

# Nutmeg State Orchid Society Inc.

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**Affiliated with the American Orchid Society**



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## The President's Message:



Welcome back from Summer! Its time to begin bringing in the orchids that have been on vacation (spray them well with your favorite pesticide – neem oil, careful, it burns some orchids, Physan 20, 1 teaspoon per gallon, Malathion, insects only, or other). Cymbidiums and others that require very low temperatures to set buds can stay out for a few more weeks but watch out for frost.

The NSOS Fall season kicked off on Sept 17 with our annual picnic. Thirty-four of us had a great time getting back into orchids and enjoying outstanding food brought by the members. Thank you again to Sandy Myhalik and Steve Calderon for hosting and Steve for your great cooking! Our first Fall meeting will be on October 3 at Camp Happy Hill in Farmington; our good friend Glen Decker from Piping Rock will talk to us about growing tropical slipper orchids – Paph's and Phrag's.

The Fall orchid show season is here as well. NSOS will exhibit at the Massachusetts Society Show the weekend of November 4 at Tower Hill in Boylston. Start grooming your plants! Our society did quite well there last Fall.

The Connecticut Orchid Society will have their show The weekend of October 20 at Van Wilgen's in Branford. Make sure to attend and support our state's sister society.

Elections will be held in December. We will be electing a new President and a new Director to replace me and Jay Presbie, respectively. Jeanne McDermott's tenure as "co-vice president" will also end this year. Since this was a temporary position not envisioned in the bylaws, it will come to an end. We will pole the other officers and directors to determine whether any of them will not be able to complete their final year of service during 2012. I will serve as Chair of the Nominations Committee – at our October meeting I will need to secure two additional members from the society so be ready to raise your hands!

We look forward to see everyone's smiling faces on October 3!

Ron Burch



## NUTMEG STATE ORCHID SOCIETY MENTOR LIST 2010

Ron Burch	Cypripediums Native orchids	860-567-0431	<a href="mailto:ronjonb@aol.com">ronjonb@aol.com</a>	Call/e-mail anytime
Walter Doehr	Cymbidiums, Phals., Growing under lights  Hydroponics	203-634-7712	<a href="mailto:johndeered@att.net">johndeered@att.net</a>	Call/e-mail anytime
Joe Hertz	Under lights and Windowsill growing  All species	860-233-5505	<a href="mailto:jhertz1015@aol.com">jhertz1015@aol.com</a>	Call/e-mail anytime
Julia Massolin-Walas	All species, Hydroponics  Pests & diseases, Mounting/Repotting  Dividing	860-673-3578	<a href="mailto:orchidjulia@hotmail.com">orchidjulia@hotmail.com</a>	Call/e-mail anytime
Jeanne McDermott	Windowsill growing:  Phals, Paphs, Brassia, Oncidiums, Cymbidiums, Miltoniopsis & mixed genera	860-677-5381	<a href="mailto:jtmcdermott@comcast.net">jtmcdermott@comcast.net</a>	Call/e-mail anytime
Sandy Myhalik	Phalaenopsis	860-677-0504	<a href="mailto:myhalik@comcast.net">myhalik@comcast.net</a>	
Jay Presbie	Growing under lights  All species	860-651-3155	<a href="mailto:jpresbie@sprintmail.com">jpresbie@sprintmail.com</a>	Call/e-mail anytime
John Sziklas	Paphiopedilums Phragmepediums  Cattleyas	860-658-2908		Call anytime

NSOS now has a mentor list and would like to add more folks going forward. We are looking for people that are willing to answer questions on something that you are familiar with pertaining to orchids. You do not have to be an expert, just able to help someone who has a question in your area of knowledge. We all have areas that we feel comfortable in that would be of great assistance to someone just starting out. If you wish to be added to our NSOS Mentor List, please send me a note:

### PICNIC

The picnic was held on Sept. 17<sup>th</sup> with 34 members attending. From the reports that I received fun was had by all.





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## **SPEAKER**

The Speaker this month will be Glen Decker

Glen began growing orchids at the age of 15 and holds the degree of Associate in Applied Science in Ornamental Horticulture. He is the owner of Piping Rock Orchids in Galway, New York. Glen was the previous chair of the American Orchid Society's Publications Committee and is presently a Director of the Orchid Digest Corporation. Glen has won numerous American Orchid Society awards, including the Butterworth Prize, Nax Trophy, WW Wilson Award and the Carlyle A. Luer Award. He has appeared in Martha Stewart's Better Living Magazine and on a PBS TV special "Orchid Delirium". Glen rewrote the Slipper section of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden's "The Best Orchids for Indoors" and was the technical editor for the "Orchids for Dummies" book. He is also an animated and down to earth speaker, so be prepared to learn!

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**2011**

**October 2 , 12:00pm ... Northeast Judging Center - Boylston, Tower Hill Garden, 11 French Dr., Boylston, MA**

**October 3, ...NSOS meeting 7:00pm – - Glen Decker from Piping Rock Orchids will give a presentation on” How to Grow Great Slipper Orchids” - Held at the Lions Clubs Camp Happy Hill, 87 W. Avon Rd, Unionville, CT @ 7 pm – 9 pm**

**October 16, 12:00pm ... Northeast Judging Center - Elmsford, The Hampton Inn, 200, Tarrytown Rd., Elmsford, NY**

**November 6 , 12:00pm ... Northeast Judging Center - Boylston, Tower Hill Garden, 11 French Dr., Boylston, MA**

**November 7, ...NSOS meeting 7:00pm – Margaret McBride from Black Meadow Flora inc. from Chester NY will give a presentation, Topic TBA - Held at the Lions Clubs Camp Happy Hill, 87 W. Avon Rd, Unionville, CT @ 7 pm – 9 pm**

**November 20, 12:00pm ... Northeast Judging Center - Elmsford, The Hampton Inn, 200, Tarrytown Rd., Elmsford, NY**

**December 4 , 12:00pm ... Northeast Judging Center - Boylston, Tower Hill Garden, 11 French Dr., Boylston, MA**

**December 5, ...NSOS meeting 7:00pm – Holiday Party & Elections - Held at the Lions Clubs Camp Happy Hill, 87 W. Avon Rd, Unionville, CT @ 7 pm – 9 pm**

**December 18, 12:00pm ... Northeast Judging Center - Elmsford, The Hampton Inn, 200, Tarrytown Rd., Elmsford, NY**

**Meetings are held at the Lions Clubs Camp Happy Hill, 87 W. Avon Rd, Unionville, CT @ 7 pm – 9 pm the first Monday of each month unless otherwise posted above or on our website.**

**ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS:** Starting in January I would like to start a new feature with input from the membership. I would like to include tips that you have tried that work. I would like input from all our members whether you are new or old to orchids.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

**NSOS financial data is available to members upon request. Send your inquiries to our Treasurer, Tom Mierzejewski: [tommajeski@comcast.net](mailto:tommajeski@comcast.net) .**

### **Advertising in our NSOS Newsletter**

**Advertising is now open to members and businesses. The following rates apply: \$10/month business card size ad. ¼ page \$25, ½ page \$50. Members would get \$5 & \$10 off these rates respectively. A four line word ad for members would be \$2. Contact Walter Doehr if interested and send your check to Tom Mierzejewski, our Treasurer.**

### **Refreshments :**

**It is requested that for the October meeting, those members with last names beginning with A thru M bring in a snack or finger food to share with members. Thanks in advance for your contributions!**



# Robert Hirnyk Memorial Library

	TITLE	AUTHOR	PUB
1	Book of Orchids	Withner, Dr. Carl	1985
2	Botanical Orchids and How to Grow Them	Kramer, Jack	1998
3	Complete Guide to Maine's Orchids	Kenan, Philip E.	1983
4	Exotic Orchids -- Successful Indoor Gardening	Rittershausen, Wilma	1989
5	Expanding Your Orchid Collection	Rentoul, J. N.	1989
6	Field Guide to the Orchids of Britain and Europe	Williams, John & Andrew	1978
7	Flowers of the Amazon Forest	Mee, Margaret	1988
8	Forgotten Orchids of Alexandra Brun	Cribb, Philip	1992
9	International Book of Orchids	Hunt, P. Francis	1979
10	Miniature Orchids	McQueen, Jim and Barbara	1992
11	Orchid Genera Illustrated	Sheehan, Tom and Marion	1979
12	Orchids	Black, Peter McKenzie	1973
13	Orchids	Menzies, David	1991
14	Orchids -- A Guide to Cultivation	Cribb, Dr. Philip & Bales, Chris	1992
15	Orchids -- Natural History & Classification	Dressler, Robert L.	1990
16	Orchids -- Wonders of Nature	Kijima, Takashi	1987
17	Orchids at Kew	Stewart, Joyce	1992
18	Orchids from Seed	Thompson, P.A.	1974
19	Orchids of Africa	Stewart, Joyce & Hennessey, Esme F.	1981
20	Orchids of Asia	Eng Soon, Teoh	1980
21	Slipper Orchids	Hennessey, Esme F. & Hedge Tessa A.	1989
22	Southern African Epiphytic Orchids	Paul, John S.	1978
23	The Specialist Orchid Grower	Rentoul, J. N.	1987
24	Wild Orchids of Britain and Europe	Davies, Paul and Jenne	1983
25			

## AOS CORNER

### Monthly Checklist for September and October



*Cynoches chlorochilon*, the green swan orchid.

### Cattleya

Despite the shortening days and lowering angle of the sun, September can still be one of the hottest months. Water and fertilizer need to be in balance with heat and light. The alert grower will notice, however, that his or her plants are beginning to slow down a bit. Growths are maturing, and the sheaths are giving the promise of the next six-months' bloom.

Check plants for potting needs for the last time this season. Any in dire need should be potted, even some that may be on the cusp, as there is just enough of the growing season left to allow the plants to establish before the days start to get really short and cold.

This is the month for purples derived from *Cattleya labiata* breeding to flower. If you are short on flowers, look into this group. There is nothing that can quite match this type for beauty and fragrance. They are easy to grow, too.

Plants summered outdoors should begin to be prepared to be brought back into the winter growing area. Clean the plants up and be on the lookout for any pests they may have picked up during the summer. Treat as necessary.

## Cycnoches

This little-known and under-appreciated genus, which can have male or female flowers, is at its best in the autumn. Two of the spectacular varieties are *Cycnoches loddigesii*, with its large brown flowers resembling a prehistoric bird, and *Cycnoches chlorochilon*, the swan orchid. This last one has large, fragrant green flowers. The biggest problem, culturally, will be red spider mite infestations that require immediate attention. Plants are quite seasonal, requiring heavy watering in the growing season and then a drier dormant winter season.

## Cymbidium

Summer can be the most rewarding season for cymbidiums. Growths should be coming strong now. The leaves of the new growths are best when they are broad and fairly stiff. The color should be a light green to nearly yellow. Early flowering varieties should be showing flower spikes, so move the plants into a cooler area with lower light. For mid-season varieties, lower the dosage of nitrogen to assist in spike initiation.



*Dendrobium* Burana Stripe is a popular and easy phalaenopsis-type hybrid.

## Dendrobium

This is a good season for hybrids of the *Dendrobium phalaenopsis* and *Dendrobium canaliculatum* types. Both are capable of putting on tremendous shows of long-lasting flowers. Fertilize with a low-nitrogen formula to promote the best flowers. *Dendrobium phalaenopsis* can get tall and top heavy, suggesting an attractive and heavy container would be appropriate for this type.

## **Rhynchostele bictoniensis**

Both *Rhynchostele bictoniensis* and its hybrids bloom in this season. *Rhynchostele bictoniensis*, formerly known as *Lemboglossum*, *Odontoglossum*) is a showy species from Mexico that has three different color forms: sulphureum (green with white lip), album (brown with white lip) and roseum (brown with a pink lip). It is a vigorous grower with tall inflorescences of many flowers, and imparts to its progeny (as seen in Odcdm. Bittersweet and Odm. bicross) ease of culture, warmth tolerance and eye-catching patterns. They make a prime candidate for odontoglossum beginners and advanced alike.

## **Paphiopedilum**

Standard, green-leaved paphiopedilums begin to show their bloom sheaths this month. Late-season heat waves can blast these early sheaths, so be observant about proper cooling and air circulation. As with the rest of your plants that may have been summered outdoors, it is time to prepare for their move inside. Clean each plant and implement pest-control practices. Repotting, if necessary, is appropriate.

## **Phalaenopsis**

The bulk of this season's growth is being ripened this month, with growers in cooler climates seeing the first emerging inflorescences. Some night heating may be necessary in the cooler areas. Begin to watch watering more carefully, and reduce feeding proportionately with reduced watering needs. An extra dose of phosphorus and potassium, such as a bloom-booster or high-acid-type fertilizer, is beneficial.

## **Rossioglossum grande**

Once known as *Odontoglossum grande*, this is a spectacular orchid with six to eight flowers up to 8 inches across. Often known as the tiger orchid, it has bright golden yellow flowers heavily marked with chestnut brown barring. The plants are beautiful with a grey-green cast to the foliage, which is borne on succulent pseudobulbs. It prefers hot and wet summers with cooler, even down to 40 F, dry winters. Grow under filtered light. Watch for snails and slugs that eat the flowers, pseudobulbs and leaves.



*Rossioglossum grande* shows off its large, dramatic flowers.

***The AOS thanks Ned Nash and James Rose for this essay.***

## Coming in from the Cold

By Susan Jones

Many growers summer their orchids outdoors to take advantage of the sun and fresh air unavailable to them inside a greenhouse or home. Before bringing plants back inside their winter growing area, check them thoroughly for hitchhikers — plant and insect pests that may ride into the growing area on the returning plants.



Oxalis is a common weed in orchid pots and difficult to pull out. Seedpods can spread seeds over a wide area.

Visually inspect the upper and undersides of leaves and flowers, and around the base of the plant. Check the growing medium and pot or basket exterior from top to bottom. Some growers recommend a few treatments with a systemic insecticide at weekly intervals before bringing plants back in for the fall, even if no pests are in evidence.

A sampling of the many orchid pests growers should be on the lookout for after summering plants outdoors is listed on the opposite page.

In addition to insects, all sorts of weeds can establish in orchid pots or baskets, siphoning off needed water, light and fertilizer from the host orchid. Once introduced into a protected environment such as an indoor growing area, they can quickly spread through a collection.

### **Controls**

The key to control is persistence. Regardless of method or chemical used, remain vigilant and expect to make at least two to three weekly applications.

**Alcohol** A popular home remedy is swabbing bugs off plants with isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol and a Q-tip™. This works for smaller populations of aphids, mealybugs and scale.

**Repotting** During extreme infestation, consider replacing the potting medium. Media can harbor weed seeds, as well as pest eggs and crawlers, so dispose of it in a compost pile or in the garbage. When repotting, a close inspection, and if necessary, a very gentle cleaning and spraying of the roots is essential.

**Oils, Soaps, and Sterilants** Horticultural, neem, and mineral oils smother the insect's breathing pores. These and insecticidal soaps, which dissolve the insect's cuticle, are generally considered safer for use around humans, pets, and plants than insecticides. Weekly applications reduce populations of mites, aphids, scale, mealybugs, sow bugs and pill bugs.

**Growth Regulators and Chitin Inhibitors** Insect-growth regulators, such as Enstar II, include a growth regulator that kills eggs and prevents insect maturation. These need a spreader-sticker (like silicon) to be effective. They are generally regarded as safe around humans and pets.

**Insecticides** Persistent or heavy infestations may require last-resort applications of synthetic insecticides. Some of the more effective insecticides are Orthene (wetttable powder), Malathion (liquid), Diazinon (liquid), and Carbaryl (water-based emusifiable concentrate). Always follow label directions and never exceed the minimum recommended concentration given in mixing directions. Systemic insecticides (Orthene, Shield) absorb into the plant's sap stem, poisoning chewing and sucking insects. Pyrethrum, a natural insecticide derived from plant sources, attacks insects' nervous systems.



Slugs will eat flowers, buds, root tips and new growths. Plants that are summered outdoors are favored haunts for these hungry mollusks.

### **Individual Pests**

Most insecticides have little effect on mites, but there are a number of chemicals specifically for mite control (called acaricides or miticides). A homemade general insecticide that is also effective against mites is 1 pint (.57 l) each of 409 household cleaner and rubbing alcohol, mixed with water to make 1 gallon (4.55 l) of spray.

When controlling aphids, mealybugs and scale, one must also eliminate any ants that protect and farm them. Insecticidal sprays are effective against worker ants that transport and protect the other pests. Use this in conjunction with sugar-based ant baits to kill off the rest of the colony.

For snail and slug control, organic (such as Sluggo, EscarGo, and Worry Free) and chemical baits (such as metaldehyde) are available from garden supply retailers. Many growers also hand-pick the critters off or set out a small tuna-fish type can filled with beer to drown the mollusks. Repotting and thoroughly cleaning all old media from the orchid's roots will eliminate any eggs that may be lurking in the pots.

Roaches, pill bugs, sow bugs and ants can be driven from a plant by immersing the pot, right up over the top of the media, in a bucket of water. The insects will emerge to avoid drowning, and may then be disposed of.

Roaches may also be controlled through the use of baits, but learn quickly to avoid many chemical baits. Roaches will eat borax, however. West Palm Beach Judging Center Photographer Greg Allikas' simple homemade bait can be constructed by gluing a few boric acid tablets (available in grocery stores) to the inside bottom of an empty 35-mm film can. Set the film cans horizontally on the surface of plants' media.

Weeds must be eliminated by hand. Herbicides are likely to damage or kill the orchid host along with the weed. To eradicate well-established weeds, it may be necessary to repot the plant in order to eliminate seeds in the medium.

## **Final Considerations**

On the extreme side, for a plant showing signs of decline from pest or disease, consider whether the low likelihood of rejuvenating the plant justifies the expense and effort of continued treatments. Destruction of a sick plant can not only be used to justify the purchase of a new, healthier one, but may keep the rest of the collection from becoming infected, making it a precaution well worth taking.

Never apply any liquid pest treatment in direct sunlight or high heat. To prevent burning of tissues, always shade plants until the solution dries. Whenever chemical controls are employed, always check to see that the product has been approved for application to orchids, and follow carefully all instructions for the product's safe use. To minimize risks of developing a treatment-resistant pest population, change methods and chemicals occasionally; do not use the same chemical mix more than three to four times sequentially.

Before nighttime temperatures dip too low, take the time to return orchids summering outdoors to their indoor growing spaces. In addition to checking for insects and other pests, remember that a change in environments, especially the light conditions and humidity levels, can impact how successfully your orchids make the transition from the garden back into the greenhouse or home.



Aphids can multiply quickly so it is best to eliminate them before bringing plants inside.

## **Inspect Orchids for These Pests Prior to Bringing them Indoors**

**Aphids** can be found on new growth, at the base of buds, on flowers and on the undersides of leaves. They feed on plant juices, causing poor growth, stunted plants or curled and distorted leaves. Where buds are attacked, the flower — if it opens at all — will be mottled and distorted. The sap sucking may result in wilting, deformed plant growth, yellowing, and even loss of leaves. Another sign of aphids is the presence of ants or sooty mold attracted to the honeydew secreted by these insects. Aphids' salivary secretions can also be toxic to their host plant. Traveling between plants, aphids can introduce and spread virus and disease.

**Mealybugs** suck the sap from plants; they feed under bracts and sheaths, and on the roots. Signs of an infestation include small whitish, powdery or cottony looking deposits on plants. As the damage progresses, leaves may curl, yellow, become stunted, and/or drop. In addition, flower production and stem growth may be reduced. Like aphids and some scales, mealybugs also secrete honeydew, which attracts ants and promotes the growth of sooty molds.

**Mites**, due to their almost microscopic size, are often detected by the damage they inflict. This makes a plant's leaves look silvery, especially on the underside, where they have killed the cells of the surface layer. From the top, the leaf often has many tiny yellow spots that turn brown over time. Mites can severely weaken and disfigure orchids by sucking sap and chlorophyll, causing leaves to blanch and appear silvery, and bruised-looking areas on flowers. Because of their feeding style, they are also potential vectors of diseases.

**Pill Bugs and Sow Bugs** are nocturnal scavengers that prefer to live in humid, sheltered areas that have plentiful decaying organic material (like broken down orchid media), such as orchid pots. They feed on the fungi and bacteria in the dead and rotting vegetation. Orchid roots are damaged when these bugs eat the fungi and microorganisms that inhabit the root surfaces.

**Roaches** enter orchid pots through drainage holes and remain hidden in the growing media by day. Plants kept on the ground are especially vulnerable. The presence of roaches is indicated by their damage to plants (nibbled flowers, root tips and roots, and new growth).

**Scale** establish on the undersides of leaves, down in leaf axils, and beneath the papery sheaths on orchid pseudobulbs, and so may go undetected until they reach infestation level. Adult scale have a waxy protective coating, under which the insect feeds on plant sap, creating chlorotic spots on plant leaves.

**Snails and Slugs** prefer to eat blooms, roots and tender new growths, although they will consume any plant part. They do their damage primarily at night, leaving translucent, shiny slime trails; holes with uneven brown edges eaten through the flower tissues; nibbled roots — thicker roots may only have small pockmarklike holes eaten into them, while smaller, finer roots may be eaten clean through; new growths may be damaged or chewed down to a nub.

*Susan Jones was the editor of Awards Quarterly and assistant editor of Orchids. American Orchid Society, 16700 AOS Lane, Delray Beach, Florida 33446*

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