made out of 3 inches wide by ¼ inch thick elm offcuts from the local sawmills. Better still, an ash or cokebreeze pitch on which plants can be placed four deep, with a path all round it, would be ideal. On a fine ash surface it is easy to bed the pots in for an inch or so by giving them a slight twist. This will give them added support in wind.

To my mind the pots should be standing above the surface of the surrounding ground. I would not favour the use of garden frames with the lights removed, where the frame walls would come up the sides of the pots. Here the plants would be down in a pit with no free circulation of air and the roots could well be roasted. One of the chief benefits of standing Cymbidiums out-of-doors is to give them a cool root system by allowing a perfectly free passage of air round the pots.

Watering

A summer like 1965 does it for you most of the time. In dry spells every situation will vary throughout the country and you must therefore try and judge for yourselves. Cymbidiums do not unfortunately give any reliable indication as to when they are too dry. Well grown pot Chrysanthemums, which are usually finally established in their 8- or 10-inch pots require watering in summer about once a week and they give an unmistakable signal by letting their leaves droop when they are dry. Why not keep one or two pot Chrysanthemums nearby the Cymbidiums and at least you will have a guide as to when the last instalment of rain or water was used up? If you wait until the Cymbidium bulbs start to shrivel before you give them any moisture, you will have waited far too long. As a general rule, if rain has not been heavy and continuous, I dip all my plants once per week.

Fertilizing

In warm growing weather I like to use a weak solution of either cow manure, Bio-fluid, Sangral or any other N.P.K.-based liquid fertilizer.

This should never be applied to bone-dry pots, and bone-dry and therefore inactive roots. But if you have dipped the plants on Saturday, go round with a can and give each pot a breakfast cupful on Sunday. Once a fortnight is sufficient for this, although I do it once a week in periods of heavy rainfall to counteract leaching of plant food from the pots.

Leaf Scorch

During the first year I stood my plants on a stone patio. The reflected light from the floor in full sunlight was rather too much for them. Too close spacing with consequent lack of air movement could also cause leaf scorch. Since then I have seen very little trouble. The leaves

tend to go light yellow in bright weather and often take on a red-bronze hue in dull windy weather.

Date of return to winter quarters

This again depends largely on locality. My latest date has been October 7. I don't get unduly worried when the radio speaks of frost warnings. Early frosts are seldom more than a degree or so and of short duration, perhaps only from 7 a.m. to sunrise. The plants are also at their hardiest after their outdoor treatment and I certainly would not lose any sleep or dash out in the middle of the night if the lawn was covered in hoarfrost. Next day would be plenty of time enough to take them inside, and the moment of transfer is a good one to inspect the plants for flower spikes. At least 75% are likely to be showing. I hope, too, that by this time the inside of the greenhouse will have been washed, painted and disinfected.

Results

So much for the actual routine. I can give no comparative figures of results as I have kept no controls. Suffice it to say that results have been very satisfactory compared to any growing standards. If one is hoping for extra spikes by putting them out-of-doors, in full sun, in the summer, I do not believe that it makes much difference. I think that spike initiation in a plant takes place quite early in the year, long before the plants are placed out-of-doors in June.

Early and particularly autumn repotting which allows a plant to reestablish and make good new growth is a far more likely factor to produce more flowers. On the other hand out-door sun and air in 1965 could have given plants just that extra vigor for flowering well in 1967 and this is taking a longer-term view. You may well ask whether there is any practical advantage in putting Cymbidiums outside for the summer, and in my own circumstances I can honestly reply that the following benefits result: (1) If they were housed in the greenhouse all summer, I would have to use a considerable degree of permanent shading as there is no one to raise and lower the blinds. Full sunlight and fresh air seem far more desirable than semi-permanent gloom.

(2) Sometime between June and October the Cymbidium house can have a really good spring-clean, which it might not get every year if the house were always full of plants.

(3) Pest control, particularly of red spider mites, is far less worry out-of-doors if occasional evening spraying with water is indulged in.

(4) If you go away for a holiday and it turns into a heatwave, the plants outside may be seriously scorched but otherwise healthy. The plants inside the greenhouse could be shrivelled right up with a consequent loss of several years' work.