

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to friends who might be interested in knowing about Five Cities Orchid Society and encourage them to subscribe at www.fcos.org



SVO 7884 *Potinara* Loud Nine (Pot Rubescence 'SVO' AM/AOS x SL Orpetii 'Hidden Treasure' 4N™)

Hello Orchidphiles,

I hope your April was as floriferous as mine. I'm enjoying the new rewards in my greenhouse: blooming *Masdevalias*, *Phaleanopsis*, *Potinaras*, *Sarcochilus*, and my treasured *Angraecum leonis*. My yard remains filled with *Cymbidium* blooms. It's just wonderful to see.

Our recent online auction was very successful. We would like to thank everyone who donated plants, books and especially those who entered bids. Plant pick up for auction winners is May 1, 2021, 12:00-2:00 pm at Asbell's Orchids, 200 Orchid Lane, Arroyo Grande. Dan Asbell will also have his doors open in case you'd like to come by and do some orchid shopping. His plants grow in a shade-house, are well acclimated to the Central California climate, and will grow and bloom quite well at your home with the proper attention to light exposure. Thanks to Dan at Asbell's Orchids for their support of the auction.

We would also like to thank Alison and Bas at CalCoast Orchids for their help with this auction. They agreed to ship auctioned plants to our out-of-town bidders. It is great to be able to buy orchids and have them shipped. I took advantage of their 3-pack Phalaenopsis deal and surprisingly affordable shipping to send 6 flowering plants to my relatives in the Puget Sound area.

We met our fundraising goal for this quarter, which allows us to continue to arrange for quality speakers and programs. We plan to hold another auction in mid-August. If you would like to donate any items for the auction, you can use this form to register your contribution: <https://fcos.betterworld.org/donate-an-item>

The FCOS has some excellent speakers and topics lined up through the end of the year. Be sure to keep checking the [events](#) section on our website for information: <https://www.fcos.org/events-and-where>

I would like to encourage you to support the FCOS by becoming a [member](#), paying dues, contributing items to the auction and/or offering a donation. All of these investments help us grow and thrive as a Society. All donations are tax-deductible.

Happy Blooming!

Jeff

Membership Form

<https://fcos.betterworld.org/campaigns/membership-2>



Angraecum leonis



Angraecum leonis- hosting two flowers with nectaries, one of which opened on the full moon (Sweet fragrance at night)



(Left) SVO117 *Sarco. Kulnura Dazzel Deep Velvet* x *Sarco Kulnura Ridgeback 'Rosy'* (Right) SVO G106 *Sarco Kulnura Secure Hot Dot* x *Sarco Kulnura Dazzel Red Spot*

Five Cities Orchid Society is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: The Orchid Collection at the Huntington by Brandon Tam

Time: Thurs May 13th at 7 pm

Join [Zoom Meeting](#)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87016320614?pwd=YIFxMXZqVFA1V1BSazVvQmlzNnh4QT09>

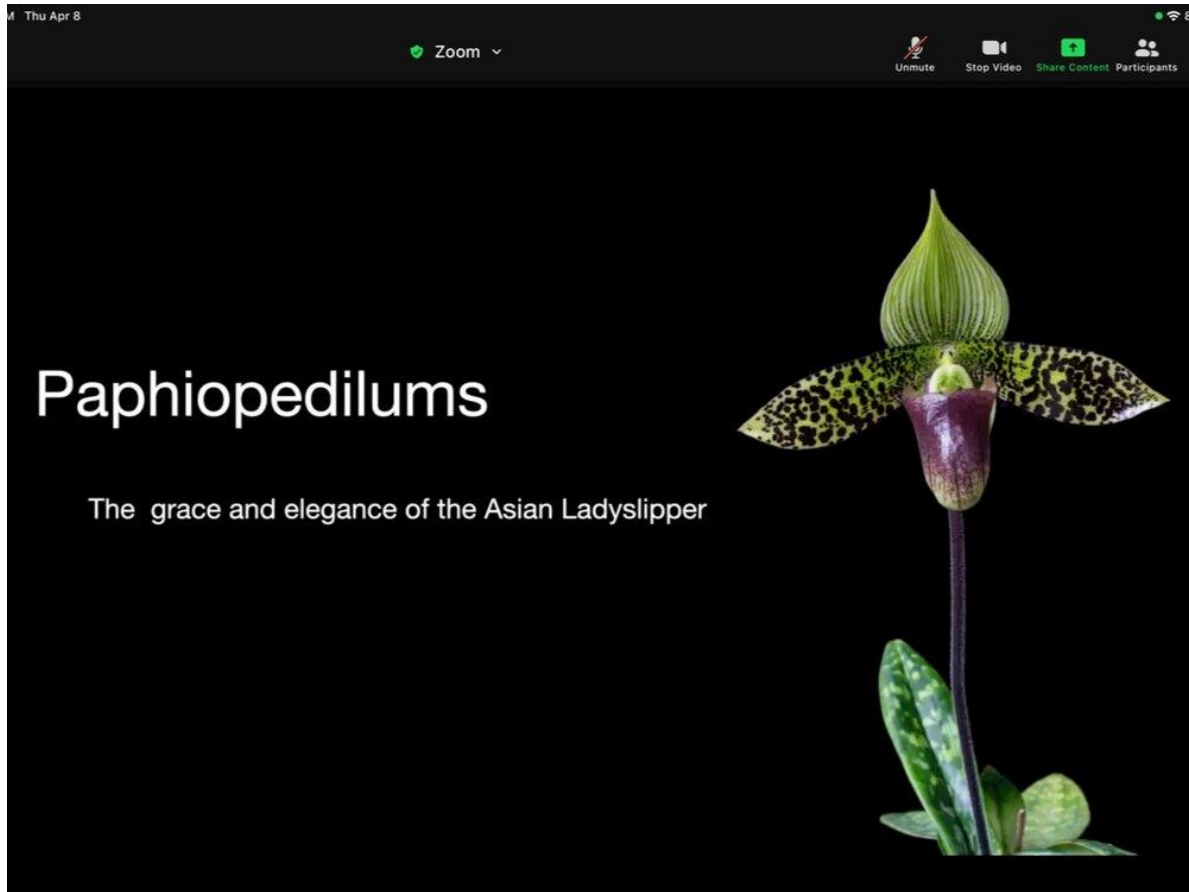
Meeting ID: 870 1632 0614, Passcode: 613810

To find your local number go to: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kcNqzKNn34>



"The Orchid Collection at The Huntington"

With over 10,000 orchid plants, The Huntington has one of the largest orchid collections in the United States, and one of the five most diverse collections in the world, with over 3,600 unique varieties, representing 280 genera, including, but not limited to, *Paphiopedilum*, *Phragmipedium*, *Cymbidium*, *Cattleya*, *Stanhopea*, and *Lycaste*. The collection has grown significantly in the last decade through donations, acquisitions, and propagations. These orchids and other tropical plants are maintained in three off-view greenhouses and one public conservatory, totaling over 26,000 square feet in space. The extensive diversity of orchids within the collections enable staff to display blooming orchids year-round in the Rose Hills Foundation Conservatory for Botanical Science, where examples of rare plants are rotated on a weekly basis for the public to view, appreciate, and interpret. Join us on a virtual tour of the collection as we discover the importance of this collection and the role it plays in the botanical world."



Speaker notes from April 2021 FCOS presentation

At the April 2021 FCOS Zoom meeting Jan Plested spoke on the topic of 'Grace and Elegance of the Asian Slipper Orchids'. Jan and her husband used to live in England where they owned and operated an orchid nursery. They began growing orchids in 1979 and began their business in 1987. Slipper orchids grow over a wide area from SE Asia, India, Himalayan Mountains, parts of China, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and a few of the Pacific Islands to name some of the locations where the species are found in nature.

Paphiopedilum (slipper orchids) relatives include *Phragmipedium*, *Cypripedium*, and *Mexipedium*. *Paphiopedilum* do not have pseudobulbs, have fan shaped growth, and the spikes can be either hairy or smooth. The lip is a modified petal. They have a staminode and two pollinia which are located on both sides of the stigmatic surface. Jan showed photos of a large number of *Paphiopedilum* species that she and her husband had seen in nature. She gave information about each species location in nature, habitat, growth, and presence or absence of fragrance.

She stated *Paphiopedilums* grow best with dappled to bright light but no direct sunlight. They will grow best with good quality water (RO or rain

water) and water must be available at all times for the roots. They grow best with 40-75% humidity and she suggested using a gravel tray with moisture in it if you are growing them inside a house. The pot cannot directly sit in water but should be above it. Air movement is essential especially if humidity is high. They fertilize at $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ strength every two weeks and flush the pot with clean water once/month. She uses a mixture of seedling and medium bark with perlite for potting media and repots every two years or sooner if the media has decomposed. For poor growers she generally puts them into sphagnum moss. But she stated that the moss will turn to mush generally after about one year so you will need to transplant more often if you plant in sphagnum moss. Many of them can be grown outside if the air temperature stays above 50°F.



A Conservation success story in North Georgia by Brad Wilson.
Brad is a member of the Native Orchid Conference (Posted on Facebook
NOC Group April 27, 2021. Story and photos reprinted with permission).

A 20-year native orchid conservation success story. The plants photographed here are a portion of a population pink ladyslipper orchids, *Cypripedium acaule*, rescued from north Fulton County, Georgia at a housing development site ca. 1996/97. The initial phase of the development was 300 acres and later expanded to approximately 500 acres. This region of Fulton county once was habitat for 1000's of acres of these plants and is now reduced to virtually none secondary to metro Atlanta urban sprawl. The Chattahoochee Nature Center (Henning von Schmeling) was asked to assess the population and I assisted his efforts. I discovered two white flowered individual plants at the original development site and they along with approximately 15 to 20 pink flowered plants were moved to private land with landowner and developer permission. The recipient of these plants is both a field botany and horticultural expert of native orchids of the eastern United States. Under his family's care the plants have remained undisturbed and the population now is likely 5x to 7x or more the original plants transplanted. The four-flowered white plant is a seedling recruit within this population, of which there may be 7 to 8 white flowered individuals which do not all flower every year. The plants were moved to land in proximity (1/2 to 1 mile) to another population of *Cyp acaule*. The habitat was selected based on intimate knowledge of the needs of this plant which is horticulturally one of the most difficult *Cypripedium* species to grow and propagate. Of the likely 300+ plants moved to various institutional and private locations in 1996, these are the only survivors.

Four flowered seedling of *Cypripedium acaule* recruit at transplantation site. Natural distribution (wind) and germination of seed from plants transplanted in 1996/97. Georgia, USA







What's Blooming Now - a few photos from our members and friends

This reed stemmed orchid from CalOrchid in Santa Barbara is in continual bloom throughout the year. Look for divisions at our next FCOS auction this summer. (I wacked my main plant with a ladder, knocking off many small keikis and expect to have many rooted cuttings by summer). - Grown by Ed Lysek.



Cattleya 'Big Ben' a large robust grower from Santa Barbara Orchid Estate. Gets bigger every year. Three spikes this year with 5 flowers per spike. - Grown by Ed Lysek.



Sunset Valley Orchids SVO 7466, three years after planting out from a flask. This first bloom seedling has a spicy fragrance. - Grown by Ed Lysek.



Cattleya suavis 4n - a division of a plant purchased from Andy Easton. Temperature tolerant, vigorous grower. - Grown by Ed Lysek.





LC Santa Barbara Sunset
'Showtime'. Grown outside on a
mount. Grown by Jeffrey Thompson.

Pleurothallis phymatodea x P.
teaguei. Grown outside in a clay pot
in a combination of bark and perlite.
Looks like at least one bug liked the
taste of this flower. Grown by Jeffrey
Thompson.





Cymbidium Dorothy Stockstill
'Foregotten Fruits'. A pendulous
hybrid grown outside in a
combination of bark and perlite.
Grown by Jeffrey Thompson.

Closeup of *Cymbidium* Dorothy
Stockstill 'Foregotten Fruits'.





Cymbidium Mainstem 'Hip Hip'.
Grown by Danny Stocks.

Cymbidium Gunslinger 'Bailard
Avenue' x Sensation 'Melita' BCSA
HCC/AOS. Grown by Danny Stocks.



Cymbidium 'Chikiting Gubat'. Grown
by Danny Stocks.

Cymbidium Blazing Rose 'Feathered'.
Grown by Danny Stocks.





Cymbidium Polka Magic 'Crimson Pirate'. Grown by Danny Stocks.

Cymbidium Pinata 'Sanbar Blackhole'. Grown by Danny Stocks.





Cymbidium Strathdon 'Cooksbride Fantasy'. Grown by Danny Stocks.

Cymbidium Little Star 'Fireworks'. Grown by Danny Stocks.





Andinia schizopogon. Grown in a cool greenhouse on a piece of manzanita with small amount of sphagnum moss. Grown by Chris Ehrlar.

Andinia schizopogon side view.





Pleurothallis linguifera. Grown in a cool greenhouse in a plastic pot with sphagnum moss. Grown by Chris Ehler.

Pleurothallis linguifera side view.





Restrepia sanguinea (spotted form).
Grown in a cool greenhouse in a clay
pot with sphagnum moss. Grown by
Chris Ehler.

Restrepiella ophiocephala. Grown in
a cool greenhouse on a piece of
manzanita with small amount of
sphagnum moss. Grown by Chris
Ehler.





Masdevallia caudata dark. Grown in a cool greenhouse in a clay pot with sphagnum moss. Plant from Ecuagenera. Grown by Chris Ehrler.

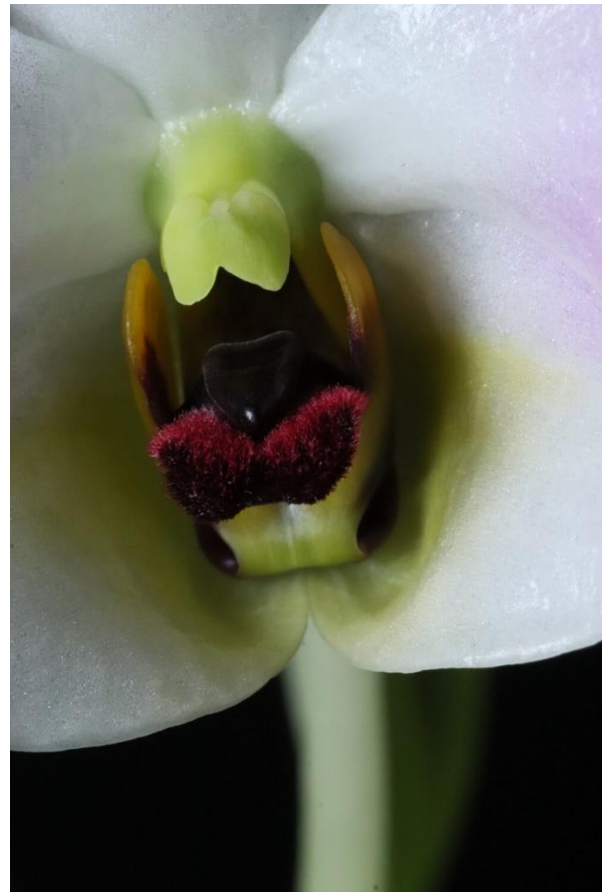
Pleione Confusa 'Golden Gate HCC/AOS. Grown in a cool greenhouse in a mixture of Orchiatia and lava rock. Plant from Asbell Orchids. Grown by Chris Ehrler.





Dendrobium trantuanii. Grown in a cool greenhouse on a piece of cork oak with small amount of sphagnum moss. Plant from the Larry Vierheilig collection. Grown by Chris Ehrler.

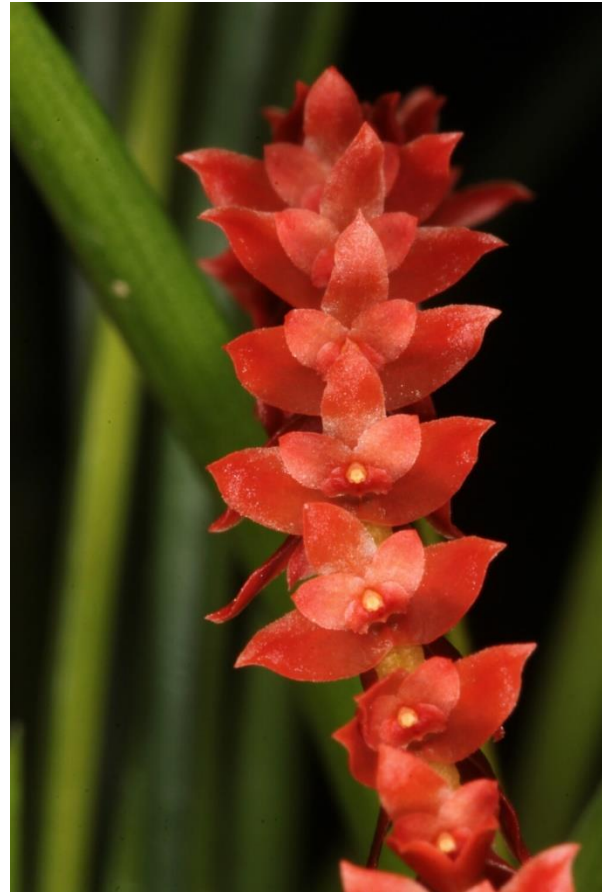
Closeup of *Dendrobium trantuanii* flower.





Dendrochilum wenzelii. Grown in a cool greenhouse on a piece of manzanita with sphagnum moss. Grown by Chris Ehrler.

Closeup of *Dendrochilum wenzelii* flowers.





Paph. Bel Royal (rothschildianum x kolopakingii). This is the best blooming I have ever had on this plant. Six flowers open simultaneously: most before was five. Grown by Eric Holenda.

Odontoglossum wyattianum.
Beautiful lip. Cool grower, outside
covered patio. - Grown by Eric
Holenda.



Paph. Petula's Flare - Grown by Eric
Holenda.



(photo: *Cattleya skinneri* - a good cattleya for beginners)

A 12-Step Plan for Becoming a Successful Orchid Grower

By Ken Slump www.orchids.org

IF YOU ARE NEW TO THE ORCHID hobby and perhaps feel you are not enjoying the success with your plants that you had hoped for, read through these suggestions and see if you can find an idea or two that will help you turn your hobby in the right direction.

1. Start accumulating an orchid library. If you do not already own some, find books on growing orchids. Purchase them and read them. You can shop for new titles at a local bookstore or on line at www.aos.org, the Society's site that offers links to Amazon.com and OrchidsBooks.com.

The best book choices for beginners are often the comparatively inexpensive paperback volumes that are frequently part of a series produced by garden supply manufacturers. You are looking for books that will introduce you to the major groups of orchids, and briefly explain the general growing conditions that they need to be successfully cultivated in a home environment or hobby greenhouse. Such books usually include chapters explaining how different types of orchid plants grow, how and when to repot them, and some basic information about watering, fertilization and pest control.

Do not overlook a visit to your nearest local used book store as well. Or visit used-book shops on line and travel afar from the comfort of your own home. Many useful books written on orchid growing in recent decades are now out of print. The techniques for growing orchids have not changed much of late. Nomenclature, however, has changed. There may be some unfamiliar and outdated plant names encountered in some of the older titles, particularly if you are enough of an orchid newcomer to be familiar only with the orchid nomenclature of the last couple of years. Still, many of these books contain much valuable information, and some of them are, to me, irreplaceable.

It is possible that books have become obsolete for some who may prefer to gather their information via the information super highway known as the Internet. I am sure that can work just as well, but I wonder if hopping between Web sites and jumping in and out of various chat rooms and forums provides the clarity and focused point of view that a good author or editor can lend to a well written book, especially if you are a beginner.

2. Establish a good and sensible basic cultural regime for your orchids. By reading and gathering information, you should gain an appreciation for the environment necessary to grow orchids and should determine how you will supply those conditions for your plants.

I would recommend that you make a decision about the growing medium you intend to use for your plants. Most growers favor some type of mix.

The best growing medium for you will depend to a large extent on your environment for growing orchids. The type of pot you use, how you care for your plants, and even the area of the country in which you live also affect which type of growing mix, and what ratio of ingredients is best for you.

Start with a basic or standard medium that can often be purchased premixed. Vary it only as you add orchids with special growing requirements or determine a problem with your plants that you feel certain is related to the conditions in the root zone.

When getting started, it is a good idea to make a schedule for routine tasks such as watering and fertilizing. Good growers eventually come to appreciate when it is time to give their plants an extra watering or skip a day or two, but in the early stages, you will probably avoid the disasters associated with overwatering if you stick to the calendar. At the risk of over generalization, I would suggest that watering twice a week is sufficient.

3. Check your plants frequently. If you are like most who are bitten by the orchid bug, you will find yourself spending time with your plants daily. This is a good habit to develop. Resist the temptation to water your plants on your daily inspections or you will soon be looking forward to buying new plants. Instead, take time to carefully look over the plants and you will learn much from them. You will begin to appreciate when the plants are in active growth and when they are resting. You will learn to marvel at the development of orchid roots and the formation of new leads, leaves and flowers.

Keep a vigilant eye out for signs of pests and disease. Be sure to periodically examine the underside of foliage and turn plants to examine the parts that are turned from your view – that is where the pests always seem to hide. Learn to recognize the signs of a plant under stress and try to determine how to modify the environment to alleviate that stress. At the same time, appreciate which of your plants are thriving, and consider why they are doing well.

4. Do not overcrowd your collection of orchid plants. Crowded plants suffer for sufficient light and the good air movement that produces healthy orchid plants. They are more prone to diseases, and pest problems spread more quickly among them. I am not saying that your plants should never touch, but you should be able to recognize each of your orchid plants as an individual when you look upon them. Plants with sufficient space around them are not only healthier, but are also easier to examine and maintain.
5. Avoid acquiring too many different types of orchids too quickly. The orchid family is a huge one, unquestionably with something for everyone.

When starting out, stick with some of the more popular and basic types. These are the ones you will find discussed in your beginner orchid books. After you gain success with those you can branch out into some of the more unusual and esoteric types. For the first year or two, it is a good idea to learn to grow the popular sorts and thus gain an appreciation for what might be called 'basic orchid culture'.

6. Let your orchid success leads you to new orchid acquisitions. As your experience with orchids accumulates, you will likely observe that some plants in your collection are out-performing others. Each grower seems to have a knack for cultivating certain kinds of orchids. When you discover yours, go with it. Seek additional orchid species or hybrids of the same or similar type. You may want to research a hybrid orchid's lineage and look to its parents or descendants for compatible plants. Although this approach to building a successful collection may seem simple and obvious, far too many doggedly insist on attempting to grow orchids that do not succeed for them and eventually reach the point of being sufficiently discouraged to give up the hobby entirely.
7. Purchase blooming-sized orchid plants whenever possible. Small, young orchid plants may take several years to reach flowering size, and it is likely that flowering will occur only if growing conditions are ideal. In most cases, it is easier to sustain a mature plant than it is to nurture a young one and you will not have to wonder if your plant is failing to bloom because it is immature or whether growing conditions are unfavorable.

The best way to know a plant is flowering size is to purchase it in flower, although a mature plant that has bloomed will often bear evidence of that. Buying a plant in bloom also guarantees that the flower you get is the one you are expecting, as some orchid species and hybrids exhibit considerable variability.

Blooming-size orchid plants are unquestionably more expensive than their juvenile counterparts, but I think they are worth it. This is particularly true for beginners who may not have the patience to wait for a few years for their orchids to start producing flowers.

8. Keep some records on your orchid collection. It is the best way to help monitor your progress and assist you in keeping up with routine tasks.

Record keeping does not have to be extensive or involve a lot of technology to be useful. A few basic bits of information kept on a pot label often suffices. Most importantly, you need to have the name of the plant written legibly and indelibly. Other useful data might include the date the plant was acquired, where it was purchased, when it was in flower, the number of flowers it produced and the date the plant was last repotted. Some growers also like to keep track of the fertilizer schedule

for their plants as well as any treatments the plant may have received for pests and diseases.

This may seem like a lot of information for a plastic pot label, so some growers maintain card files or small databases on the plants in their collections. The amount of information you record is a personal decision, but at the very least, in addition to the plant's name, you should keep track of its repotting date to help prioritize your efforts at repotting time.

9. Admit your failures. Cull your collection regularly of those plants that are struggling and slowly dying. Many declining orchids seem to be able to cling to life for months or years, yet I do not think I have ever seen anyone bring one back from the brink of death to become a thriving, healthy specimen. Do not try to pass off such plants to a friend or unsuspecting novice, or worse yet, donate them to the divisions table at your orchid society to resell or give away.

These plants need to go to the trash or compost heap, but try to learn from your mistakes. Attempt to determine why the plant declined. Perhaps it was a cultural problem that you have now solved so that you might succeed in the future with the same or a similar orchid plant. If, on the other hand, you suspect that the orchid failed due to limitations of your growing environment or some inability on your part to understand how to grow it, you would perhaps be well advised to avoid adding that sort of orchid to your collection in the future, at least until you are able to learn more and modify your cultural practices.

10. Join your nearest orchid society, one of the best places to learn about growing orchids. There you should find all levels of orchid growing expertise and experts who can advise you on how to grow orchids well in the particular area in which you live. You can find a list of affiliated societies on line at the AOS Web site (www.aos.org) under 'Affiliates'.

Do not be discouraged if your first visit to an orchid society meeting feels a bit like a visit abroad. Orchid growers speak their own language and it takes a bit of time to understand and appreciate some of the terminology and nomenclature.

Orchid societies vary in their operation and organization, but most are welcoming of new members. Be sure to arrive a bit early when you make your first appearance at an orchid society meeting. Make sure you introduce yourself and let some of the members know you are new and interested in learning more about how to grow orchids successfully and are interested in how their organization might enhance that effort.

Thriving societies usually have a variety of activities that occur during the course of their meetings. Many have special events and sessions for novice members, too. As you become better acquainted and involved in the organization, you will likely make lasting friendships and find

opportunities to participate in activities such as orchid shows and visits to orchid growers, both commercial and private.

While it seems harder and harder in today's world to find time to join and participate in a special interest club such as a local orchid society, most who join and get involved will tell you it is a thoroughly rewarding experience. If you are not already a member, you should also join the American Orchid Society (www.aos.org).

11. Seek answers to your questions and solutions to your problems. People can and do successfully grow orchids in residential environments in an amazing variety of ways. If you are not enjoying success, there are individuals and groups out there that should be able to help.

Look to orchid societies, libraries, greenhouses and garden centers, botanic gardens and the Internet for help. Gather information and try to sort out the best of it, being aware that too much information can be more confusing than too little. Perhaps the best advice for a struggling orchidist might be to simplify things as much as possible, both in the number and kinds of plants being cultivated, as well as to simplify their cultural practices. Many orchids, indeed, thrive on neglect.

12. Visit an orchid show. You can locate one near you by checking the calendar in Orchids magazine or looking on the AOS Web site. A bit of a drive will be worth it. At the show you will have opportunities to meet and learn from orchid enthusiasts, to see and acquire beautiful orchids and to be inspired. It is virtually guaranteed to renew your enthusiasm for your orchid hobby.

FCOS Lifetime Membership

A New FCOS Lifetime Membership is available for a donation of \$500. The FCOS Board is looking for creative ways to insure the long term financial health of FCOS. For those of you who are able to consider this generous donation your lifetime membership will help FCOS maintain its quality speaker programs and prepare for the resumption of our Spring Show. Click here for donation details.

Become a Life Member of FCOS for a \$500 [donation](#)



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Here's a better way to air your dirty (or clean) laundry. Got a complaint, suggestion or just want to express your opinion: send an email to our editors, [Jeff Parham](#), [Chris Ehrler](#) or [Ed Lysek](#). (photo courtesy of Gary Yong Gee)

A new member asked: *Where can I purchase orchids locally?*

Answer: *There are three commercial orchid growers in the local area:*

1. Asbell Orchids is located in Arroyo Grande and specializes in orchids for frost free outdoor locations for our area. To visit, contact Dan Asbell 805-550-1593.
2. SLO Orchids is located in Arroyo Grande. Visit their website at www.SLOorchids.com and sign up for their newsletter for their monthly specials.
3. CalCoast Orchids is located in Los Osos and specializes in phalaenopsis, but has recently added other orchid types including slipper orchids and oncidium hybrids. Visit www.CalCoastOrchids.com for more information.

In support of local orchid growers, Monty Don, the host the BBC's show Gardner's World says:

"The horticultural industry is unimaginative and dominated by vast, supermarket-like outlets. But the small nurseries and growers remain - praise them with your wallets, not your memories."

FCOS Garage Sale

Send an email to [Jeff Parham](#), [Chris Ehrler](#) or [Ed Lysek](#) and include an image of your item, a description, price, and your contact info. We'll include your info in our next monthly newsletter if there is space. FCOS assumes no responsibility for payment, taxes, etc. We ask the items be orchid or plant related. FCOS is not taking a commission or participating in any other way.

Five Cities Orchid Society 2021 Board of Directors

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Orchids are really great!

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