



MARCH/APRIL



MANATEE ORCHID SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



General Meetings

We can't meet together yet, but hopefully the time is getting closer. Likely most of you who are eligible have received at least one Covid-19 vaccine (if you so desire) and many of us have already had our second.

A small group of our membership has been attending the Zoom meetings and in light of that, the board has decided to quit holding these meetings. It requires a fair amount of preparation time to put together the Culture Class, program and show table. We certainly understand if you don't like the Zoom meetings. They are clumsy but (to me) better than no meeting at all.

We will continue to have our newsletter so please send me your orchid pictures and we will showcase them in our newsletter, our website or Maureen Hirthler will include them in a Facebook album. It's always a delightful surprise to me to walk in my little garden and see something pretty in bloom. So, do send me any pictures you're willing to share.

If you want to have your current bloomer on our newsletter or website, [send me a picture](#). You could also send any pictures to [Maureen Hirthler](#) and she'll post it into your album on Facebook.



Are you ready to meet in person? Some of our members have had one or both of their Covid vaccines and are asking when we'll again meet in person. We'll send out an email allowing you to vote on this issue. Give it serious thought as it will help your board make a decision as to when we'll again hold our regular meetings.

We would, of course, follow prescribed social distancing (including keeping our tables/chairs at a reasonable distance) and other prescribed healthy practices, i.e. no snacks, at least for now, minimal or no personal contact,

wear masks, keep meetings at a shorter period of time, disinfect table surfaces, and provide hand sanitizer as well as any other reasonable practices.

Eventually, we'll get there.



Treasurer's Report
Submitted by Sharon Kinkaid
March/April 2021

We do have the liability of the Zoom meetings—will pay them later.

		Expenses	
Check Book balance as of	\$5,658.54	State filing for Non-Profit	61.25
February 28, 2021			
Income			
Dues		Total Expenses	50.00
Supply Sales		Checkbook Balance	\$5,597.29
Total receipts:	0	March 1, 2021	

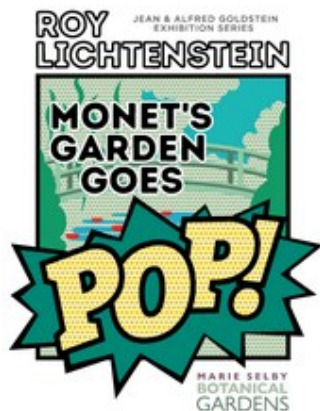
March at Selby Gardens—Opens Saturday, March 13th

Roy Lichtenstein: Monet's Garden Goes Pop!

February 13 to June 27, 2021, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Downtown Sarasota Campus

This exhibition showcases the legendary Pop artist's screen prints based on Monet's world-famous paintings of water-lilies and haystacks. Lichtenstein's rarely seen *Water Lilies* and *Haystacks* provide an unexpected homage to a staple of the public imagination — Monet's paintings of his garden and home at Giverny that inspired them.

The display of Lichtenstein's art in the midst of a horticultural evocation of Giverny creates a unique experience for more than 100,000 garden visitors. Selby Gardens, transformed into Monet's famed gardens at Giverny through the Pop Art lens of Roy Lichtenstein, includes iconic elements of Monet's garden such as the green Japanese bridge, trellises, and benches. This conjuring of Lichtenstein's world also serves as the dynamic backdrop to the lush plantings and mixed borders for which Monet's paintings were renowned. An avid gardener, Monet once said, "My garden is my most beautiful masterpiece." Marie Selby Botanical Gardens evokes this crowning achievement with a surprising Pop Art twist.



I did go down to see this several weeks ago and it was pretty interesting. The conservatory is lovely as usual and the Lichtenstein displays definitely pop. Social distancing—most everything is outside and the display in the mansion is well done. The Café is open and a nice place to stop for a lunch or just a coffee. And it's always a treat to go through the gift shop.

The vernal equinox (12 hours of day and 12 hours of night) was at 5:47 AM March 20th - so that it is officially spring. This means that the days will get longer until June 21 (the summer solstice) and will then reverse until we reach the autumnal equinox. In terms of orchids, it means that we are entering the longest bloom season for orchids.

The Quisquous Month

by Thomas Mirenda

as a writer, I am enamored of words. They are my tools of expression and conveyance of ideas. I love their utility and their precision as well as the specificity they can offer in this regard. While some say that simple language is better for the sake of clarity, I believe that finding the best word, however obscure, might require a bit more effort by the reader, but conveys truth and meaning more completely. The ultimate insult once hurled at the great Ernest Hemingway was that his prose never once sent any of his readers to the dictionary. So, I will leave you to explore the meaning of this title. It in many ways encapsulates what is going on with our orchid collections. And besides, I cannot resist a word with two q's in it! Make sure that plants are spaced well enough so that every new growth gets adequate light. Overcrowded orchids seldom produce spectacle. While we all want as much diversity in our collections as possible, sometimes less is more. Crowded plants stretch toward the light and can become spindly, one-sided and weak. They can also pass diseases and parasites to each other if kept too close together.

IRRATIONAL EXUBERANCE The volatile month of March can be so exciting with all the growth commencing and blooming activity that is tempting to "jump the gun" with our cultural activities. When we are encouraged by our orchids so earnestly trying to grow, displaying fresh new root nubbins and delicate new sprouts, we might overreact by watering and fertilizing excessively this month. I caution you to show a little moderation at this time. New roots may be coming on cattleyas, oncidiums, cymbidiums and even phalaenopsis right now, but they need to be at least an inch or two (2.5–5 cm) long before they are really capable of handling a serious feeding or repotting. Indeed, those roots are searching for moisture and if you wet them constantly many of those roots will slough off and never lengthen or develop properly. They are also exceedingly delicate and easily damaged at this stage. The best thing to do at this stage is supply enhanced

humidity rather than drenching with moisture. Avoid the rotting that often happens on new growths this time of year with a little restraint.

ENTERPRISE Before the rush of repotting season in the next few months, it is imperative to prepare for the onslaught of new growths that are on their way. Assess your collection to see what supplies you might need, fresh bark and moss, new pots and baskets, fertilizers and other nutrients. If you wait till the last minute to acquire these things you may have trouble obtaining everything you need. In addition, you may want to begin to prepare; i.e., clean, sanitize and organize an outside or alternate growing space. Invariably in the crowded winter conditions, some pathogens have developed. Search them out and find and treat them now or they may burgeon uncontrollably as plant juices start flowing and plants are moved around for repotting. It is also quite rewarding to keep a notebook or journal about your plants to track their progress from one year to the next. This way you can record successes as well as failures to keep positive momentum going or, conversely, record disasters from repeating themselves. Our plants are our instructors, so take notes when they communicate with us in their inimitable, nonverbal ways.

FASCINATION Aside from being beautiful, our orchids are enthralling in every conceivable way. How far we delve into their peculiarities and ecologies will ultimately make us better growers and conservators of these astounding plants. There is a reason why orchids are beloved and lovingly nurtured by people like us around the world. They are endlessly interesting and rewarding once we have figured them out. Seek out the advice of your orchid community, your local nurserymen, growers and hobbyists, and the many amazing online communities as well as the professionals at local botanical gardens and university collections. Quisquous though they may be, they offer so much fulfillment and joy when we successfully engage with and solve their many mysteries. —

Thomas Mirenda has been working professionally with orchids for over three decades and is the past chair of the AOS Conservation Committee. He is an AOS accredited judge in the Hawaii Center (email: biophiliak@gmail.com) This is reprinted from the March 2021 Issue of the AOS "Orchids".



How does your garden grow?



The phal above is on Maryanne Hazen's patio garden. The plant below was grown from a bare root Mercedes Kratz bought from Palmer's—no tag. It sure looks like the top picture of the three on the right—all from Chris O'Grady's front yard garden. Am sure her yard is a delight to her neighbors. I know almost all of you have many bloomers right now—where are your pictures?



On the left is Merc's "Green Hair Pig" Isn't she pretty in spite of her name?

Above is Chris' Nobile.

Do you wonder exactly where to cut the spike on your orchid after it's bloomed?

Cutting a Healthy Single Spike

If the flower spike is a healthy green color, one option is to find the node just below the lowest flower and prune it about an inch above the node. Another flower spike may emerge, though the flowers will be smaller and less plentiful than they were previously.

Another option is to trim the spike near the base, with the option of leaving just a couple of nodes. Usually, within 2-3 months new growth will appear and buds will form. Remember that younger or weaker plants may not re-bloom. [Phalaenopsis](#) with branching stalks will grow up from the base. It never hurts to trim 2 nodes above the base of the plant and hope for the best. If the stalk dies, you can always trim it down if the stalk dies.



My personal recommendation is to count a couple of notches up from the bottom and make your cut. [Phalaenopsis](#) orchids are tough and can handle another blooming. If the spike comes up from the base instead of blooming from the cut spike, you've lost nothing.

TIP: If you don't trim the flower spike, the [Phalaenopsis](#) may continue to flower from the tip of the flower stalk, but the flower stalk will become longer. There will be fewer, smaller flowers. To give the orchid a fresh, strong start, trim the flower stalk 2 nodes up from the base, or at the base.

Cutting a Double Spike

If you are lucky enough to have a double-spike [Phalaenopsis](#) orchid, cut one spike at the base and cut the other spike about an inch below the last flower.



This article is from Anna Weston, the creator of Orchid Bliss. You can find many other tips and tricks for growing orchids on her site: [Orchid Bliss](#)

Manatee Orchid Society

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MANATEEORCHIDSOCIETY.COM

Email: Use contact emails on website

Check the website for current info. You can also find previous newsletters there on [our Members page](#). If you don't know how to access our "special members only page for a member directory, be sure to ask.



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Question asked in the March 2021 "Orchids" issue:

QUESTION: Do you have any recommendations for sanitizing cork mounts for reuse?

ANSWER: My recommendation is do not do it. I just do not know of any way to reliably get such a rough, three-dimensional surface to a point that I know it is completely clean.

Perhaps they could be steam sterilized but again the question would be when is enough. Clay pots, a much less rough inorganic surface are notoriously difficult, involving scrubbing, bleach soaking, repeated rinsing and, for many, a final high-temperature bake. I know many growers who aren't even comfortable trying to disinfect used clay pots.



A photo from the April 2021 issue of the AOS magazine.

Bulbophyllum medusae 'pacific Heights' CCE/AOS,
winner of the Bill Thoms Award for Bulbophyllinae.

And I was delighted to have my medusae have six blooms. If you haven't joined the AOS, it's worth it for the beautiful magazine you'll receive each month. Each new member gets a copy of this magazine and if you didn't get your copy, let me