



WOS Newsletter

A Windward Orchid Society Publication

Issue No. 9

June 1991

"On The Orchid Trail" 12th Spring Show A Big Success

It became apparent on the very first day of the show that we were in for an exceptionally successful show. In spite of the minor glitches inherent in this type of operation (or perhaps because of them!), we were on a roll. You could sense that Shirley Knisley felt upbeat as she kept the rest of us updated on the plant sale results throughout the show. The final tally will not be available until all the bills are in, but all indications are that this is unequivocally the most successful show we have ever had.

To top it all, the icing on the cake was our winning the AOS Trophy for the best display in the show. Our super exhibit was the result of the combined efforts and talents of co-chairs, Hattie Holderbaum, Marlene Lau and Irene Wong. Wahine (female) power has done it again! Congratulations to our terrific trio and our faithful and hard-working members who helped out.

Kudos to Ellie Christie for an outstanding job of publicizing the show. Coverage was excellent, and we feel that this was a major contributing factor toward the success of the show.

Our new trophies were a bit hit, thanks to Scot Mitamura. The artistic ceramic pottery by Jeff Chang received a lot of positive comments, and its earthen quality blended in very well with the rest of the flora and the theme of the show. Thanks, Scot, for suggesting it and for making all the arrangements.

A new and popular feature of this year's show was our culture table capably manned by Ted Sumida, Wilbur Chang, Harold Yonamine and David

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Orchidist of the Year



Marlene Lau Accepts Orchidist of Year Award

Marlene Lau was named "Orchidist of the Year" at the WOS Installation and Awards Banquet held at Natsunoya Tea House on March 9, 1991.

Marlene and her significant other, Herbert, have two adult children. In the six years that they have been members, they have both worked tirelessly for the Society.

Hardly missing any of our monthly membership meetings, Marlene has participated in practically all the orchid shows held throughout the island--even to taking vacation leave from her full-time job at the State District Court to help set up displays. Not surprisingly a few of the displays she has helped to set up have captured awards.

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Dendrobiums ... Versatile And Easy To Grow

One of the most popular orchids to grow among backyard hobbyists and beginners is the dendrobium, because it is easy to grow and can be grown as a garden plant (without a hot house). It can also be used in diverse ways; i.e., in leis, corsages, flower arrangements, etc. It is also a very hardy plant that stands up very well to shipping.

Dendrobiums have become a very successful commodity commercially as the demand for it continues to increase and marketing and shipping techniques improve.

Of all the orchid types, the dendrobium has the most diverse number of species (over 1,000) requiring different culture requirements. For purposes of this article we will discuss the more common, evergreen, "cane type" variety. (See separate article on honohono.)

Potting The most important aspect of dendrobium culture is proper potting. Never overpot. In other words, use a pot that is small relative to its size. Use media with good drainage such as hapuu, cinders, gravel, fir bark, hardwood charcoal or a combination of some of these media. Do not be afraid to experiment to get the best combination for your particular area and culture habits.

Watering. Dendrobiums should be watered abundantly during active growth (assuming small pots and good drainage). In warm sunny weather they should be watered every second day. After the plants have matured, however, they should be watered less frequently. Allow plants to dry out between waterings.

Feeding. Use a balanced liquid fertilizer such as 14-14-14 or 18-18-18 twice a month (use 30-10-10 if plants are in fir bark to make up for the loss of nitrogen in the decomposition process of the bark).

Light. Most dendrobiums grow and flower well in fairly strong light. In Hawaii they can be grown successfully outdoors which makes it a favorite "starter" plant for beginners.

Spring Show

(Cont. from page 1)

Kagawa. The steady stream of people who took advantage of the potting demonstrations made it abundantly clear that there continues to be a great deal of interest in orchid culture. This offering also boosted plant sales for who could resist getting a few plants to try out after getting a few tips on "how to?" Ted Sumida deserves the credit for getting this show on the road.

Awards

Congratulations to the following individual members who won prizes for their outstanding plants in the WOS Display:

Scot & Karen Mitamura - "Best White Cattleya," Blc. Meditation 'Superba.'

Kagawa Orchids - "Best Strap Leaf Vanda," V. Keeree's Delight.

George & Irene Wong - Best Vandaceous Hybrid," Opst, Suree 'See's' AM/AOS.

Larry Kamiya - "Best Paphiopedilum Multiflower," Paph. St. Swithin.

Melvin Kwiatkowski - "Best Miniature," Lyc. aromatica.

Elizabeth Chang - "Best Unusual Orchid," Megaclinium falcatum.

Toyoko and Ralph Ajifu - "Best Other Dendrobium," Den. farmeri.

Mahalo Night

Thank you, Toyoko and Ralph Ajifu, for offering your place for our great mahalo dinner. Additional thanks to Toyoko and her helpers for doing all the work involved in putting on this dinner.

Thank You, One and All

Bob Yee, Chairman, would like to thank each and everyone of you who contributed toward making this Spring Show a rousing success.

Conversely, Bob is deserving of praise for chairing a superb show, one that may very well go down in WOS history as the best one ever! A job well done, indeed!

A Critical Factor

Watering Your Plants Properly . . .

The importance of watering your plants properly cannot be over-emphasized. Paradoxically, this apparently simplest of functions in the care of your orchids is also the most critical and difficult to master. Overwatering and, believe it or not, underwatering, are the major causes of death or damage to orchid plants.

And yet, for all its importance this is the one area for which there is no simple formula. Haven't you been frustrated by the answer "that depends" whenever you ask an oldtimer for advice on watering? Actually, although the answer is not very helpful, it is factual!

Everything that impacts on keeping your plant properly watered must be considered. This includes the size of the pot, the material the pot is made of, the potting medium, the requirements of the specific plant, humidity, and light intensity (summer versus winter).

Guidelines

Here are some guidelines to help you develop your watering expertise:

- Overwatering means watering too often, not watering well. When watering, water thoroughly. Make sure every pot is completely watered and drained. This will ensure even moisture throughout the plant and also serves to leach out any harmful salts that may have collected in the pots. Underwatering the same plants over and over again can damage or kill your plants just as surely as if you had overwatered them.

- Plastic pots and glazed ceramic pots retain water longer than terracotta and cement pots. Baskets require more water than containers with closed sides.

- The more heat, the more water plants will need. Do not allow your plants to overheat. On hot sunny days

"mist" your plants in the morning between watering. They will need more moisture to replenish that which is lost through the leaves.

- Check out the requirements of the plant. Some genera need to dry out between watering while others need to be constantly moist (moist, not wet). Segregate accordingly.

- Do not mix newly potted plants with non-established root systems together with plants with healthy, vigorous root systems and water them all the same. Place all newly potted plants together in a more shaded area for about two months. Some roots will be damaged during repotting and must have time to heal. Do not overwater during the healing process or the plant will rot.

- "Flag" plants that retain water longer due to old media breaking down. This will also serve to remind you that these plants need repotting soon.

- Plants that are vigorously growing require more frequent water during their growing process.

- Place plants together by pot sizes. Smaller pots may require watering every other day as opposed to larger plants which may require watering only once or twice a week.

- When using sphagnum moss or rockwool, do not pack too tightly as this will inhibit good drainage. Do not allow to dry completely between waterings because it will be hard to rewet.

- Consider using coarse perlite as an additive to your mix to facilitate good drainage. (See article on perlite elsewhere in this newsletter).

- Avoid watering in the evenings if at all possible. Water that stands in the crown of plants overnight will lead to crown rot or disease (phalaenopsis is especially susceptible). If you must water in the evenings, don't water

(Cont. on page 4)

Eternally Popular Hawaii's Favorite The Honohono

Now that another honohono season has ended and all the hoopla and publicity on this old Hawaiian favorite are history once again, don't you wish you had given your plants a little more attention so that you could have had a better year? You need only to check the prices of blooming honohonos at the garden shops to dispel any snobbery or prejudice about this "common" plant that any self-respecting orchidists wouldn't bother growing.

This sentimental, old-time favorite has enjoyed a resurgence in popularity a few years ago and, let's face it, it's here to stay. It may not be as exotic as other species of orchids, but here in the islands no other orchid is as loved. Certainly, no other orchid can attract more attention and evoke more ooh's and aah's than a blooming, well-grown honohono, and its fragrance is unequalled.

In Hawaii we have identified this orchid by its Hawaiian name, "honohono," for so long that many of us are not aware that its botanical name is *Dendrobium Superbum* (Anosmum). It got its name from their resemblance to the wandering Jew plant with long drooping stems and broad leaves.

History

The honohono was discovered by Cuming in the neighborhood of Manila in the late 1830's. It was sent to Messr. Loddiges in Hackney, England, where it flowered in 1839 and was described by Lindley in the same year.

There is no written record as to who brought the first plants to Hawaii. They may have been introduced by some seafarer who came from the Philippines. According to some old-timers, the white variety was brought in later. *Dendrobium Anosmum* is nearly odorless but the variety *Superbum* has the powerful scent.

So, let's start getting ready for next year! To ensure glorious plants next spring, begin proper culture now.

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Notable Quotables

"Don't be afraid to stress your plants."

... *Scot Mitamura on getting your plants to flower.*

"Paphs got a bum rap."

... *Doug DeMoss on paphiopedilum's reputation for being difficult to grow in Hawaii.*

"Paphiopedilums, the next wave to hit the islands."

... *Larry Kamiya on the future of paphs in Hawaii.*

"You can grow orchids in anything except dirt."

... *Ted Sumida on potting media.*

"Because the flower is ugly, don't assume the plant is junk."

... *Wilbur Chang on a hard lesson learned after giving away a valuable species plant because the petals and sepals were too skinny.*

Watering

(Cont. from page 3)

from overhead; try to water directly on the potting mix.

Generally speaking you will probably find that most of your plants need watering about twice a week.

How can you tell when to water? Stick your finger in the medium and if it feels moist, don't water. If you don't want to or can't because of the type of medium used, use a newly sharpened pencil and twirl it into the medium. If it comes up damp, the plant has enough moisture.

It takes lots of practice and experience to master the art of watering properly, but it is very critical that you do so, and it will pay dividends.

The Honohono

(Cont. from page 4)

First, cut off bare canes and discard or set aside to sprout new shoots. Tie some chicken manure in a bag (old nylon stockings will do) and tie it on top of the plant. The plant will then self-fertilize every time you water. Keep the plants wet. Water every day (twice or thrice a day if necessary) and fertilize with soluble fertilizer (half strength) every week rather than full strength once a month. Stop fertilizing in November or early December when the plant goes into dormancy.

The flowers will bloom in late March and April. Albeit for a relatively short time (about two weeks), it's worth it!

Annual Honohono Show

For the serious honohono grower, the annual exhibition at the Arboretum in Manoa is a must. Each spring, around April, the best blooming honohono's (and nestors) grown by specialists in the field are displayed in all their splendor--some as long as six feet! They also conduct classes on honohono culture and sell plants if you want to expand your collection.

(Mahalo to Bill Lorimer for the information on the history of the honohono.)



WOS Newsletter

The WOS Newsletter is published quarterly by the Windward Orchid Society, P.O. Box 23, Kaneohe, Hawaii 96744. Distribution is free to all members.

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Members' Hints

Fellow member Mabel Keesling has submitted three wonderful hints that she would like to share with the rest of the membership. Likewise, if you have any hints that you have found helpful, won't you share them with us?

...Editor

- Always keep a small hand sprayer on hand (the cheap little bottle sprayers) filled with a Physan solution at the rate of 1 teaspoon to a gallon for spot treating your plants. This gives additional protection against both bacteria and fungus. It will not stain foliage. It is most helpful especially during prolonged humid or rainy spells such as we had last year. (From Bob Gordon's "The Culture of the Phalaenopsis Orchid.")

- Here's a new way of sterilizing tools that those of us who have been relying on a candle and a prayer (or a bic lighter and burnt fingers) should try. Make a saturated solution of TSP (tri-sodium phosphate--what painters use) in a wide mouth jar and stand shears and cutting tools in it. A saturated solution is made by putting enough in the jar so there is always some undissolved material in the bottom. Renew the solution when it becomes discolored. Wash the tools before putting them in the jar. This does not dull tools, but should you get moving parts wet, it may require a drop of oil. (From Rebecca Tyson North's 1990 revised edition of "Home Orchid Growing.")

- The orchidist's worst nightmare--the dreaded red-vented bulbul. Mabel has noticed that the bulbuls have preferred her husband's vegetables to her orchids--especially those little hot peppers which are planted some distance away from the orchids. If you have an unresolved bulbul problem, you might want to try her theory that she escaped the bulbul problem because of those little hot peppers, olé! If you can't beat 'em, feed 'em.

Perlite, A Great Mixer To Try

It is absolutely essential that there is a free flow of air around the roots of your plant so that oxygen (for respiration) and carbon dioxide (for photosynthesis) are continually available. Without sufficient air, the roots die, and anaerobic fungi and bacteria cause them and the surrounding potting mix to decay.

When your potting mix begins to break down and disintegrate, it fills up the spaces which previously existed in between your medium. This will deprive your plant of aeration and will lead to root rot and the destruction of your plant. (This is why it is so important to repot your plants often.)

When added to your potting mix, perlite can improve aeration and drainage by leaving a passage for water to travel out. Perlite does not break down easily. It is sterile, lightweight and retains water without becoming soggy. When repotting time comes around, you will find that perlite will prevent your old potting material from sticking to the roots of your plant making it a lot easier to clean the yucky stuff off.

How much should you use? Scot Mitamura and Randy Tajima, two of our best growers, use of one part of coarse perlite to their fir bark mixes. (Scot uses five parts fir bark, one part coarse peat moss, and one part coarse perlite. Randy uses seven parts fir bark, one part coarse peat moss, and one part coarse perlite, sometimes adding bits of kiawe charcoal.)

Orchidist of Year

(Cont. from page 1)

Always congenial, Marlene is a "natural" as a social director. She has served in the past as program chairman for our general meetings and, in addition, has been responsible for putting on great Society banquets.

Without a doubt Marlene is a multi-talented, dedicated and involved member of the WOS and is most deserving of the honor of being named "Orchidist of the Year."

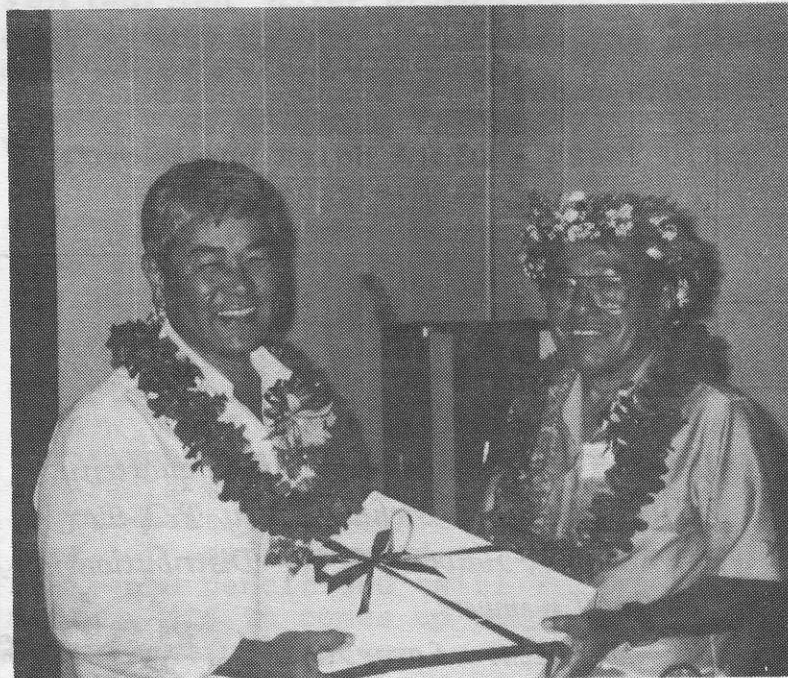
Be A Friend To Our Public Library

From time to time (about twice a year), you will receive a notification in the mail advising you that it's your turn to take a plant to the Kaneohe Library. For those of you who may not know what it's all about, please read on.

As a public service, the Windward Orchid Society has adopted the practice of decorating the Library with orchid plants. We feel that this is a small contribution to make to our community. Our plants add considerable beauty to the facility and they are appreciated by everyone who works there, as well as those who use the library.

When you get a notice, therefore, we would sincerely appreciate your cooperation insofar as it is feasible to do so. Mahalo!

(If you wish to read or borrow any books on orchid culture, please ask for the books at the front desk because they are kept in a locked bookcase and are not available on the shelves.)

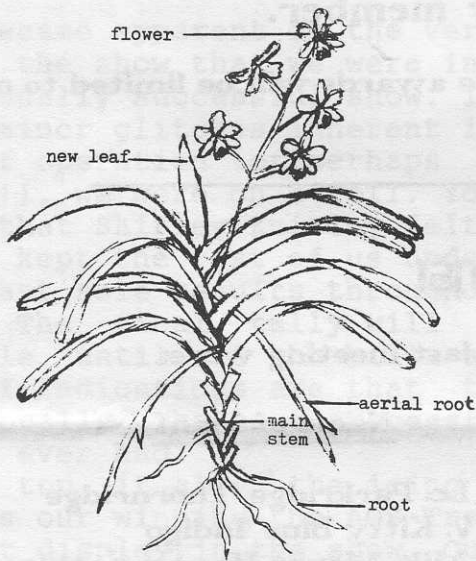


Incoming President Larry Higa (left) expresses WOS's appreciation to outgoing President Harold Yonamine (right) at Installation Dinner

A Beginner's Primer . . .

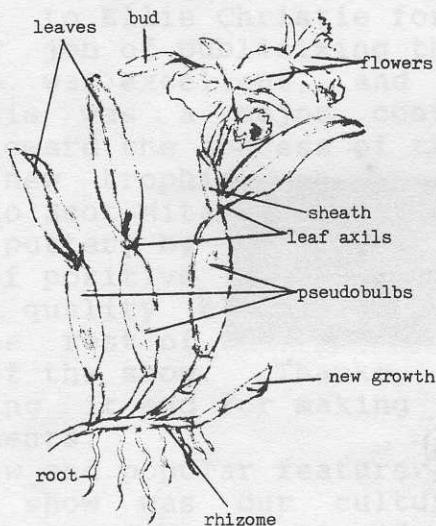
The Anatomy of an Orchid

There are basically two fundamental types of orchids based on their growth habits. The first is the monopodial (Latin for single foot) orchid, which keeps growing upward from a single main stem such as the vanda and the phalaen-



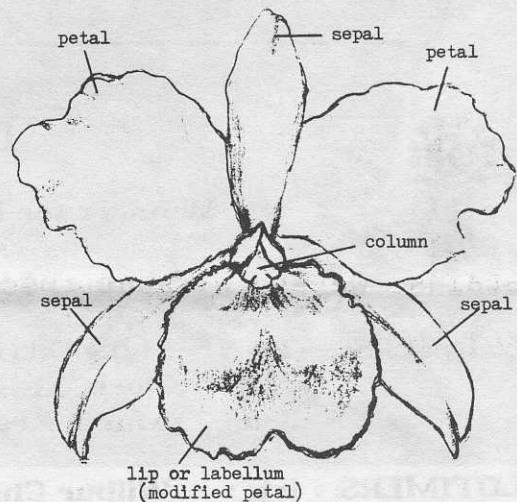
Monopodial

nopsis. The second is the sympodial (Latin for many footed) orchid, which grows outward, creeping along from its stem called the rhizome, such as the cattleya and paphiopedilum.



Sympodial

Flowers of all orchids are structured on a basic formula. There are three sepals and three petals--one of which is a modified petal called the labellum or more commonly, the lip. This third petal is different from the others in that it is larger and more showy. In some genera such as the paphiopedilum, the two lateral sepals are fused into one unit and is identified as the synsepal.



Flower Structure

Although we tend to think of orchids as coming from steamy jungles in tropical locations, they grow nearly in all parts of the world. Some orchids grow in the ground (terrestrial) but the majority, especially in tropical and subtropical areas, grow attached to trees or rocks (epiphytic). Because of this growth pattern, some orchids are thought to be parasitic when, in fact, they are not.

Orchids do not need elaborate care and are not necessarily harder to grow than any other plant. All you need to know is how to provide them with the proper amounts of four elements--light, air, water, and fertilizer. In fact, in time you will learn how to deliberately neglect your plants lest you kill them with too much kindness!

General Membership Meeting

DATE: Wednesday, July 3, 1991
 PLACE: Benjamin Parker Elementary School
 TIME: 7:30 p.m.
 PROGRAM: Presentation by Harold Yonamine
 Topic: Dendrobium Culture - My Way

Plant Sale as usual. Limit 5 plants per member.

Bring your plants for display and discussion. (Culture awards will be limited to one per person, per meeting.)



CONGRATULATIONS!

Winners for best plants at our last meeting were:

	<u>Name of Owner</u>	<u>Name of Plant</u>
BEGINNERS:		
1st :	Malie Griffith	Lc. Parkridge 'Thornridge'
2nd :	Gloria Nishimoto	V. Kitty Blue 'Indigo'
3rd :	Mabel Keesling	Milt. Mount Hood x Kathleen Oka
OLDTIMERS:		
1st :	Wilbur Chang	L. Purpurata var. 'Shuster'
2nd :	Herbert/Marlene Lau	Haw. var. Red Velvet x Self
3rd :	Clarence Kelly	Mlcna. Pagan Love Song



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