

Greater Akron Orchid Society

19th Annual Spring Orchid Show



Dayton Nurseries

3459 S. Cleveland Massillon Rd., Norton, Ohio, 44203

Saturday: March 7th 2020: 10 am – 5 pm

Sunday: March 8th 2020: 11 am – 4 pm

www.thegaos.com

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ABOUT ORCHIDS

About 30,000 or so species of Orchids make up an exceedingly diverse family. In addition to the species found in nature, man has created over 100,000 hybrids in a wide variety of colors, sizes, and growth habits. Orchids may generally be classified as either epiphytes (“air plants”), that is, those that grow on the branches or trunks of trees and receive nutrients from organic matter washed over the roots by rainfall, or terrestrials, which grow with their roots in the soil. Of the two, the epiphytes are the more common. Most epiphytes are grown by hobbyists in plastic or clay pots filled with fir bark mixtures, although many types will do very well when mounted on slabs of cork or other suitable supports.

Those new to orchid growing are often daunted by the reputation that the plants are finicky and difficult to grow. While it is true that some varieties are demanding of specific environmental conditions, many types will grow quite well under conditions suitable for African violets. *Phalaenopsis* and *Paphiopedilums*, in particular, are well-suited to artificial light culture, as are certain varieties of the “mini-Cattleyas”. A sunny windowsill will suffice nicely for those requiring moderate light levels. Some types, however, require very high light levels and are not generally suitable for in-home culture, but will do well for those lucky enough to have a greenhouse. Many indoor growers move their plants outside for the summer to take advantage of the buoyant air and light levels that only sunshine can adequately provide.

Orchids do require humid air to thrive, but 40-60% relative humidity is generally sufficient, so you need not turn your home into a steaming jungle. Setting plants over – not in – gravel-filled trays holding excess water or misting the plants with a sprayer can help to offset low humidity. And because epiphytes are air plants, good air circulation is essential to plant health. A small fan in the growing area will provide sufficient air movement to keep your plants happy.

Just as different families of orchids differ in light requirements, the proper temperature range is crucial to blooming. Broadly speaking, orchids are classified as either cool, intermediate, or warm growers, depending upon the heritage of the plant. A species found natively in the hot jungles of the Amazon River basin will naturally prefer a warmer climate than one at home in the high altitudes of the Andes mountains. By crossing species from different climates, however, hybrids are created which are less demanding of specific environmental conditions than are the parent plants. This “hybrid vigor” makes hybrids – rather than species – generally better choices for the beginner. There are a few species, however, which are exceptionally forgiving and make excellent beginner’s plants.

The growers at our show can give you more information about the cultural requirements of those plants which strike your fancy.

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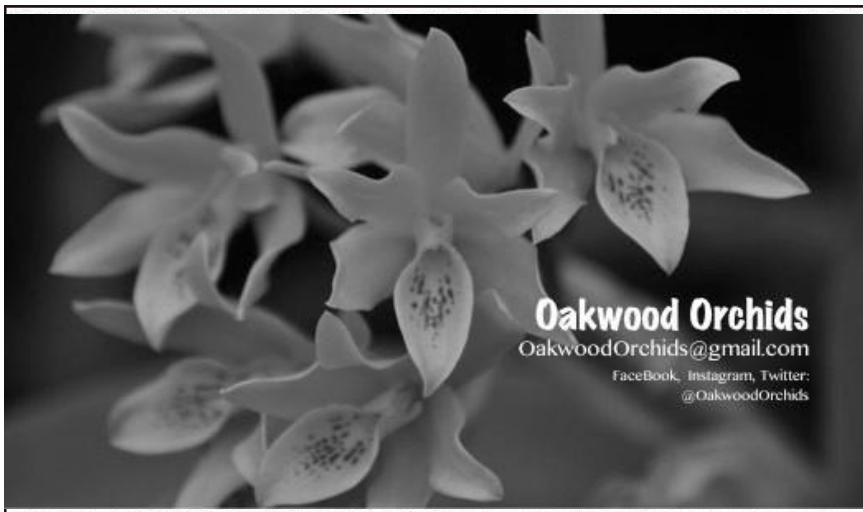
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Basic Orchid Culture

Knowing which orchid you are trying to grow is your key to its cultural requirements. Orchids, like all plants, need a balance of light, air, water and food to grow and flower well.

Light

Without enough light, orchids may produce lush looking growths but no flowers. Not giving orchids enough light is the most common reason for failure to bloom. The old notion of orchids growing in dark jungles still persists and it couldn't be further from the truth. In reality, many have evolved as epiphytes to take advantage of brighter light available in the upper forest canopy.

How much light is enough? The answer to this seemingly simple question is "as much as they will take without burning." Orchids grown under sufficient light will have lighter, somewhat yellow-green foliage and strong upright growths.

Air

Orchids roots will die if they do not get air and this is the reason that, with the exception of a few terrestrial varieties, orchids do not grow in soil. Orchid potting media should be open, with exceptionally good drainage, yet capable of holding sufficient moisture to support the plant's needs. You should provide gentle air movement. For orchids grown in the home, this can be provided by an overhead paddle fan set on its lowest setting or a portable oscillating fan directed AWAY from the plants.

Water

Without question, more orchids are killed by incorrect watering than by any other reason. Proper watering consists of two separate components; quantity and frequency. Orchids should be watered just as they dry out. Humidity, air movement, potting medium and light levels all play a role. When orchids are watered, they should be watered copiously. Water should be provided until it runs freely from the drainage holes. Not only does this soak the potting medium but it also flushes salts that naturally accumulate.

Fertilizer

Orchids will grow and flower, given that their other requirements are met, for fairly long periods without fertilizer but you'll get better results with some level of feeding. Typically plants are fertilized once a week during the summer and every two weeks in the fall and winter. Regardless of the fertilizer that you chose to use, most experienced growers use no more than ½ the label-recommended strength. Fertilizers used on orchids should contain little or no urea. This is because soil organisms must first convert the nitrogen in urea to a form useable by plants, and since orchids do not grow in soil, this conversion does not occur efficiently.

Greater Akron Orchid Society



2020 GAOS Program Calendar

- Jan 13 "Preparing For the Show"
- Feb 10 "Preparing For the Show"
- Mar 9 Get Acquainted with New Members & "Orchids 101"
- Apr 13 "Orchids of China" *with Thomas Sampliner*
- May 11 "Orchids Under Glass" *with Dave Miller*
- Jun 8 Summer Picnic & 1st Member Plant Auction
- Jul 13 Edgar Stehli - TBD
- Aug 10 2nd Member Plant Auction
- Sep 14 "AOS Webinar "How to Pick the Best Orchid Plant"
- Oct 12 Wayne Roberts
- Nov 9 Holiday banquet / Elections
- Dec 14 no meeting

Greater Akron Orchid Society

Membership Application

To become a GAOS member, complete the following form and present it or mail it to the treasurer with your dues.

Dues are \$20 for a single member and
\$30 for a family membership

Make checks payable to GAOS

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9258 Seneca Street NW

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Summering Orchids Outside

By Darlene Thompson

Whether you are a windowsill or greenhouse grower, the summer presents a great opportunity to let your orchids enjoy the natural light, air movement, and humidity.

Before taking your plants outside, you should monitor the temperature, you want to make sure the minimum night temperatures outside do not go below the suggested temperatures for your orchids. If you have a variety of orchids, they may not be able to all go outside at once. A good rule of thumb is to not put out your warm growers, like phalaenopsis, until you can plant tomatoes, which is between 50°F and 55°F.

Just as you do anywhere else, you want to make sure your growing area has the right balance of shade and sun. Some outside growers have shade houses for their orchids. For the rest of us, we have to find an alternate way of providing our plants with the right amount of shade. Placing orchids under a shade tree or hanging the orchids from the tree is a great option. Last year, I covered a wire shelving rack with a sheer curtain to protect my orchids from the direct sunlight on my balcony. Be creative and resourceful when finding a safe summer home for your orchids. Avoid placing them directly on the ground as this is an open invitation for creepy critters to invade your pots.

The higher summer temperatures mean more watering. Thankfully, rainfall will help you out a little here. While your orchids will love the occasional shower of fresh, clean rain water, Mother Nature can also over water. When there is heavy rainfall, orchids can become waterlogged, especially if you have potted plants. Waterlogged pots increase the probability for roots and new growth to rot. This is especially true when the rain is accompanied by a cool front. To protect orchids, you can simply place something made of water proof material over your plants when the rains are heavy. This could be a piece of fiberglass or a small tarp. If you have saucers under your pots, empty them after each rainfall or you risk rotting the roots.

Some heat loving plants appreciate the higher summer temperatures. However, those that tend to grow in cool conditions will not. To give my cooler-growing Colmanara some heat relief, a friendly local grower suggested that I place it inside a large clay pot. I then put the clay pot in a saucer of water. The clay pot wicks up the water from the saucer to help keep the Colmanara cooler on warm days. If you do this, be sure to put stones or packing peanuts between the clay pot and the plastic pot. I found this technique very helpful and plan to repeat it this summer.

Finally, you want to watch out for pests. Make sure you are checking your plants and your growing area ever so often for pests. This includes checking under pots where snails like to hide. Remember the best defense against pests is a healthy plant. Pests target stressed plants, so monitor the condition of your plants. Make sure they are getting the right amount of water, fertilizer, light, and shade.

In addition to these suggestions, be sure to talk to other society members to get additional advice and more specifics about summering your orchids outside in northeast Ohio. Your orchids will love you for it.

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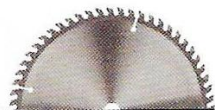
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Growing Orchids in Your Home

By American Orchid Society

You can grow orchids in your home without living in the tropics or having the luxury of a greenhouse. Today, houseplants are a regular part of home decoration. If you have ever successfully grown a houseplant, or enjoyed a flowering potted plant, you can grow orchids. The good news is there are plenty of options to give a beautiful display of flowering orchids year round.

LIGHT Without enough light, orchids may produce lush looking growths but no flowers. Not giving orchids enough light is the most common reason for failure to bloom. Orchids grown under sufficient light will have lighter, somewhat yellow-green foliage and strong upright growths. Place the orchid close to an east, west, or lightly shaded south window. A north window will rarely provide adequate light. If light is too intense in a southern exposure, a sheer curtain can hung to diffuse the light.

TEMPERATURE Orchids will be comfortable where you are comfortable. Typical home temperatures of 55–60 F (13–16 C) at night and 75 F (24 C) during the day are fine. Guard against excessively low or high temperatures immediately adjacent to glass windows. Some leeway for seasonal fluctuations is allowed. Do not place your plants in front of the furnace or air conditioning ducts.

HUMIDITY Group plants to take advantage of their collective transpiration (exhaled moisture) or place them on gravel-filled trays to raise the humidity. Be sure that the plants are sitting above the water level.

WATERING More orchids are killed by over-watering than by any other reason. Constant wetness will cause the roots to rot, which leaves the plant without a means for taking up nourishment which then causes the leaves to droop and will eventually kill the plant. The classic advice is to water the day before the plant dries out. If you have to let the plant go dry to figure out what a dry plant weighs, it will not kill the plant and will make you a better grower. Another measure is to use the pencil trick (the point of a sharpened pencil, when inserted into the medium, will darken with moisture if the plant has enough water). And, there's always the old standby -put your finger in the mix. If it feels wet, it is wet. If you aren't sure whether it is time to water, wait one more day. When orchids are watered, they should be watered copiously. Water should be provided until it runs freely from the drainage holes. The best place to water your plant is in the kitchen sink. Use lukewarm water (do not use salt softened water) and water your plant for about 15 seconds and be sure to thoroughly wet the media. Then allow the plant to drain for about 15 minutes. It may appear dry but it has had enough water. After the plants are watered, they should be placed so that the pots do not stand in water.

FERTILIZER Orchids need to be fed regularly. Growers suggest using a "balanced" fertilizer such as 20-20-20. If you are unsure of what fertilizer to use, you can generally use any fertilizer you would for your other container plants. Orchids will do far better with too little fertilizer than with too much. Feed "weakly, weekly" applying a dilute (1/4 strength) fertilizer each time you water. Water first then follow with fertilizer solution.

TIP FOR SUCCESS Orchids grown in the home during the colder months can be moved outdoors in a protected area during the summer. Take care to protect them from direct sun and position them where they will be easy to water and care for. Before returning them indoors in early autumn, inspect plants to make sure they are free of insects and ailments.

PLANTS Some of the more popular orchids to consider are: Cattleya Alliance Hybrids and Species: Choose miniature types less than 10 inches tall; bright light of southern exposure is best. Dendrobiums: Dwarf phalaenopsis types, or higher-altitude miniatures; bright light at south window required. Oncidiums: Many types available in flower, best if smaller growing; bright light. Paphiopedilums: Lady's-slipper orchids grow well under home conditions, giving long-lasting blooms; provide African violet growing conditions. Phalaenopsis: Moth orchids are absolutely the number-one best orchid houseplant; provide African-violet conditions.

ORCHIDS IN THE GARDEN Properly selected and cared for, orchids can be among the showiest and most exotic of all garden or patio plants and almost without exception, no matter where you live there are orchids that can be adapted to outdoor culture for at least part of, if not the entire, year. There are many areas throughout the southern and central United States where temperatures for a good portion of the year are compatible with the needs of many orchids. Even if you live in areas with severe winters, you will find that orchids thrive out-of-doors during the warm summer months. This enables the plants to grow so much better than they would if left indoors all year. Some coastal areas are nearly frost-free year round. In these areas, with some protection from excessive sun, wind, and rain, lovely orchid plants can be successfully cultivated on the patio or as a part of the landscape. Growers in frost-free areas with cooler summer nights (below 60 F in August and into the fall) can grow cymbidiums, one of the finest of all garden orchids. Where summer nights are warmer, many varieties of vandas and cattleya types are appropriate.

Culture sheets for more than a dozen genera and groups of orchids that explain the basic needs required to grow and flower these plants successfully are available on the AOS web site. You will also find many additional articles and a video library all to help you grow your orchids. The American Orchid Society is the world's leading provider of information about and related to orchids. We invite you to join us and learn about the world's most fascinating flowers and plants.

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