



# Southern Tier Orchid Society

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## October 2013

### NEXT MEETINGS

**October 20, 2:00** First United Methodist Church of Endicott

**November 17, 2:00** First United Methodist Church of Endicott

### IN THIS ISSUE

- Don't miss our October meeting! Our guest speaker will be Paul Sheetz of Just Pat Orchids!

### Meeting NOTES

Paul Sheetz, owner of Just Pat Orchids, will give a presentation on "Complex Paph Orchids and Their Hybridization" by Dr. William W. Wilson of Penn Valley Orchids of Philadelphia, Pa.

Any contributions, articles, and/or photos for the monthly newsletter are appreciated! Please submit any inputs by the first week of the month for inclusion in the upcoming newsletter.

### EDITOR'S NOTE

Contributions, including pictures, to the STOS newsletter from members are welcomed. Contributions must be submitted by the 5<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:southerntierorchidsociety@gmail.com)

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### President's Message

September meeting was our annual auction. The auction went well, everyone seemed to have a good time, and the club made a profit. Thanks to our Treasurer Jane Trey who recorded winning bids and handled the money. This money will be used to pay club expenses such as speakers. Special thanks also to Pete O'Connell for ordering plants and running the auction with assistance from Luis. At Octobers' meeting, we will have a speaker (Paul Sheetz) who is known to you all as a judge at our show. Please plan to attend on Sunday, October 20 and support your Orchid Society. We need to have more members attend the monthly meetings. Without member participation there will no Orchid Society. Also, on the agenda is the appointment of a nominating committee to select candidates for office for 2014 to be presented at the November meeting with election in December.

CNYOS the Syracuse club is having its' annual show at the Beaver Lake Nature Center in Baldwinsville near Syracuse this weekend October 5th and 6th. I plan to set up my educational exhibit with some added plants representing STOS. If you are free please feel free to attend and support our sister club. Their web site is <http://www.cnyos.org> which has their information and directions.

I would like final approval from the club of my Show Manual. I have sent you all the first portion with my concepts for running the Show at the Mall. To date, all comments to me have been positive. I will pass around the second part at the meeting (47 pages) which has all the forms we use for the show, all contact information, AOS information, entry forms, judging map, Mall rules, who has the show supplies , etc. This manual is purposely written in Microsoft Word so it can be continually updated. The Manual took over a month to write and should be helpful to future show chairs, as it has all the information in one place. Special thanks Pete O'Connell, Ann Tinker, Bob Howe, Bob Rudin, who supplied me with information that I included in the manual and Linda Mandeville who was my proofreader and grammar corrector. I also have placed the entire manual on flash drives to make it easily portable.

Hope to see you all on the 20th!

John Zygmunt  
STOS President

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### Minutes for September 15

The STOS met today for the first time since the summer break. Some of our members arrived earlier than usual today to help set up for the STOS AUCTION.

Our meeting was called to order by our president, John Zygmunt, at approximately 1:20 PM. At that time, our president welcomed new members, Liz and Butch. Each member gave us a synopsis of how they came to be interested in joining our organization. We welcome each of you and look forward to getting to know you!



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## Monthly Show Table

There was no Show Table this month since we held our annual Auction. We look forward to seeing members' beautiful, blooming orchids at our October meeting!

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## Orchid Nutrition for Winter

Planning for the optimum health and blooms of your orchids through winter and into spring is as important as their day-to-day care. Preparing now for orchids' seasonal nutritional needs can boost their resistance to damage from pests, disease and winter temperatures in the coming months.

### Overall Health

Orchids will fare better in encounters with pests, diseases and temperature extremes if they are in a good state of overall health. A plant suffering from under or over-fertilizing, or stressed from lack of water is much more likely to be injured by any additional strain.

Orchids grown under less than ideal conditions are more likely to be a target for infection or infestation. Make an extra effort now to get plants and their greenhouse or growing area in good shape for the shorter, darker days ahead by removing old foliage, weeds and dying flowers. An autumn cleanup can minimize or prevent the pest and disease problems that can crop up in the darker and more crowded conditions that often characterize the winter growing area.

### General Nutrition

Light levels and temperatures begin to fall at this time of year, and your orchids' nutritional needs change accordingly. Orchid growers can take the following steps now to help prepare their collection for optimal health through the months ahead.

If your orchids will winter outdoors, fertilizing properly can help them resist cold, insect and disease damage, as well as give them two to three additional degrees of cold resistance. This can mean the difference between a dead orchid and an unscathed plant or one that just loses a few leaves.

Use a fertilizer low in nitrogen (which should be nitrate nitrogen, not urea nitrogen) and high in potassium; the numbers on the label should read something like 10-5-20. Watering and fertilizing should be reduced in frequency for the cooler autumn season, and orchids that bloom during the winter and into spring should be given a couple of doses of blossom booster in October and November; bloom boosters should have a higher middle number, such as 10-50-10.

Ideally, this change in fertilizer should start by mid-November and continue through the end of January. This regime will sacrifice plant growth in December and January in favor of plant protection, but it can help keep the plant healthier overall.

Some growers recommend using Dyna-Gro Pro-TeKt (0-0-3), a liquid nutritional potassium-silicon supplement for plants. The product is supposed to improve heat and drought tolerance in orchids, as well as boosting their resistance to pests, disease and environmental stress.

### Specific Genera

Seasonal nutritional needs differ among various orchid genera, and may diverge still further depending on

local climatic conditions in disparate geographic regions. The following guidelines may require modification to accommodate individual growing conditions.

**Cattleya:** Watering and fertilizing frequency should be reduced, as the plants dry out more slowly in the cooler temperatures and shorter days.

Bud sheaths may yellow at this time of year as temperature fluctuations can cause water to condense inside the sheath. Should you notice condensation in the sheath, it should be opened or removed to allow the developing buds adequate air circulation and prevent bud blast caused by rots. Simply slit open the sheath and carefully peel it down toward the pseudobulb, exercising caution so as not to damage the delicate bud primordia within.

**Dendrobium:** Autumn and winter needs vary according to the species or hybrid parentage in this diverse genus. *Dendrobium phalaenopsis* and *Dendrobium canaliculatum* hybrids will benefit from a fertilizer with a low nitrogen formula for optimal flowering.

The leaves of *Dendrobium nobile* types and their hybrids begin to yellow and drop at this time of year in preparation for their winter dormancy. Plants should be given plenty of light and good air circulation and kept dry from November through February. Mist occasionally if their canes become overly shriveled.

**Paphiopedilum:** Generally, these do not require a great deal of fertilizer. This is especially important with the cooler-growing bulldog types to reduce nitrogen levels at this time of year for best flowering. (Bulldog Paphiopedilums have plain green leaves as opposed to the mottled-leaf types. One of the best-known bulldog-type hybrids is *Paphiopedilum Winston Churchill*.) Watch for water accumulating in the growth around the sheath or for late-season warm spells, as either can rot the sheath and destroy the developing inflorescence. While Paphiopedilums should not be allowed to dry out entirely, water needs are significantly reduced in the cooler days. Overwatering can cause root rot or Erwinia problems.

**Phalaenopsis:** Growth slows and inflorescences begin to appear. Reduce watering and fertilizing frequency, and apply a bloom-boosting fertilizer. Many growers also recommend applications of epsom salts (magnesium sulfate) to Phalaenopsis at this time of year to prevent yellowing and loss of lower leaves and to enhance blooming. Once buds are evident on the inflorescences, keep temperatures and humidity consistent to prevent bud drop. Phalaenopsis grown in the greenhouse are especially prone to bud blast in February and early March, when the heat is still coming on at night and the greenhouse temperatures rise during the day.

**Vanda:** Aside from *Neofinetia falcata*, vandaceous orchids generally do not tolerate autumn and winter's cooler temperatures (below 60° F [16° C]) well and need to be carefully protected from chills.

Vandaceous orchids still need as much light as possible as the days become shorter and light levels fall. Reduce the frequency of fertilizing and watering to accommodate the slower growth period they are entering. Starting the first week of October, Julie Rosenberg at R.F. Orchids in Homestead, Florida, recommends feeding vandaceous genera a blossom booster fertilizer exclusively, once a week for four to six weeks, at 1 teaspoon per gallon of water (15 ml to 3.8 l), with normal watering between. In November, begin fertilizing every other week, using a balanced 20-20-20 fertilizer at 1 teaspoon per gallon (15 ml to 3.8 l), substituting bloom booster every fourth feeding.

Preparing now for orchids' seasonal nutritional needs can mean happier, healthier and more productive plants year round.

By Susan Jones Reprinted from *Orchids* -- The Bulletin of the American Orchid Society. Copyright American Orchid Society -- [www.aos.org](http://www.aos.org)

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**Upcoming Meetings**

**October 20** ~ Paul Sheetz-Just Pat Orchids

**December 15** ~ Annual Holiday Party

**November 17** ~ TBA

**January 19** ~ Annual Holiday Party

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

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**Refreshment Volunteers**

More than one person may sign up for an individual meeting so that the cost and work can be shared among members. Please note that volunteers are still needed for several upcoming meetings, so be sure to sign up if you haven't already. Just let Anne Tinker know if you can help. Her contact info is on the front page.

Current refreshments list includes:

**October 20** ~ We Need Your Help!

**December 17** ~ Everyone!!!

**November 17** ~ We Need Your Help!

**January 19** ~ We need your help!