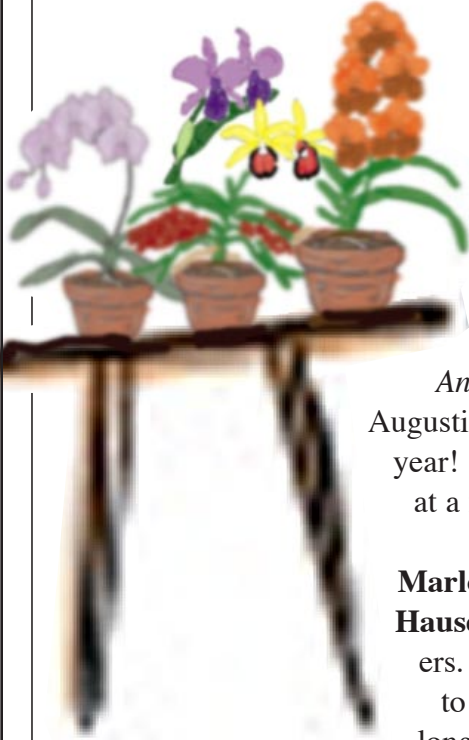
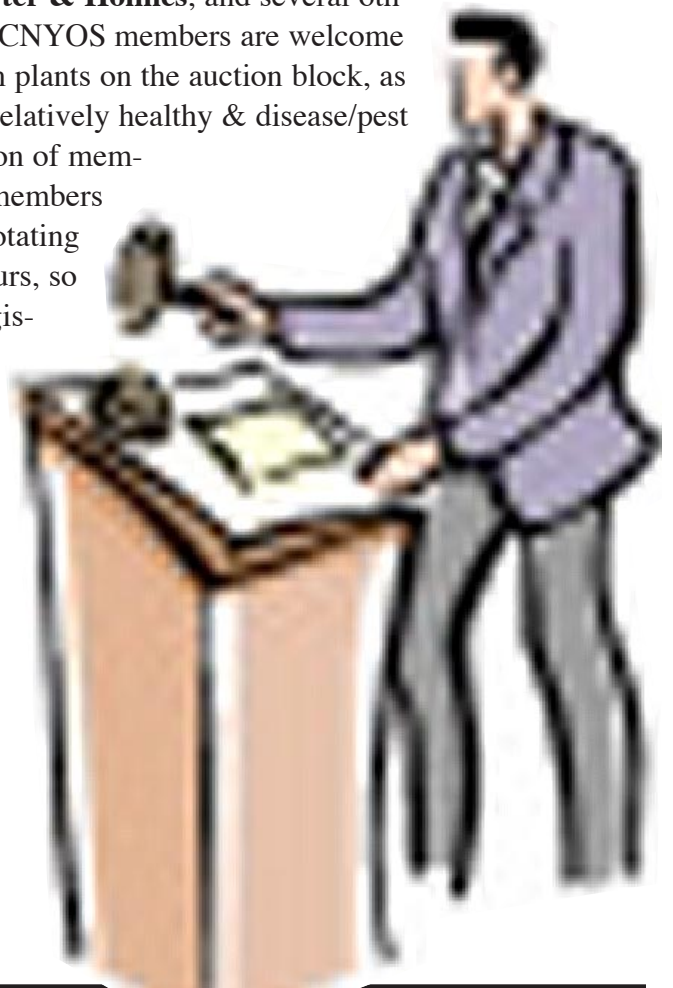


# IT'S AUCTION TIME!



**T**his April has not only been filled with Spring Showers, but Summer temperatures, Winter snows, and crisp Autumn-like mornings! Good grief—living in Central New York can certainly be confusing. But for members of the Central New York Orchid Society, there is little or no confusion as to what May always brings—*The Annual Spring Auction!* To be held Sunday May 5<sup>TH</sup> at 2:00<sup>PM</sup>, St. Augustine’s Church, the auction is our largest fund-raising event of the year! Here is your opportunity to pick up orchids for your collection at a fraction of retail prices. Donations have been requested from a number of reputable vendors, including **Bloomfield Orchids, Marlow’s Orchids, J&L Orchids, Mountain Orchids, Orchids by Hausermann, Carter & Holmes**, and several others. In addition, CNYOS members are welcome to put their own plants on the auction block, as long as they are relatively healthy & disease/pest

free; 50% of the final bids from the auction of members’ plants goes to the club. Several club members have volunteered to be auctioneers on a rotating basis. The auction always takes several hours, so **Please Come Early!** You will need to get registered to receive an auction number, and you’ll probably want a chance to check out the plants as well! During the auction, members are encouraged to keep track of their purchases and / or sales. A list of the orchids on the auction block will be available by request before the meeting, and on the club website once the donations arrive.



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## APRIL MEETING: MOUNTED ORCHID CLINIC

Our April 7<sup>TH</sup> meeting marked our third biennial mounted orchid clinic, and was a resounding success! Well over thirty members showed up to mount orchids that had been preordered from Andy's Orchids in Encinitas, CA. As usual, Andy sent a great selection of healthy orchids for the club to mount, along with some surprisingly large mounts! Jeff Stuart discussed the benefits of growing mounted orchids and how their culture differs from growing orchids in pots (see page 10 for more hints). Using a small amount of moss and some fishing line, participants mounted their selections under the guidance of several members who volunteered to help out. Thanks go out to Dolores Capella and Rich Groll for their help. Also thanks to all the members who helped to clean up the meeting room after the program. Look for the mounted orchid clinic again in the Spring of 2004!



## CNYOS DOES WELL IN ROCHESTER

Members Judi Witkin, Barbara Weller, and Jeff Stuart made the drive out to Rochester to set up the club's display in the Genesee Region Orchid Society Show, held April 20-21. As usual, GROS did an outstanding job in putting together a quality show. There were at least 15 displays of orchids presented by some 4 orchid societies and 10-11 vendors. And speaking of the vendors... The sales area had more than enough to wet any grower's appetite! The club's display, with a basket theme, took second place in its class. In addition, the display was littered with first, second, and third place ribbons going to members' plants. The full list of awards will be available in the June newsletter. Pictures of the display, as well as from the STOS show (April 27-28) are posted on the web site.



1. New members/ guests were introduced including Dave Clemens from the Southern Tier Club.
2. Thanks to Monica Kot and Donna Coleman for the April refreshments.
3. Lindleyana, the scientific journal of the American Orchid Society, has been ordered and will be kept at our library at the Church.
4. AOS has approved our show for this September 27-29.
5. So far, the profits from the club's participation at the Central New York Flower & Garden Show is \$871.
6. GROS is now sponsoring an award for window-sill grown plants. If we need a name for a current name for a plant, please call/E-mail Iris.
7. To help the people doing the displays to everybody's names right and to get the right plants back to the right people, put your name and the name of the plant on tape one the pot of the plant, and then put the list of names of plants attached to your box.
8. STOS Show, April 26-28: Judy Daily and Judi Witkin will set up the club's display. Pat Bonamo (from STOS) will be handling pre-registration and entries can be e-mailed to her prior to the show. We can also contact Iris about names by 4/22.
9. The auction is scheduled for 5/5/02. Jeff Stuart will contact vendors and request donations.
10. Deb Coyle has established a supply box for setting up displays for shows and other events.
11. Ed Cooke stopped by the meeting to announce that he has an opening for part time summer help his landscaping business.
12. Iris has received a request for a speaker 6/4/02 at 7p.m. in Sherrill, N.Y. at the Sherrill Library—anyone interested should contact Iris to make arrangements.
13. Fund Raiser (Holiday Fair) sponsored by the Junior League is scheduled for Veterans Day week-end at the State Fair Grounds. The cost is \$300/booth, and the club will be selling a small selection of "gussied-up" orchids in bloom.
14. CNYOS Member Harold Guay has been ill; Dianne Bordoni, who has volunteered to act as the club's Sunshine Member, will send good wishes on behalf of the club.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Barbara Weller, CNYOS Secretary

- May 5**                      **Annual CNYOS Orchid Auction!**
- June 2**                      **Annual CNYOS Summer Picnic!** Tentative date; details to be announced.
- July 27-28**                      **Parkside Orchid Fest 2002:** A two day educational and sales event hosted at Parkside Orchid Nursery in beautiful Bucks County, PA. 22 Vendors will display and sell the finest in orchids for the beginner to the serious hobbyist. On Saturday, there will be a series of three lecture/workshops and on Sunday you can attend a diagnostic clinic in which you can get all your orchid questions answered. See the Parkside Orchids web page for more information: <http://www.parkside-orchids.com>
- August 24-25**                      **CNYOS Booth at the Great New York State Fair!** CNYOS will have a display and information table in the Horticultural Building at the State Fairgrounds.
- September 27-29**                      **2002 CNYOS Annual Fall Orchid Show & Sale:** Shoppingtown Mall. Details to be announced.
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**GREENHOUSE FOR SALE**

A stand-alone detached metal frame greenhouse (20 x 50 feet), with frame, plastic covers, fan, gas burner and shade-cloth is for sale. Owner would ideally like to sell greenhouse and collection of plants. Buyer will disassemble and move greenhouse to new location. For more information, please call 607-748-0254.

**GROS NEWS: NEWS FROM THE GENESEE REGION ORCHID SOCIETY**

After a very successful Spring show, GROS will have a nice relaxing meeting with Mario Ferrusi as our invited speaker. Mario is a certified AOS judge; no information is yet available on his program.

The GROS Spring Show, held the weekend of April 19-21, garnered an impressive total of five AOS awards, all for flower quality.

Taken with permission from *The Orchid Collection*, Newsletter of the Genesee Region Orchid Society, Vol. 24, No. 7, April 2002, Phil Matt, Newsletter Editor (716) 288-7025.

**STOS NEWS: NEWS FROM THE SOUTHERN TIER ORCHID SOCIETY**

As a way to wind down after their recent show, STOS will be getting their hands dirty at their May 19<sup>TH</sup> meeting by having their annual repotting clinic for the newcomers and the nervous! Come and play in the potting media!

Monthly meetings begin at 2:00<sup>PM</sup> in the Vestal Public Library. For directions, etc. call STOS president Kenneth Lattimore at 570-553-2753 or e-mail him at <klatt@epix.net>.

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## Cypripedium Alliance

<i>Paph. chamberlainianum</i>	Wilson
<i>Paph. hennisianum</i>	"
<i>Paph. charlesworthii</i>	"
<i>Paph. niveum</i>	"
<i>Paph. unknown</i>	*
<i>Paph. Meda Ballard (primulinum x Denehurst)</i>	Stuart
<i>Paph. Woodland Glade (Forest Vale x Shapely)</i>	"
<i>Phrag. besseae</i>	"
<i>Paph. hirsutissimum</i> var. <i>esquirolei</i>	"
<i>Paph. appletonianum</i> var. <i>hainanense</i>	Coleman
<i>Paph. Hellas x White Queen</i>	"
<i>Phrag. Patti MacHale (sargentianum x pearcei)</i>	Ditz
<i>Paph. Delrosi (delenatii x rothschildianum)</i>	"
<i>Paph. Gloriosum x Sunken Treasure</i>	"
<i>Paph. primulinum</i> var. <i>purpurascens</i>	Coyle
<i>Paph. lowii</i>	Rice/Kwiek
<i>Paph. Rosy Egret (appletonianum x acmodontum)</i>	Linehan
<i>Paph. Doctor Jack (concolor x niveum)</i>	Braue
<i>Phrag. Grande (longifolium x caudatum)</i>	Capella
<i>Paph. Royal Dear x leucochilum</i>	"

## Cattleya Alliance

<i>Lpt. bicolor</i>	Coleman
<i>Iwan. Appleblossom (sic)</i> ( <i>Dial. Snowflake x Blc. Orange Nuggett [sic]</i> )	Introne
<i>Slc. Jewel Box (Anzac x C. aurantiaca)</i>	"
<i>Slc. Jewel Box</i>	Braue
<i>Slc. Frank's Valentine (California Apricot x Precious Stones)</i>	Cohen
<i>Kalopternix sophronites</i>	Witkin
<i>Bc. King Harold (sic) (Rhyncholaelia digbyana x C. Harold)</i>	Stuart
<i>Epidendrum pseudepidendrum</i>	Ditz
<i>Slc. Fire Lighter (sic) (Bright Angel x Sl. Orpetii)</i>	Rice/Kwiek
<i>Epi. unknown†</i>	"
<i>Lc. Mari's Song (Irene Finney x C. Cherry Chip)</i>	Capella
<i>Bl. Morning Glory (B. nodosa x L. purpurata)</i>	Bonamo
<i>Epic. Autumn Gold (?) (C. Chocolate Drop x Epi. cinnabarinum)</i>	Hoefler

## Vandaceous

<i>Trgl. pusilla</i>	Braue
<i>Neost. Lou Sneary (Neof. falcata x Rhy. coelestis)</i>	"
<i>Stereochilus dalatensis</i>	Stuart
<i>Phal. Goldberry x Brother Carol</i>	Cohen
<i>Neof. falcata</i>	Witkin
<i>Phal. parishii</i>	Ufford
<i>Phal. Via South Coast (Goldiana x Kaula)</i>	Coleman
<i>Phal. (Golden Peoker x Goldberry) x Carmela's Brite Lites</i>	"
<i>Phal. Be Tris (Be Glad x equestris)</i>	Wilson

<i>Phal. Golden Sun x Sogo Champion</i>	Bordoni
<i>Phal. unknown‡</i>	"
<i>Dtps. Minho Valentine x King's Valentine</i>	Becker
<i>Phal. Brother Wildcat x Brother Purple</i>	Capella

## Oncidium Alliance

<i>Milt. Leo Holguin (Franz Wichmann x Hamburg)</i>	Powell
<i>Onc. Twinkle (cheiophorum x ornithorhynchum)</i>	Bordoni
<i>Onc. cheiophorum</i>	"
<i>Vuyl. Melissa Brianne (Milt. Anne Warne x Oda. Mrs. Rudolf Pabst)</i>	"
<i>Hwra. Lava Burst (Mini-Primi x Rdza. lanceolata)</i>	Coleman
<i>Onc. Twinkle</i>	Braue
<i>Brs. Spider's Gold (Arania Verde [sic] x arcuigera)</i>	Hoefler
<i>Onc. Memoria Bill Carter (Mendenhall x Psychopsis papilio)</i>	Capella

## Dendrobium

<i>Den. Aya (Ise x moniliforme)</i>	Coleman
<i>Den. gonzalezii</i>	"
<i>Den. nobile</i>	"
<i>Den. Yellow Magic (Happy Gold x Santana)</i>	Bonamo
<i>Den. unknown§</i>	Introne

## Pleurothallid Alliance

<i>Rstp. striata</i>	Witkin
<i>Pths. ornata</i>	Coleman

## Angraecoid Alliance

<i>Aërgs. modesta</i>	Witkin
<i>Aërgs. citrata</i>	"
<i>Aërgs. luteo-alba</i> var. <i>rhodosticta</i>	Ufford
<i>Jum. arachnanthe</i>	Hoefler

## Miscellaneous

<i>Pleione</i> sp.	Introne
<i>Cym. tigrinum</i>	Stuart
<i>Coel. cristata (?)</i>	Hoefler
<i>Lyc. consobrina (sic)</i>	Bonamo

\*There is no *Paph. Red Fire* registered. Check your label carefully & contact your supplier for parentage.

†There is no *Epi. Kirari* registered. Check your label carefully & contact your supplier for parentage.

‡There is no *Phal.* or *Dtps.* *Lava Glow* registered. Check your label carefully & contact your supplier for parentage.

§There is no *Den. Pataya Red* registered. Check your label carefully & contact your supplier for parentage.

**CLUB REMINDERS**

**Orchid-Growing Supplies** are now available, including fir bark, sphagnum, sponge rock, charcoal, and 40W fluorescent tubes. Call Rich Groll for details on pricing and availability (451-4248).

The **CNYOS Club Library** is now located at St. Augustine's church. Make arrangements with Val Introne (682-8595) if you want to borrow an item from the Library.

**DON'T FORGET TO BRING YOUR  
BLOOMING ORCHIDS FOR THE MONTHLY  
SHOW TABLE!!!**



*Phalaenopsis bellina* (violetaceae), photograph by Vagisha Sharma, with digital enhancement by J. Stuart.

***CNYOS is Now ON-LINE!***

CNYOS is on-line at [www.paphiopedilum.net](http://www.paphiopedilum.net). The site is regularly updated and will be changed as the club's two crack web-masters (Jeff Stuart & Charles Ufford) have time to do so, so check back frequently!

***REFRESHMENT SCHEDULE***

May 5

Dave Ditz &amp; Jen Wilson

Looks like it's time to search for new volunteers for the refreshment table! Please consider signing up for next Fall!

***CHECK OUT THE NEW WEB SITE FORMAT!***

The club web site has a new look! It has been reformatted to make it easier to navigate (less scrolling) and hopefully will soon be more informative with expanded content. Stop by and let us know what you think!

## ASCOCENTRUM MINIATUM & CURVIFOLIUM

This month the spot light is focussed on two small vandaceous gems that, unlike most of the large Vandas that are only rarely grown successfully outside a greenhouse, can be grown at a bright windowsill or even under fluorescent lights.

Diminutive size and ease of culture make *Ascocentrum miniatum* a favorite amongst many orchid growers. This species is widely distributed from the Sikkim Himalayas through Burma and Java, into the Philippines and Thailand. Mature plants produce many keikis, making it an excellent choice for specimen culture. Basket culture with plenty of light, water and regular fertilization will encourage it to live up to its potential; masses of brilliant orange flowers in the early spring.

A well-grown *miniatum* should have thick, rigid leaves liberally sprinkled with purple anthocyanin spots. This species plays prominently in producing the brilliantly colored Ascocendas common in collections.

*Ascocentrum curvifolium* was discovered in the early 19<sup>TH</sup> century in the tropical section of the Himalayan foothills. During its history it was confused with *Asctm miniatum*, despite *curvifolium*'s curving foliage (hence, its name). It is a popular species with hybridists for its orange-red color and free-flowering habit. This species enjoys warm temperatures, basket culture and bright light for best growth and flowering. Provide copious water during bud development to prevent blasting. Flowers appear in spring, usually April.



*Ascocentrum miniatum*

© 1996 Greg Allikas



*Ascocentrum curvifolium*

© 1996 Greg Allikas

**Reference:** Photos © Greg Allikas. The Orchid Photo Page by Greg Allikas: <http://www.orchidworks.com/>. Text reference, Greg Allikas (<http://www.orchidworks.com/>) & Jeff Stuart.

At one point or another we've all had them... Once they get into your collection they can be pretty hard to rid. Those pesky little gnats that flit from one orchid to the next—more of an annoyance than anything else. Or are they? Could they be doing more than just driving you crazy as they dart around eluding your attempts to squash them with your index finger? In our continuing series on orchid pests, Paul Johnson tackles the common Fungus Gnat. What are they and—even more important—what are they eating? Read Paul's article and find out!

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*Paul J. Johnson  
Insect Research Collection,  
South Dakota State University,  
Brookings, SD*

Orchid growers are reputed to pamper their plants excessively. However, over-watering and over-fertilizing are two symptoms of a "mothering" of plants that can be deadly. Most natural species orchids are adapted to harsh and low nutrient conditions, with roots in well drained media, if covered at all. Given this fact, the use of potting media is used not for nutrition as with most plants, but to help provide moisture in the artificial environments of the home, office, or

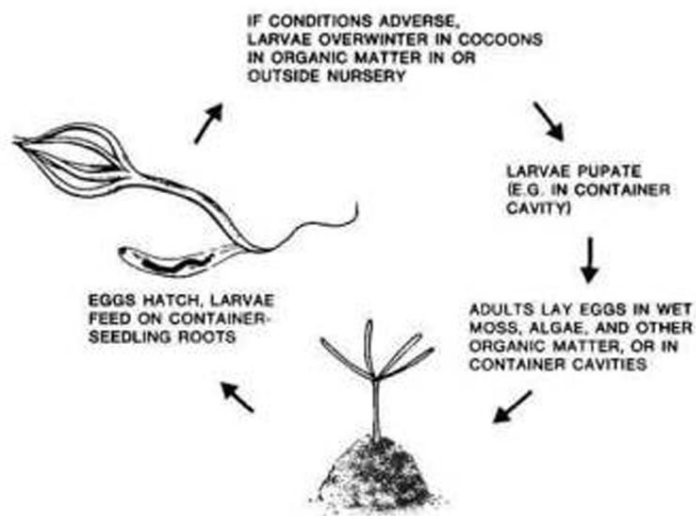
greenhouse, as well as temporary support while roots are growing. Media breakdown through time is related to watering and fertilizing, and is a significant problem for the majority of cultivated orchids. The more decayed the media then the less breathable it is for the orchid's roots. Interestingly, there is an insect that can be used as an indicator of poor orchid care, even though they are commonly considered pests. Probably all orchid growers have at least some of this insect in their plant collection, namely, fungus gnats. Fortunately, for orchid growers, these little flies are usually mere nuisances, only.

## BIOLOGY

The common fungus gnats in the hobby orchid collection are small (ca. 1.5-3.0 mm), long-legged, long-antennaed, delicate flies with dark bodies and one pair of dusky-gray to black wings. Insect taxonomists place these small flies into the family Sciaridae (pronounced: "sy-are-ee-day"), with the common name "dark-winged fungus gnats." This taxonomy helps discriminate them from a wide diversity of related gnats that feed on fungi. [Gnats are simply small flies, most of which do not bite!] As with most other insects with four life stages (i.e., egg, larva, pupa, adult), it is the larva or maggot that does most of the feeding. Adult fungus gnats do not bite and are absolutely harmless to people and pets. Fungus gnats are widespread and very common insects.

Adult dark-winged fungus gnats fly in search of fungi. The females lay their tiny white eggs in moist to wet soil. When the eggs hatch, the slender translucent-white maggot with a distinctive shiny black head feeds on fungal growths and





measures about 4-5 mm in length when mature. After about 2 weeks, depending on temperature and moisture, the maggot transforms into the pupal stage, then emerges a few days later as an adult fly. The entire life cycle takes about a month.

As the name indicates these flies are associated with fungi. But, why are they so common around potted plants? Well, it is not because they are feeding on your plants, usually! They are common because their larvae are feeding on the fungi growing in potting media that is too moist or wet, is warm, and in media that is decaying quickly. In other words, it is the overwatering and over-fertilizing of your plants that brings out the best in these cute little flies. Fungus gnats are more abundant in older and moister potting media that is rich with fungi. Organic potting materials will decay faster with higher levels of fertilizers because nitrogen also feeds the fungi and other decay organisms.

Usually, the maggot feeds only on fungal growths. However, larvae will also feed on seedlings, dying and rotting tissues such as roots, and will rapidly devour a leaf resting on the surface of moist potting media. Feeding on roots of seedling orchids has been observed, possibly due to a combination of sterilized media, high moisture, stressed plants, and lack of fun-

gus for the maggots.

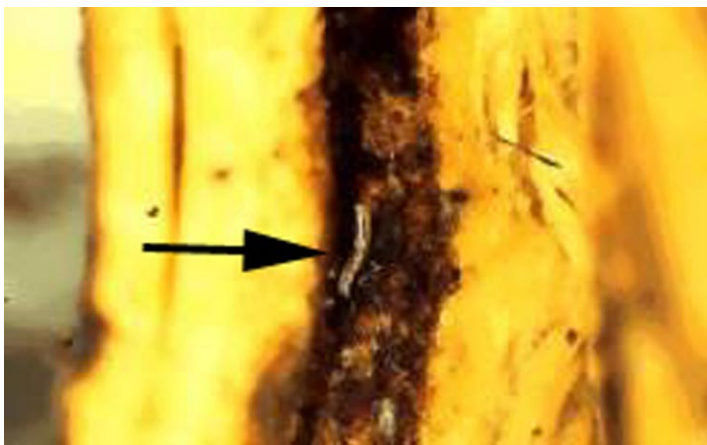
## DETECTION

Adult fungus gnats are usually the first life stage to be seen of these insects. The adults are active on the surface of the potting media, often running along the edge of the pot. They fly readily and are often found at windows. Yellow sticky cards, the kind used for whiteflies and aphids, are excellent for monitoring adult fungus gnats.

Check for larvae by watching for declining plants, then or otherwise unpotting the plant and examining the media for white to translucent, slender bodied, black headed maggots. These will usually be clustered around decaying roots and rhizomes, and fungusy clumps of media.

## MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL

Fortunately, fungus gnats are usually easily managed and can be kept in check in most orchid collections. Yellow sticky cards sold for monitoring and control of aphids and whiteflies are excellent for trapping fungus gnats. These cards are so effective when there are only a few flies that there is no need to use any insecticide on these flies. However, often female gnats will fly little so sometimes it is useful to cut strips of the cards and insert these strips into a pot to capture more of the females. Larvae are easily controlled by adjusting watering and ensuring that your orchid media is not overly decomposed and is





draining well. This may require frequent repotting if you use a heavy watering regime.

The following points will help control fungus gnats:

1. Repot your plants on a regular basis and use mixes containing materials such as charcoal and coconut (fibre or chunks) that are slow to decay, or inorganic components such as perlite;
2. Do not keep the media constantly wet, and if possible, allow the media to dry between waterings, especially the upper inch or so of media; and
3. Keep fertilizer to the minimum needed for the plant and adjusted to the potting media used.

Should these cultural methods not be effective or the collection be large, then alternative treatments may be warranted. However, the use of insecticidal drenches for controlling the maggots is not recommended, except as an absolutely last resort. Severe infestations of large collections may be best treated with biological control methods. The use of bacteria, nematodes, and predatory mites is highly effective in greenhouses and may work in large collections.

Bacterial treatment is most effective against the young larvae early in the cropping cycle and uses *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (sold under the trade name of Gnatrol™ for greenhouse use). This type of *B.t.* affects only true flies (Order: Diptera) and is different from the *B.t.* used for caterpillars in the garden. The *B.t.* causes paralysis of the maggots gut, stopping feeding and killing the maggot. Gnatrol™ is applied as a soil

drench to thoroughly wet the soil of pots, flats, beneath benches, or other sites of infestation. It is only effective for about 48 hours so 2-3 applications may be needed with heavy infestations. Use of Gnatrol™ is *not* recommended with simultaneous use of fertilizers or fungicides containing copper or chlorine. It will not affect the adult fungus gnats.

Parasitic nematodes are also useful for controlling fungus gnats. They enter the insect's body and multiply inside the host insect. While feeding they release a bacterium that is toxic to the host. The nematodes complete their life cycle within a few days so large numbers of infective stage nematodes are produced that will continue to search for new hosts. These beneficial nematodes can be applied as a drench to the growing media and to soil under the benches. Two common species available for greenhouse use are *Steinernema carpocapsae*, sold as ScanMask™, and *Steinernema feltiae*, sold as Nemasys™.

Finally, a small predatory mite, *Hypoaspis miles* also attacks fungus gnat larvae. These mites are usually sprinkled over or mixed into the potting media before planting. This mite is long-lived, will usually persist as a scavenger on dead insects while continuing to seek fungus gnat maggots, and will also feed on thrips pupae and other pests.

\*Slightly modified from the December 2000 issue of the Newsletter of the South Dakota Orchid Society.

Original article reproduced here with the author's permission. This and several other interesting articles on management of common orchid pests in small collections can be found at the home page of the South Dakota Orchid Society, [http://nat\\_hist.sdstate.edu/Orchids/SDOS.htm](http://nat_hist.sdstate.edu/Orchids/SDOS.htm)



## NEXT MONTH:

Paul offers advice on how to tackle another class of damaging and dreaded orchid pests, MITES!

**O**K, so you came to last month's clinic on mounting orchids, and you mounted a few that you ordered from Andy's Orchids for the meeting: moss, fishing line—the whole works. You got them home and promptly found a proper location for them, one that provides sufficient light and air circulation, the right temperature, and the right humidity. And you've been watering them several times a week, in the morning, so they stay moist enough to allow those tender sensitive root tips to start emerging, so your new orchid can secure itself to that stick or cork plaque you tied it to...

**W**as that a collective “Huh?” that I just heard???

**S**o I guess it's time for a brief follow-up on how to care for those orchids. Most of you should have gotten one of Andy's cheat sheets at the meeting—this is a summary of that sheet, with a little of my own experience thrown in.

**F**irst of all, the best thing you can do to foster a positive relationship between you and your new orchid friend, is to familiarize yourself with what its needs are with respect to light, moisture, temperature, and humidity. Do not try and treat that neat little *Bulbophyllum antiniferum* like your *Epidendrum arbusculum*! Check the March Supplemental issue of *THE ORCHID ENTHUSIAST* for some basic guidelines for each species, but better yet, check your books and the web to find some more detailed cultural information. Once you know what your orchid needs in order to prosper, then you've won half the battle! The other half—often the harder of the two—is following through with the appropriate action to keep the orchid growing and (we hope) blooming. Here are a few guides to help steer you on the right track.

**Temperature:** Most of the orchids from the clinic fall into the intermediate temperature growing group, needing winter night temps around 60°F, plus or minus 5°, and summer day temps at about 85°F max. The best way to select orchids for your home is to know how your temperature varies, and choose accordingly. Here in the Northeast, most of our homes will generally fall under the category of the

intermediate temperature range, and it's probably easier to err on the cool side of intermediate.

**Light:** With few exceptions, orchids like light. Even plants that are listed as shade loving probably need more light than you'd think; shade outdoors is a far sight brighter than shade indoors! If you ever have access to a light meter you'll quickly discover what I mean. A simple test may help to determine whether you're orchid is getting enough light; hold your hand over the plant. If little or no shadow is cast, there's certainly not enough light. An indistinct shadow indicates that there is probably enough light for shade-loving orchids. A slightly diffuse shadow indicates light levels adequate for orchids that enjoy bright conditions, and a distinct shadow will be found if you have enough light for those that enjoy full-sun (rarely found indoors). But remember, these are just guides and there are other factors; temperature and air circulation play critical roles. Leaves that are kept cool by a breeze can handle higher light levels. A hot stagnant environment in full sun is likely to damage almost any orchid, sun-loving or not. Those that grow in a greenhouse usually use shade-cloth in the summer and always have lots of air circulation to prevent sun-damage. All plants will grow better with a slight breeze, which will help to strengthen the plant and make for sturdier flower spikes. Adding a fan to your growing area will help prevent disease and result in overall healthier plants.

**Water:** Here lies the single most misunderstood aspect of orchid culture—watering—including water quality, frequency, and duration. And it is one of these aspects that gets new hobbyist into the most trouble. Let's examine them one by one. (1) *Water Quality:* Because very few orchids are truly terrestrial, they are not accustomed to the presence of large amounts of dissolved salts in the water. Salts are seldom good for orchids roots, although some orchids have a higher tolerance than others. How many of you who use tap water can successfully grow a *Masdevallia* or *Pleurothallis*? *Dendrobium cuthbertsonii* anyone? For these sensitive orchids, build up of salts almost certainly means weakened growth, failure to bloom, and ultimate death. New roots can often be damaged by residual salts. Collecting rain

water or using some sort of purification method (reverse osmosis, deionization, etc.) is usually a better alternative. But NEVER use softened water, which is high in sodium and will KILL your plants! (2)

*Frequency:* It is very difficult to overwater a mounted orchid (!), but easy to do so in a pot. Orchid roots must be able to breath and potted orchids must be occasionally repotted to ensure that the medium does not break down and suffocate the roots. Mounted orchids need more frequent watering—sometimes once per day, depending on the variety. In times of reduced humidity, you may have to increase your watering frequency to compensate. Pay close attention to your plant—it can often tell you if it’s getting enough water. (3) *Duration:* Give your plants a good soaking rain storm! The roots—all of them—need to

get thoroughly wet. Misting your orchid with a little bottle seldom provides enough water; it will evaporate before the roots have a chance to absorb all they need. Fertilization is often over-emphasized by the hobbist; orchids don’t get much food in the wild, and using fertilizer at quarter strength or less every time you water will probably be enough. Some orchids will want a dormant winter period where they get little or no water at all.

There you have it, a *quick* guide to caring for your mounted orchids. This is only a guide, as there can often be lots more to consider (pH, for one). But master the key elements—temperature, light, water, and air circulation—and your orchids will reward you year after year! **JAS**

**HELPFUL HINT:**

*Thanks to CNYOS Member Rick Braue for digging this hint out of a past issue of “Orchids” magazine:*

Some mounted orchids will require more frequent watering than others. Here’s a tip on how to keep those moisture loving gems from ever drying out: Start by finding a sturdy container that will hold water. Suspend the container, your reservoir, over the plant—make sure you mount it securely. Then take a length of 1/8 inch flexible aquarium air tubing and use it as a siphon from the reservoir to the orchid.

Use an adjustable tubing clamp on the siphon to regulate the number of drips delivered to the plant—many tubing clamps have some sort of threaded thumb wheel mechanism that will allow precise control of the flow rate. Position the “delivery” end of the tubing securely to a location above the roots; remember, you don’t necessarily want to get the entire plant wet, just the mount and the roots. It may take a little adjusting, but you should be able to adjust the “drip rate” such that the plant’s roots will stay moist, but you won’t end up with a puddle of water on the floor!

*February 1992 “Orchids,” page 125*

**THE AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF SYRACUSE ...**

...Will be having its Annual Show and Sale, Saturday, May 4<sup>TH</sup> (2:00<sup>PM</sup> - 9:30<sup>PM</sup>) and Sunday, May 5<sup>TH</sup> (11:00<sup>AM</sup> - 6:00<sup>PM</sup>), in Shoppingtown Mall, DeWitt. African Violets and their relatives (*Gesnariads*) often make

great companion plants to orchids.

Plants & supplies will be available for sale (African Violets, other gesneriads, plants from Ralph Robinson, Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses, Ethel Champion, and more). You all

know the old adage, “If you can bloom a *Phalaenopsis*, you can bloom an African Violet!” Or something like that...

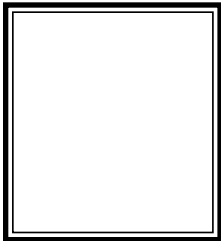
Anyway, stop by and see what this wonderful and diverse family of plants has to offer!



Next Meeting: May 5, 2002: CNYOS Annual Orchid Auction!!!  
June 2: Annual Spring Picnic



It's Auction Time!!!



THE CENTRAL NEW YORK ORCHID SOCIETY  
Your local AOS & Orchid Digest Affiliate  
351 Kensington Place  
Syracuse, NY 13210-3309

## Central New York Orchid Society

**Presidents:** Deb Coyle (315) 445-9106  
Dianne Bordoni (315) 446-3836  
**Vice Presidents:** Judi Witkin (315) 422-0869  
Ken Renno (315) 652-6495  
**Treasurer:** Elinor Burton (315) 682-6274  
**Secretary:** Barbara Weller (315) 468-5039  
**Newsletter Editor:** Jeff Stuart (315) 471-1404

The Central New York Orchid Society meets at St. Augustine's Church, 7333 O'Brien Rd, Baldwinsville, at 2:00<sup>PM</sup> on the first Sunday of each month from September through June. Yearly dues are \$15.00 per individual, or \$17.00 family. Dues should be paid to the CNYOS Treasurer, Elinor Burton.

## *THE ORCHID ENTHUSIAST*

The CNYOS Newsletter, *The Orchid Enthusiast*, is a publication of the Central New York Orchid Society and is distributed to the Society's members ten times per year, prior to all club meetings, events, or functions.

**Jeff Stuart, Editor**  
351 Kensington Place  
Syracuse NY 13210-3309  
(315) 471-1404  
e-mail: [jastuart@syr.edu](mailto:jastuart@syr.edu)

