



ORCHIDS

GVOS Online

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Calendar

DEC

Zoom Meeting AOS/GLJC

Jan

TBA

Feb

TBA

March

TBA

April

TBA

GVOS Board

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Gastrodia agnicellus has been called the ugliest orchid in the world by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

Rick Burian

December

This month we will not be having a regular zoom meeting. However, the AOS/GLGC is having an open meeting. As part of this meeting Deb Boersma will share her experiences with the Mid-Atlantic judging center's "Virtual Orchid Judging" project. This is a weekly endeavor to increase the knowledge-base of existing judges and developmental judges and non-judges by critiquing orchid photos. Also Lynn O'Shaughnessy will share her talk "Odds and Ends in the Vanda Alliance". Through genus name changes, the Vanda Alliance has grown. Lynn will show some of the more unusual of these Vandaceous orchids

Topic	Zoom information
<p><i>GLJC December Meeting</i></p> <p>December AOS judging session will be online education only from 11 am to 1 pm due to COVID guidelines for in-person gatherings so no plants will be judged.</p>	<p>Topic: GLJC December Zoom Meeting</p> <p>Time: Dec 19, 2020 11:00 AM America/Detroit</p> <p>Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88191012915?pwd=bmV4ZkZ2LzhaNkQ2TXJqcGQ2bUFCUT09</p> <p>Meeting ID: 881 9101 2915 Passcode: 569043 One tap mobile +13017158592,,88191012915#,,,,,0#,,569043# US (Washington D.C) +13126266799,,88191012915#,,,,,0#,,569043# US (Chicago)</p>

Interesting Read

Orchids are endlessly fascinating. With over 20,000 species and more being discovered it's no wonder there is always something new to learn. Recently, new species of orchid was discovered and named, *Gastrodia agnicellus*. This fascinating little plant was discovered in Madagascar. It apparently lives almost it's entire life underground and only surfaces to flower and spread seeds. Since there are no leaves and it lives underground it depends on a symbiotic relationship with a fungus for nutrients and survival. For more information on this new discovery the full article is linked below.

<https://www.newscientist.com/article/2263273-newly-discovered-orchid-species-labelled-the-ugliest-in-the-world/>

Member News

Jerry sent a couple of emails talking about his orchids and how he started growing. He graciously gave me permission to share them. Below are the emails he sent and the pictures he included. He says he considers himself more an orchid purchaser than an orchid grower, but I think most of us would disagree. He has some absolutely stunning plants. It doesn't take a collection of hundreds to be a grower as he clearly demonstrates.

I hardly call myself a grower. Truth be told I'm a simple consumer who manages to keep my twenty or so orchids healthy and regularly blooming :-)

I used to buy my wife a fresh cut flower bouquet every week. When I found out that orchid blooms lasted many weeks or even more than a month in some cases I started buying them instead. Well, with our 20 or so plants I'm about to run out of windows and have gorgeous blossoms around the house all the time.

A year and a half ago I picked up my first Lady Slipper at the orchid show. It's currently giving me my first bloom so I thought to send you a couple of photos of it.





Paph. Magic Cherry
x (Black Cherry x Voodoo Magic)

Years ago, my daughter brought home an orchid gifted her by a boyfriend. Not unlike puppies, I ended up taking care of it for her and thought I'd get one or two for our house. Well, around here we have a joke that once anybody has three of anything it becomes a collection..

I do have a habit of making a collection out of anything which interests me. That first orchid turned into "more to follow." Fortunately, we have a wonderful north-facing bay window so the first ten I gradually picked up fit nicely and have done very well there for the past decade.

Then I started putting others on our three-season porch, not thinking ahead to winter and having to bring them inside. That led to erecting two metro racks in front of two other windows. So, plenty of blooms around the house, but now space is maxed out with just over thirty pots and my old, very large staghorn fern.

I'd always avoided orchids because of a belief that they were difficult to keep and relatively expensive. It's turned out just the

opposite. Much less expensive in the long run than weekly cut flowers. Watering once a week, and transplanting a few a year to larger pots is about it. I think that makes me an orchid purchaser, not an orchid grower. But that's okay with me.



Sunset Valley orchids December Newsletter



December 2020 Sunset Valley Orchids Catasetinae Growing Tips

Now that winter has really set in, your *Catasetums* and *Cycnoches* will have matured their growths and finished flowering, but there are always a few late bloomers that soon should be on their way to dormancy. *Mormodes* will be finishing up their bloom season, and now it's time for many of the *Clowesia* hybrids to flower.

The onset of dormancy is caused by several factors: the maturity of the pseudobulb, shortening day length, cooler day/night temperatures and a reduction of root zone moisture. The yellowing and dropping of leaves signal the beginning of dormancy. Now is the time to stop fertilizing and cut back on watering frequency, simulating the end of the wet season in nature. This change in culture will cause the pseudobulbs to harden off in preparation for the upcoming months of dormancy. When most leaves are yellow/brown and have fallen off, cease watering altogether. This marks the start of the dormant period.

Those of you in Florida and the southern states will have dormant plants now, and it's possible that some of you may start to see the first beginnings of new growth.



These six plants illustrate the progression of Catasetinae into dormancy, from left to right: 1) leaf tip yellowing, 2) leaf yellowing, browning and abscission, 3) more yellow leaves, tip die back and leaf drop, 4) obvious missing leaves at base, 5) two leaves remaining, 6) leafless plant.

Not all plants lose all of their green leaves when dormant, and it's not uncommon for some to hold a few leaves well past the point when irrigation has stopped.

The onset of dormancy generally occurs naturally; however, when plants are cultivated in consistently warm growing areas, such as in the home or under lights, dormancy sometimes needs to be encouraged. I have found that managing irrigation is one of the best tools to trigger dormancy. If you still have plants in December with a full complement of green leaves, it's time take a more aggressive approach. Allow the media to become dry, regardless of the number of green leaves. Let the media stay dry for 3-4 days then water sparingly, about one or two ounces of water. The water may flow right through the media, and that's okay. Allow the media to dry and wait 4-5 day before following the same stingy irrigation procedure. Repeat this process, increasing the dry interval between waterings. This will trigger dormancy in plants that are resisting the transition.

By late December, it's important to get your Catasetinae into the dormant stage and provide them with an adequate rest period so that they will "wake up" early in the

spring to a long growing season that will help them to develop big bulbs and lots of flowers!

I've been getting questions about indoor light levels during dormancy. It is best to keep the plants in nearly the same light levels as in the growing season: target 2000-2500 foot candles. It is easy to download a Foot Candle Reader app for your phone. If you're growing under lights, you do need to adjust the day length throughout the year, as all Catasetinae experience changes in the number of daylight hours per day. This adjustment is important for all your orchids that come from areas where day length changes during the year.

Light level management Indoors

Growing under lights for optimal results:

April – October: day length should be set at 15 hrs.

November: reduce light schedule hour to = 14 hrs.

December: reduce one more hour = 13 hrs.

January: and reduce one more hour = 12 hrs.

February: add one hour = 13 hrs.

March: add one more hour = 14 hrs.

April – October: back to a day length schedule of 15 hrs.

I shared this idea with the last newsletter, and it's worth sharing again.

If you've had challenges overwintering your Catasetinae plants, it is most likely due to excessive dehydration, perhaps caused by long periods of low humidity. Here is a solution being used successfully by some ingenious growers in locations with low winter humidity.



Set the pot in a jar with water, making a loose-fitting seal with the rim of the jar. The water should not touch the bottom of the pot. The reservoir will maintain high humidity around the roots, even while the plant remains dry during dormancy. This innovative technique produces great results! We have had lots of positive feedback from growers who are using this method.

As my *Catasetinae* go to “sleep” for the winter I am reminded of the words of Shelley:
“If winter comes, can spring be far behind?”

Your support as customers and friends is truly appreciated!

I am always available to take your calls and E-mails, so please feel free to contact me. I love to talk orchids!

And as always, Good Growing!

Please join our Facebook page:

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Orchid Show/Festival Schedule

Unfortunately, with Covid-19 continuing to be a major health hazard, some shows have already canceled. This will be updated as more information becomes available.

Show	Location	Date	Status
Grand Valley Orchids Society Show and Sale	Frederick Meijer Gardens 1000 East Beltline Ave NE Grand	Feb 27-28	Tentative
Greater Lansing Orchid Show and Sale	Michigan State Soil and Science Building 1066 Bogue St, East Lansing, MI 48824	February	Canceled
Michigan Orchid Society Show	United Food & Commercial Workers Union Bldg., 876 Horace Brown Drive, Madison Heights, MI	March	Canceled