

## Dave's Plant Stand

Pressure-treated 4x4 uprights were used and all other parts are cedar. The stand dimensions are 12 ft. x 4 ft. x 7 ft. It was designed to hold two shelves deep on each side to hold coated closet shelving labeled as "close wire spacing". Paying extra for narrow spacing allows the pots to sit more firmly. Aluminet shade cloth is placed over the top. Since my stand faces East, I found it necessary to add two visors in order to shade the front plants from morning sun from 8 am to 10 am. Originally, I used window screening for the visors, but the sun was still too hot. These old sheets lasted about three years.



Every plant stand needs its own gargoyle.

I use 50% aluminet shade cloth for cover which I obtained from Roberts Flower Supply. It is attached with tarp clips and bungee cords. I pack it every fall and it is still going strong. Since the cloth was a fixed width of eight feet and approximately seventeen feet long, it laps down the back side and both sides which does provide a little Westerly sun protection in late afternoon.

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I found these gray totes at a wholesale supply house; they already had holes in the bottoms. I drilled lots of 1" holes in the sides. Using these keeps the wind from



blowing over my plants. I also use various greenhouse trays in and out of the totes to also protect against wind.

I made a template for the decorative cuts of the top joists.

The rest of the assembly is for structure and rigidity. Hard to believe this stand is already seven years old.

Three frames were built knowing the entire stand would be extremely heavy. My plan was to pre-build the frames then connect them onsite. I rounded the bottom of the uprights to prevent splintering when dragging the stand.



The whole stand was built starting with how much room I actually had on the patio and also considering which direction I wanted it to face. The shelves are actually slightly smaller than 6 ft so a little metal cutting was required to cut them shorter. The shelves stay out all winter.

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I found that putting several shelf cross pieces in place gave quite a bit more support to the depth of the shelves. Since I also use clay pots to support top heavy plants, the shelf weight adds up quickly.

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You can see in the picture that 1x6 and 1x4 pieces were used to make strong shelf supports.



More pics on basic structure.

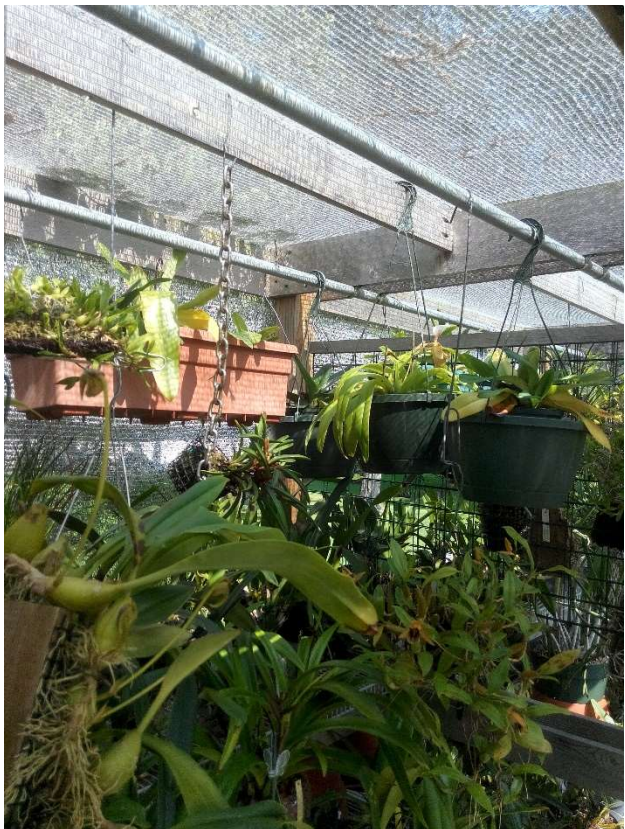


I used deck screws throughout and they have held up admirably.

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What self-respecting plant stand would not have hanging rods? Here is where the strap-leaf Paphs hang out, getting more light than any other orchids except the *Catasetinae*, noble *Dendrobiums* and *Cymbidiums* which sit in front of the stand. I used 1" galvanized to make sure the rods did not bend, and they have not.

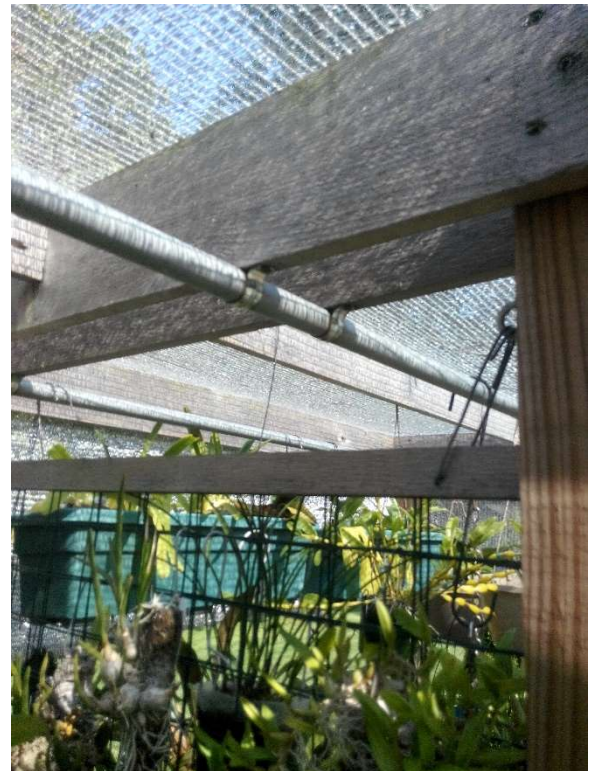


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As everyone knows there is never enough space for orchids so I took a cue from my friend Edgar Stehli and added vertical hangers inside the frame spaces. I hang Brassavolas and Tolumnias there. They get a bit of shade and are quite happy to flower for me over the summer. I am able to use both sides of each frame.

Be sure to **FIRMLY** attach the rods to the stand. At any time, there might be as many as fifty hanging plants on this one that might have just been watered.



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The back faces due West and in dead summer, 5 pm can get hot. It is easy to tie off the skirting and let more air through and it also makes watering a little more efficient.

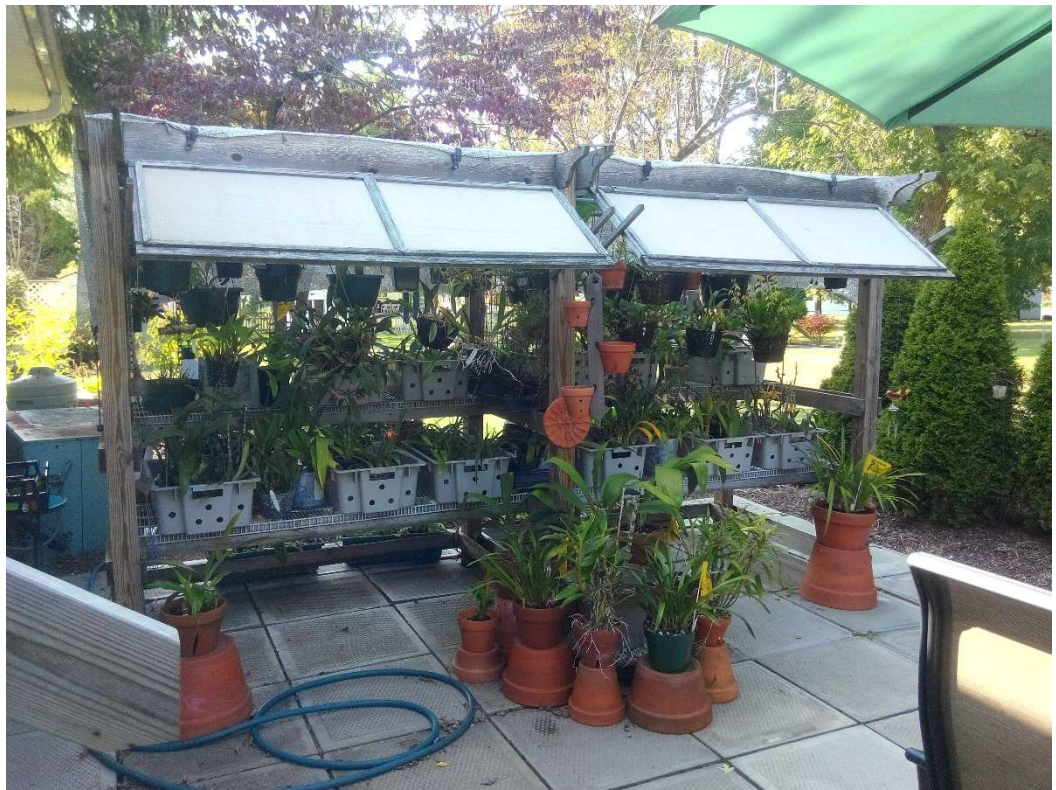
The visors are made with struts that are easily unscrewed and lowered for the winter. Galvanized hinges are attached to the tops.



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Since the stand sits on concrete pavers and the uprights are pressure-treated, I have not experienced any signs of rot on the wood in seven years. I am careful to keep all plants in front raised up from ground level using totes and masonry pots.

Dave's stand in its full glory. It will hold up to three hundred orchids in various sizes if the space is maximized.



A view in mid-March, seven years later. With no snow this year, the visors are still up.