



In This Month's Newsletter: Note from the President, Spring Bloomers from EIOS members, What Does the Judge Say, AOS growing tips for March and April.

The Spike
April 2021

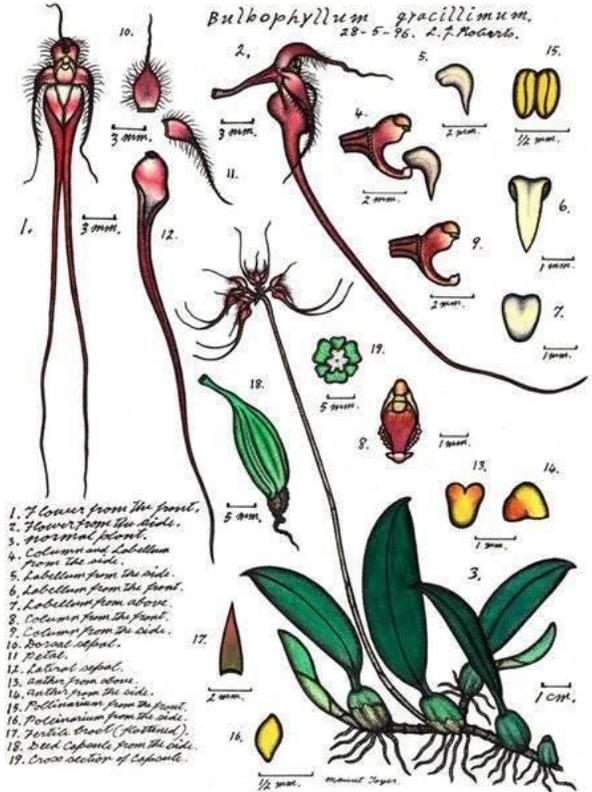
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EASTERN IOWA ORCHID SOCIETY
The Spike

A small group of people with a big love of growing orchids.

How Many Flowers Here? This is *Bulbophyllum gracillimum* grown by Marcia Whitmore. This is an umbel inflorescence with 10 flowers in it!



Illustrated by Lewis Roberts Orchids NE Queensland, Australia

PRESIDENT'S BLURB What wonderful weather we are having! Everywhere you look, the landscape is greening up and blossoms are starting to appear. As the owners of a new puppy, getting exercise is critical, so we set out into the woods often to get some energy out. Today, as we wandered through a trail system I had not hiked in probably at least a dozen years, we found literally hundreds of Putty Root orchids within a few feet of the trail. Putty Root (also known as the Adam & Eve Orchid, or Aplectrum hymale) puts out their very distinctive



(Continued on page 6)

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Calendar of Events

EIOS Monthly meeting via Zoom	April 1st,
Program "Native Orchids of Iowa" by Carson Whitlow	2021
Social 6:30	Program 7 pm
Hopefully in person field trip to find native orchids	Early May 2021
EIOS Monthly meeting Planning an in person gathering	June 3rd 2021
Central Iowa Orchid Society Speakers Day: Lions Club in Johnston Iowa	July 24th 2021
September EIOS meeting	Sept. 2nd 2021
EIOS Orchid Show (tentative)	Oct. 23-24 2021

Spring Bloomers from EJOS members

These sunny days with increased daylight and warmer temperatures has rewarded us with an abundance of orchids in bloom. Vibrant orange, small flowered cattleya-guarianthe crosses are in bloom. These three here are progeny of *Rhyncattleanthe* Orange Nugget (*Gurianthe aurantiaca* in background). *Rhyncattleanthe* [Rth.] Shinfong Little Sun 'Young-Min Golden Boy' AM/AOS (left); *Rhyncattleanthe* [Rth.] Tsiku Lily 'NN' HCC/AOS (right) both grown by Dave Wujek and Marcia's *Rhyncattleanthe* [Rth.] Lily Marie Almas 'MGR' AM/AOS (below). **Be sure to send your photos too!**



Bruce Byorum sent pics of Bc Yellow Bird and the lovely lavender Alkra. Stellar 'Hoku' the flowers are 2 1/2 inches across and never been awarded. (both below)



Epicatarthron [Eth.] (syn. Tuck-erara or Tuck.) Hilo Adventure (right). This is an interesting multi genera cross between cattleya, epidendrum, and caularthron. Marcia might consider getting this one judged as only 2 other awards given in the past.



Phal - Tastic Flowers - Fantastic Growers!



Clockwise from top left: Greg Harris yellow; Dave's Fuller's Gold Stripe, and Shih Hua Girl; Harris' pink; Granner's bloomers; Dave's Doud Violet; John Leeson's Kiki on plant of Irene's; and Bruce's KV188





What Does the Judge Say! Cultural Awards. Hard to Get?

When a favorite plant is happy and we refrain from repotting it too often, it can grow into a specimen plant. AOS awards, Certificate of Cultural Merit (CCM) and Certificate of Cultural Excellence (CCE) are given to the GROWER of such a plant. Often the awarded plants are huge with literally 100s of flowers. So I asked Larry Sexton (AOS Chicago Center judge) what do you do with a nice specimen plant that doesn't come close to previously awarded CCMs . I sent these picture of Ctt. Gold Digger 'Buttercup' AM/AOS which Lois and I have grown for many years. 38 flowers on 13 inflorescences, flower 8 x 9.5 cm. Clearly, it already has a flower quality award and doesn't have the number count of some cultural awards such as 'Fuch's Mandarin' CCE 2018 with 420 flowers. Shown here at right. *Photo Orchid Wiz*



Here are my thoughts on Gold Digger: Look at Fuchs Mandarin for the fullness in the sepals and petals that I now expect from this cross. Yours does not have that. Your flower count is low, but that alone would not preclude a low CCM if you had good form. It is quite hard to get a CCM here with the bar set so high! You need the form and color to be perfect to offset the low flower count. **Larry**



So I gave him another chance! Take a look at this *Restrepia falkenbergii* 1.2cm wide 4.5 cm vertical spread 10 flowers each on its own inflorescence. **It has decent form, good flower count and the color is average. Most teams would immediately pass this because they do not know how to judge them or what to look for! I would not do that and would consider it for a low CCM. It is quite hard to get a Restrepia in to judging with more than a few flowers open (notwithstanding they only last about 3-4 days). But many judges don't realize this! I could point this as a low CCM 80-82 and be quite happy! Thanks for the opportunity to do this! Larry Sexton.** This Restrepia species is from Columbia near the city of Medellin. It grows as an epiphyte at altitudes from 3000 to 6000'



The stems are called ramicauls up to 14 inches, erect with loose overlapping papery sheaths topped with single leathery oval leaves. Flowers arise from the base of the leaf, one flower per each short peduncle (inflorescence). Each leaf will produce subsequent peduncles with flowers that leave shaggy string like remnants - so don't cut or pull them off as flowering may be continuous for months. The most prominent portion of the flower is the lip; **oops** it is the **lateral sepals** that are fused to form a **synsepal**.

Closely above them is the true **fiddle shaped lip** which looks like a soft pad but is not connected to the synsepals except at the base. The **dorsal sepal** is at the top of the flower and the **spiney thin petals** extend to the sides. **The column** is slender and club shaped. Isn't this an amazing flower. These grow in low light, 60 to 85 degree temperature, in moist well drained media or on a mount, with no rest period.

Something new to try! Nile D.



AOS Monthly Checklist for March and April

Cattleya: Although March is, in many parts of the country, still a cold and blustery month, the lengthening days and warmer temperatures allowed by increased light are long-awaited harbingers of the coming change of season. Some of the best standard cattleyas of the year will be in bloom, or will be blooming soon. The last of the winter-flowering hybrids will join the earliest of the spring hybrids in a wonderful display. Be on the alert for senescing sheaths that need removal.



If these yellowing sheaths are not removed, the moisture they trap can lead to bud rot. Careful removal of the sheath will allow the buds to develop, although they will need additional support. Changing light conditions can also be a problem in March and April. An exceptionally bright day, especially immediately following a rain, can lead to sunburn of the foliage if shading is not attended to properly. There can still be periods of dull days where spikes can be weakened owing to the lower light. Lengthening days will mean increased metabolic rates necessitating increased water and fertilizer. The plants will indicate needs by drying more rapidly, which means more frequent watering and fertilizing. With the passing of the season for winter bloomers, and the beginning of the season for spring bloom, it is also the time to be on the lookout for plants that will need potting after they bloom. Immediately after blooming has proven to be the best time to repot winter- and spring-flowering cattleyas. In most cases, they will be ready to grow roots, so if potted at this time, they will root right into fresh mix with little or no setback.

Dendrobium (Australian) These hard-cane dendrobiums will be at their flowering peak now. It is not unusual to see a specimen of this type in an orchid show boasting 1,000 flowers. The secret with this group -- bred primarily from *Dendrobium kingianum* and *Dendrobium speciosum* -- is to provide ample water, fertilizer and light during the growing season.

Lycaste This genus of superb orchids will be coming to the end of its flowering season. Soon you will see the beginning of new root growth, which is an excellent time to repot into fresh media. As new growth emerges, provide ample fertilizer and water. A sign of good culture is an increase in the size of pseudobulbs with each successive year.

Miltoniopsis This marks the beginning of the flowering season. Amazing displays of color will dazzle the grower over the next few months. Prepare your plants for optimum display by staking spikes (if needed) and cleaning off the older yellow foliage. Do not miss the wonderful fragrance as the flowers unfold..

Photos from EIOS members - Article from AOS.org



Paphiopedilum March is the beginning of the season of heaviest potting for lady's-slipper orchids. However, it is a month where the volume of plants needing attention is still small. It is an excellent month to take the time to work with your paphiopedilums before the pressure of other potting prevents your doing the thorough job you should. Look at each plant: Is it clean of dead and dying foliage? Is it weed free? Does it need potting? Is it in spike? Does it have an insect problem? Cleaning and restaging your paphs is one of the most satisfying tasks of the orchid year. Cleaned and potted paphiopedilums look happy.



The summer-blooming types will be showing the first of their buds in March and April. Be on the lookout for the buds, as well as any insect pests that may have found their way into the crowns of your plants. It is especially difficult to clean mealybugs, in particular, once they have become established in the plant. Better to get to them before they get a good toehold.

Increasing light levels should give emerging spikes the strength they need to grow straight and strong. Do not be too anxious to stake the spikes, because if they are staked too soon, the flowers may develop a "nodding" stance, where the dorsal will not stand upright. If the spikes seem to develop at an angle, let them, and stake after the flower has hardened for best carriage, especially on the hybrids with fairieanum background.

Phalaenopsis In most of the country, March is the peak blooming month for phalaenopsis. Staking needs to be carefully attended to, so that the flowers will be displayed at their best for orchid shows and judging -- even those intended for your home will look best if properly staked. One of the most decorative aspects of phalaenopsis spikes is the way they gracefully arch. If not staked properly, the spike will lack this grace and will not be as pleasing. Most growers like to have the final support just below the first flower, allowing maximum support, without sacrificing the beauty of the arching spike. Rapid-growing



spikes and open flowers place extra demands on the plant. Careful monitoring of watering and feeding will give the plants the energy they require to give their best floral display. Remember, too, that the lengthening days will also increase the frequency at which plants need water. Beware of the invasion of sucking pests that accompany the flowering season. Flowers and spikes are favorite targets of mealybugs and scales. Be on the look out for their presence, often indicated by the appearance of sooty mold resulting from the exudate of the bugs, and treat before flowers or buds are too advanced. If flowers and buds are too far along, the chemical treatment may damage or abort them.

Photos from EIOS members - Article from AOS.org

Eastern Iowa Orchid Society

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The Eastern Iowa Orchid Society

*A small group of people with a big love of
growing orchids*

www.easterniowaorchidsociety.org



Paph. Luther's World - extra points for an extra dorsal?
Bruce Byorum.
An example of orchid diversity!

(Continued from page 1)

new leaves in November and they last through March, when they disappear. The flower stalks then emerge in late May or early June; it looks like I/we will have to plan a return trip (or several) in about ten weeks.

Speaking of Iowa's native orchids, our meeting on Thursday, April 1st (no joke), will feature Carson Whitlow presenting and discussing Iowa's native orchids (of which there are several dozen). I hope that you can make it – look for an invitation to the Zoom meeting a few days before the meeting. Also at that meeting, we will need to decide whether we plan to have our Orchid Show and Sale in October. What will be crucial is how many people will be willing to volunteer and in what capacity, so please plan and be ready to discuss how and how much you are willing to support this event. Until then:
Happy Growing!

Andy Coghill-Behrends

Tentative dates for the show reserved at the Elks Club are Oct. 23-24, 2021 with setup on the 22nd.

Hosts for Upcoming Meeting

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Directions to the First United Methodist Church in Shueyville, Iowa

This is half way between Cedar Rapids and Iowa City, The church is located 1 mile EAST of Exit 10 (Swisher-Shueyville) off Interstate 380. Our meetings begin with a social time at 6:30 pm; followed by the official meeting and program at 7:00 pm. Meetings are free and open to anyone interested in orchids! Our club displays orchids at regional orchid shows and participates in American Orchid Society orchid judging. Meeting programs include beginning orchid growing, discussion about various types of orchids and orchid conservation, plus plant sales and holiday party just for fun. Enjoy our website, easterniowaorchidsociety.org, read our newsletters, attend our Fall Orchid Show in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and come join us at our next meeting!