



Southern Tier Orchid Society

Executive Board

President

Ben Cabot
607-348-6239
bcabot@gmail.com

Vice President

Carol Bayles
607-275-9090
cjb4@cornell.edu

Treasurer

Jane Trey
607-724-5358
jtrey@stny.rr.com

Secretary

Linda Mandeville
607-227-1563
lmandeville@stny.rr.com

AOS Representative

Bernice Magee
607-844-9711
magee.bernice@gmail.com

Members-at-large

Anne (Tinker) Quain
607-797-1383
anneetinker@yahoo.com

Sharon Voorhees

607-739-7898
sassvoor@gmail.com

Luis Matienzo

607-754-5702
lmastienzo@stny.rr.com

Newsletter & Membership

Linda Mandeville
607-227-1563
lmandeville@stny.rr.com

Show Chair

Carol Bayles

Web Page

<http://www.storchidsociety.com/>

March 2019

NEXT MEETINGS:

March 17, 2:00 First United Methodist Church
****1:00 Executive Board/Show Committee meets prior to the regular meeting! All are welcome!****

April 7, 2:00 First United Methodist Church

IN THIS ISSUE

Don't miss our March meeting! The Executive Board and Show Committee will meet at 1:00, followed by our regular meeting at 2:00. John Dunkleberger will be our special guest speaker!

Meeting NOTES

****Note: In the event of a weather emergency**, please check your email the morning of the party! If nothing is received from STOS, the party is on. Likewise, those who receive the newsletter by regular mail will receive a call from one of us. If any questions, members may also call one of the Board Members.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Contributions, including pictures, to the STOS newsletter from members are welcomed. Contributions must be submitted by the 5th day of each month to the editor.

If you have difficulties with the electronic format of this newsletter, please contact the webmaster at: southerntierorchidsociety@gmail.com

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Minutes for February

STOS President, Ben Cabot, called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm.

Approval of Minutes:

- A motion was made and accepted to approve the January 2019 Meeting Minutes

Treasurer's Report:

- Jane reported that we currently have a balance of \$9,557.00 in our STOS account.

New Business:

- The Executive Board met at 1:00, just prior to today's regular meeting. The Board reviewed the By-Laws, and a few modifications were recommended. The 2019 Budget is not quite ready to present to the general members; another board meeting will be held in March to finalize the 2019 budget, and will be presented to the membership for approval at that time.
- April Meeting: Since Easter falls on the 3rd Sunday of April (our normal meeting day), we have decided to hold our April meeting on Sunday, April 7th. This meeting will be our annual SPRING AUCTION/meeting! Jane has graciously offered to take care of the orchid plants upon delivery and bring them for the auction. Pete/Luis will place the order.

Old Business:

- Ben briefly discussed the STOS website, indicating that it was not user-friendly and there is a potential for changing. Options still being investigated.
- For anyone interested, Ben and/or Lori have the order sheets for STOS shirts/jackets; a total of 6 orders are needed to place a custom order.

Committee reports:

Show Committee:

- A few members of the club took a tour of the Roberson on Front Street in Binghamton, to "scope out" the possible areas for set up of our April STOS Show. Ben took several short videos of the facilities that are available to us, and showed the videos to us during the meeting.
- The Roberson will provide 6' x 30" tables, chairs
- Rental fee is \$225
- Set-up will be Friday, April 26; Show will be Saturday (4/27) and Sunday (4/28), Noon-5pm
- April 27 and 28 is also Earth Day Festival at the Roberson, which should bring more 'business' to the show

Program committee:

- Carol Bayles has arranged for John Dunkleberger to speak in March. Glen Decker of Piping Rock Orchids is slated for November. If anyone has suggestions for a speaker, please contact Carol.

Other Notes:

- Bernice Magee, our AOS representative, told the members that she has the AOS Orchid Magazine that is available to all members; anyone is welcome to borrow a copy; Other copies of the magazine, along with our club books, are kept in the library, and available to all. Bernice also mentioned that Barbara Schmidt, author of *Orchid Care for Beginners*, has worked with Middle/High School aged children to raise orchids in Philadelphia, and will be at the Philadelphia Flower Show this March.
- There are two members' meetings of the AOS each year; all are welcome to attend

Program:

- Our very-own member and renowned photographer, Geof Gould, was our guest speaker for February. Geof shared with us some of his beautiful photos and experiences of his trip to Cuba. He took a 7-day Viking River Cruise from Miami to Cuba. He shared some wonderful photos of the architecture, small towns, and various elements of Cuban life. His presentation was enjoyed by all!

Meeting was adjourned at 4:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted
Linda Mandeville, Secretary

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Treasurer's Report

Jane Trey reported that we had an account balance of \$9,557.

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March Featured Program

Be sure to attend our March 17 meeting! Mr. John Dunkleberger, one of our renowned AOS orchid judges, will be our special guest speaker! Mr. Dunkleberger is a breeder of orchids, growing and hybridizing Cymbidiums, Zygopetalums and Oncidium alliance. Mr. Dunkleberger will speak to us on his travels in Ecuador seeking orchids. I'm sure his talk will be most enlightening, so please be sure to join us!!

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Update on 2019 STOS Orchid Show

Our STOS Orchid will be held on Saturday, April 27th and Sunday, April 28th, with set up on Friday, April 26th at the Roberson Museum and Science Center. The event is free to the public from noon to 5 pm on April 27th and April 28th. Our STOS Orchid Show Chair, Carol Bayles, indicated that we will be needing lots of volunteers to man tables and help with setup and cleanup. There will be a sign-up sheet at the March 17th meeting. Please check your calendar before you come and plan on signing up now.

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Linda's Orange Catt in full bloom March 2019



Give Me Some Air

Combining Humidity with Air that Feels Light and Is Constantly Moving Benefits Plants

During the 19th-century Orchidmania craze that swept Europe, thousands of orchids would die in dry, heated “stoves,” as the orchid greenhouses were called. It is surprising that any survived and it was only the sheer numbers being ripped from the jungles at that time that allowed a hobby to be born. These early orchid hobbyists had little first-hand knowledge of where or how orchids grew and the plants often arrived in Europe unaccompanied by the person who collected them. The notion was that epiphytic orchids grew in dank and steamy tropical jungles. There certainly are orchids that come from sea level forests close to the equator, but even in those places there is open air movement, the subject we will cover here.

Humidity and air movement are qualities of the air that surround your orchids, and you. Although there are genera-specific requirements for more or less humidity, most tropical epiphytic orchids require 50–70 percent humidity. Less than 40 percent humidity can cause plants to grow poorly or at best, less than optimum. Plants transpire moisture through stomata, tiny pores on the leaves. If the humidity of the growing environment is too low, orchid plants will transpire water faster than they can take it up through the roots and become desiccated. Roots and potting media will also dry out quicker when a plant is kept in a dehydrated state. Watering more frequently is not a solution for dehydration and leads to root problems because of rapid decay of the medium.

If you grow orchids in a greenhouse it is most likely properly equipped to provide an acceptable range of humidity. Evaporative coolers are an excellent means of adding humidity and keeping temperatures cooler in summer. If you grow orchids in the home, you have more of a challenge to maintain proper humidity. Winter heating and summer air conditioning both dry the air significantly. For just a few plants there is a classic solution that may be somewhat limited in its effectiveness, but is easy and provides some humidity. Fill a shallow tray (such as an aluminum oven liner) with pebbles, and then add water to just below the tops of the pebbles. Set your orchid pots on the pebbles. Refill the tray every few days as needed (if algae builds up, empty the pebbles into a colander in the sink and rinse with diluted bleach, then plenty of clean water and then return to the tray). This works well if you are growing just a few orchids on a windowsill. Misting can also help, but the water evaporates so quickly that the benefits do not last long. If you have a larger collection that you perhaps grow on a plant stand or cart, an inexpensive humidifier can be bought for slightly more than the cost of a couple of orchid plants. Look for one with a large reservoir that does not need frequent refilling. Specific orchid-growing setups such as orchidariums, terrariums, Wardian cases and many under-lights setups in basements all will provide ample humidity.

If you were to visit the habitat of an epiphytic orchid such as *Cattleya mossiae*, you would discover a setting totally contrary to the Victorian perception mentioned in the first paragraph. You would be in the Venezuelan mountains at an elevation of about 3,000–4,500 feet (915–1,370 m) and the cattleyas would be growing in the canopy of the trees above you. Air constantly flows up the mountains and the tops of the trees sway in the breeze. Many of our favorite orchids come from this kind of airy environment.

Optimum conditions for cultivating orchids are often described with the words “buoyant atmosphere.” What that describes is air that feels light and is constantly moving. Primarily, a buoyant atmosphere provides a constantly fresh supply of carbon dioxide to the trees and the orchids in them. Green plants convert carbon dioxide and water into food compounds (such as glucose) and oxygen through the process called photosynthesis. Air that is constantly moving provides other benefits, such as eliminating pockets of extreme temperatures and moderating the temperature of both air and leaves. An adequately ventilated orchid growing space discourages fungal infections by hastening the evaporation of standing water. The surest way to discourage the flower-damaging fungus *Botrytis cinerea* is to increase air movement.

Providing orchids with air movement is one of the easiest things to achieve. If you are growing a few orchids on a windowsill, merely open the window a few inches any time the outside temperature is above 50 F (10 C). If you have a grow cart of orchids, one or two 6- or 8- inch (15- or 20-cm) muffin fans will do the trick. Turn them on low and aim them above or to the side of the orchids to draw air over the plants. Ceiling fans provide excellent air circulation for patios and sunrooms, while most commercial greenhouses offer fan options. If yours does not, buy one or two 24-inch (60 cm) box fans, depending on the size of your structure.

As you have probably gathered, if the setting feels comfortable to you, your orchids will like it too.

---Article courtesy of the AOS Education Committee, originally published in ORCHIDS Magazine March 2013.



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Upcoming Meetings

March 17 ~ John Dunkleberger	April 27-April 28 ~ Orchid Show @ Roberson
April 7 ~ Spring Auction!	May 19 ~ Repotting Clinic

Please remember that these are tentative and subject to last minute change.

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