

# NEWSLETTER



**Editor's Note:** The newsletter is distributed electronically (blind copied so addresses remain private) to all members for whom we have an email address. If you do not receive an emailed newsletter please notify me at [thues@sasktel.net](mailto:thues@sasktel.net).

## Upcoming Meeting Dates on Zoom:

Sat, Apr 24, 2021 @ 1:30pm  
Guest speaker Dave Sorokowsky, Paph Paradise "*General Paph Culture*"  
Sun, May 30, 2021 @ 2:00pm  
Guest speaker Francisco Miranda, Miranda Orchids  
"*Brazilian Orchid Habitats - 3 (the Coast)*"

## SOS Executive

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The April general meeting will be held on **Saturday, Apr 24 via Zoom beginning at 1:30pm**. Please see page 2 of this newsletter for a link to the Zoom meeting.

Our guest speaker Dave Sorokowsky from Paph Paradise will present "*General Paph Culture*."

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### GENERAL MEETING AGENDA:

**Join Zoom meeting** - family members are requested to join on a single device to help us stay under the maximum number of devices for our zoom subscription

#### 1:30 pm Presentation - Dave Sorokowsky

We are sharing our zoom meeting link with members of the Manitoba Orchid Society (MOS), for the presentation.

#### SOS Business Items

(Following Dave's presentation)

#### Announcements

Welcome to new SOS members

Problem corner

General feedback



### SOS Membership Renewal - Early Incentive

Memberships are due for renewal in September 2021 to cover the Society's activities from September 2021 to May 2022. Members renewing in April and May 2021 will receive a \$5 voucher for materials purchased from the SOS Resources.

Please send an e-transfer to SOS Treasurer Cheryl Grummett [cherylgrummett@me.com](mailto:cherylgrummett@me.com)

Or mail a personal cheque to  
P.O. Box 411, Saskatoon, SK S7K 3J3

**You are invited to join the SOS General Meeting at  
1:30 pm SK time, Saturday, April 24, 2021 by clicking on this link:**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/93597303701?pwd=TVNRQ3llbk9iUEhUK2xRMIM4Z0lnUT09>

Meeting ID: 935 9730 3701

Passcode: 378038

**The meeting will begin promptly at 1:30pm.**

## PLANT ORDERS

### Ching Hua Orchids

**Orders have been submitted.**

Plants are expected to arrive in Vancouver and then on to Saskatoon by Air Canada May or early June.

Plants will arrive bare-root, wrapped in sphagnum moss so will need to be potted as soon as possible upon pickup.

### Garden Slippers

**Orders have been submitted.  
Delivery is expected late April  
or early May.**

*For planting instructions, click [here](#) to link to website and select the Plant Care tab.*

### Orchids In Our Tropics

Orders have arrived!

### Paph Paradise & Gold Country Orchids

Orders have been submitted - delivery late May pending US Fish & Wildlife Dept processing the CITES documentation.

Heather will receive the invoice prior to plants arriving. Those of us who have placed orders will be charged the cost of the plants in USD + 15% for documentation & shipping. Heather will contact us for payment in cash, cheque or e-transfer.

Orchids will be shipped to Calgary and FOS member Ross Otto will ship our orchids to Saskatoon. The Calgary-Saskatoon shipping will be divided between plant orders and Heather will collect this at the time of plant pickup.

#### "How do we select your plants?"

When we are pulling orders, we always look for the largest and strongest plants. Basically we try to select the plant that we would chose for ourselves. If we can find one in bud, we will select that one.

You can order with confidence knowing that you will receive the best plants available."  
Paph Paradise Orchids

### ECUAGENERA

**Orders have arrived!**

Thank you to Heather, David and Tom for bringing these plants to our collections!

## SPEAKERS PROGRAM

**Dave Sorokowsky, from Paph Paradise, will present “General Paph Culture.”**

Paph Paradise is owned and operated by David and Stacey Sorokowsky. It all started with a few orchid seedlings from a ‘big box’ store.... Soon all the windows were full. Then the grow lights went into the spare bedroom, and then the inevitable greenhouse was built. As their collection grew they experimented with different genera, but found that slipper orchids were the most intriguing. After a few years they became the main focus.

David has 20 years experience growing and breeding top quality orchids with close to 100 AOS and CSA awards. Having been a major customer of the Orchid Zone, he was able to acquire some of the finest plants in the world from them, and now he is using these exceptional orchids to produce his own new and unique breeding lines. After dabbling with hybridizing for a few years, he started setting significant numbers of seed pods in 2013/2014. These seedlings started blooming in 2017 and he is looking forward to seeing more and more in the coming years.

David is an AOS accredited judge and noted orchid speaker.



***Paphiopedilum Hawaiian Skies***

A beautiful example of the Paph breeding at Paph Paradise. The SOS Newsletter editor ordered one of these and is so excited to grow and flower it!

Photo from Paph Paradise [website](#)

## REQUEST FOR TREASURER

Please consider putting your name forward for the Treasurer position (or for Secretary, in which case Donna Carlson-O’Keefe will switch to Treasurer).

## LIBRARY

If anyone is interested in borrowing any library resources, please email Librarian Deb Huculiak [hucuh@sasktel.net](mailto:hucuh@sasktel.net) to arrange for pickup. Please include in your email message your name and a phone number for Deb to reach you. You can find a .pdf of the library holdings on our website. Available are books, magazines (AOS Orchids and Orchid Digest), pH meter, light meter.

## MARCH GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

recorded by Donna Carlson-O’Keefe

The meeting was chaired by Tracey Thue. There were at least 48 participants from the three societies.

Tracey welcomed the members of the Saskatchewan Orchid Society, the Orchid Society of Alberta and the Manitoba Orchid Society to the Zoom meeting. She then introduced the speaker. Marni Turkel from California. Marni will tell us about the joys, benefits, possibilities, and challenges of growing miniatures.

Calvin Lo told the participants that he visited Marni’s wonderful greenhouses in California a few years ago, and that this is Marni’s first talk ever to a Canadian audience.

### **Presentation by Marni Turkel: “Less Is More: Small Orchids”**

Marni started growing orchids in 1980, when she was still a student living in a studio cottage with skylights. She was running out of space, so she started buying small orchids. A friend of hers, Ron Parsons, who has written several books on miniature orchids, has a limit of 6” for his plants, but Marni doesn’t necessarily hold to that. Her collection is more mixed, but for this presentation she is concentrating on miniatures.

## GENERAL MEETING MINUTES, CONT.

### What makes an orchid an orchid?

Using a blossom of *Dendrobium christyanum*, Marni reviewed the parts of an orchid flower: the lip, the column, three sepals and two petals. (The lip is a modified petal.) She showed a slide of an intact flower, and then slides of the same flower deconstructed to illustrate the different parts of an orchid flower.

The column is the important part. At the top of it is the anther cap and under that are the pollinia. Below that is the stigma, the female and receptive part of the flower. The stigmatic cavity contains a sticky viscous liquid which traps the pollinia. The unique thing about orchids is that the male and female reproductive parts are fused together onto the same structure.

The pollinia are waxy and do not blow in the air. Most orchids, although not all, are dependent on pollinators such as birds or insects to pick up the pollen from one flower and deposit it on another. Most can't pollinate themselves; this is key to genetic diversity.

### Getting over that size thing

The only unique thing a big plant gives you is big!

Marni showed several pairs of slides, first a large plant and then a similar but smaller plant. If you find a plant that you like but it is too big, you can often find a similar plant that will also give you pleasure in a smaller size. She feels that smaller plants often present a more attractive form, and often look better even when they are not in bloom.

### What can miniatures offer?

Miniatures can have:

- Hundreds of flowers in a 2" pot, e.g. *Dendrochilum parvulum*.
- Flowers that last for 9 months, e.g. *Dendrobium cuthbertsonii*, but she feels that when something blooms that long, she tends to stop looking at it, so she doesn't discount plants that have a shorter blooming life.
- Amazing foliage, e.g., *Oberonia rufilabris*. These plants look great, whether they are blooming or not
- Extra-terrestrial appearance and incredible detail, e.g., *Stelis microchila*.
- A fragrance that can fill a room, e.g. *Eria pannea*.
- Athletic flowers, e.g., *Porroglossum sergii* which has a hinged lip that closes at night. When an insect lands

on it in the daytime, it slowly closes and then snaps shut, trapping the insect inside. The pollen sticks to the insect's thorax, and the insect has to crawl across the stigma to get out, depositing the pollen as it goes.

- Intricate detail, e.g., *Sievekingia reichbenbachiana*.
- Flowers that deceive, e.g., *Trichoceros onaensis* which mimics the insect that pollinates it
- Flowers as big as the plant itself, e.g., *Paphinia neudeckeri*, *Masdevallia patula*. Note that unlike most *Masdevallias*, *Masd. patula* will rebloom on the same spikes, so don't cut the spike off after blooming
- Patterned foliage, e.g., *Lepanthes calodictyon*, jewel orchids.

### Choosing your orchids

- Species or hybrid – hybrids are easier to grow because they are more adaptable. They don't require the narrow range of habitat that species do.
- Choose your orchids for what *you* can provide, for example, the light and humidity found in your home
- Provide for the needs of the orchids you choose - choose the orchid and then research what it needs.

This is what Marni tends to do and now she has four different growing areas with different conditions. If you're buying the orchid from a vendor or online, ask the vendor what cultural conditions it needs:

temperature range, elevation at which it grows, etc. Or you can tell the vendor what conditions you have and ask them if the plant will do well in the conditions you have.



*Trichocentrum longicalcaratum* flowers  
Grown and photographed by Marni Turkel

## GENERAL MEETING MINUTES, CONT.

### General Culture

- **Water quality is important** – she has had problems with fluctuating water quality all her life. If you are using city water, she recommends that you find out what is in it, either by testing or by asking others.
- **Temperature** – she recommends a minimum-maximum thermometer, so you know the temperature range the plant is experiencing when you aren't there.
- **Light levels and light quality** – if you are growing in a greenhouse with Fiberglass panels, they will degrade over time and block light so your plants will stop blooming after a time. Tinted windows could also make a difference.
- **Humidity** – most orchids grow in fairly humid conditions. At least 60% humidity is a good starting point.
- **Air movement** – some of the lowland plants like really hot temperatures and don't experience much of a breeze, but as you move to higher elevations, there is more breeze due to updrafts, and plants from higher elevations will require more air movement.
- **Potted or mounted** – 95% of orchids are epiphytes (attached to trees). There are also lithophytes (attached to rocks) and terrestrials (growing on the ground). If it is terrestrial, it needs to be potted; it will not grow mounted. If it is potted, you need to consider what potting medium it needs, for example, what kind of bark or moss (or something else), the particle size, etc.
- **Fertilizer** – in nature when it rains or there are heavy mists, the orchids get nutrients washing down from above. The amount of fertilizer needed increases with the amount of light and warmer temperatures. If it is cold dark winter, you don't want to use too much fertilizer. Some dry rest plants that come from monsoon areas do not want any fertilizer at all during their rest periods. The type of fertilizer you use is not so important. It is a good idea to vary the fertilizer that you use; use a couple different fertilizers in rotation.

If you are not satisfied with the way your plant is growing or blooming, all of the above are factors to look at for what could be wrong.

### Special considerations for miniatures

- **Do not overpot** – a lot of plants like to be root-bound. Many plants like a wet-dry cycle, some over the course of a year, some just over the course of a day, but if the pot is too big, there is too much potting media, and it won't dry out fast enough, leading to root rot.
- **Net pot in bottom of pot for species** - Marni showed a slide of a *Dendrobium violaceum*, a cloud forest species that likes to be evenly moist, potted in moss in a deep ceramic pot with a net pot inside at the bottom. The plant roots remained quite shallow and avoided the air holes at the bottom of the pot. With specimen plants after the roots die off in the middle, she frequently puts a cut-down net pot at the bottom, so the roots can grow around it and still get air at the centre.
- **Beware of moss creep** – moss such as “velvet moss” will often grow on the surface of the potting medium and encroach on the orchid plant, smothering it. If the moss is wet, it prevents air from getting through, and if it is dry, it prevents water from getting to the plant. Marni really hates this moss! She sprays the moss with 70% alcohol (isopropyl alcohol or ethanol), avoiding the plant as much as possible, although it shouldn't hurt the plant if a little bit gets on it.
- **Algae coat** – algae on the plant will block sunlight so the plant will not be photosynthesizing. She uses hydrogen peroxide to get rid of the algae, spraying it on, letting it sit for a few minutes and then wiping the algae off with a paper towel or soft brush. She also uses lemon scented ammonia or soapy/sudsy ammonia in a 10% solution. She spritzes it off with a fairly strong spray of water. The ammonia solution also works for slugs and some bush snails.
- **Cautions** – do not use hydrogen peroxide in hot weather or on nigro-hirsute *Dendrobiums* (it will defoliate them although they will come back). Wash it off after using. Do not use ammonia on begonias (check other plants before using it on them), and if you have polycarbonate panels in your greenhouse, be sure to rinse the ammonia off them after spraying.
- **Wetting agents/surfactants** – Marni uses surfactants such as Dawn liquid (a drop in a gallon of water will do), Coco-Wet (can be found at hydroponic stores but she is not impressed with it), Total Solutions surfactant, and Suffusion liquid. A surfactant reduces the surface tension of the water and allows better penetration of the potting medium. It also helps water drain out of the crown of the plant.

## GENERAL MEETING MINUTES, CONT.

### General Culture, cont.

- **Water antitranspirant/leaf coatings** – Vapor Gard puts a coating on the leaves, preventing transpiration. This allows repotted plants or plants just out of flask to develop roots; avoid getting it on the roots. Another antitranspirant is Cloud Cover but it washes off so is not very effective in a greenhouse.
- **Beneficial microbes** – these help the roots and keep them healthy. There are a lot of products available online or in hydroponic stores. Two examples are RootShield or Bushdoctor Microbe Brew.
- “**Pest infestations** are sometimes directly related to one’s need for a trip to the optometrist.” – Bob Hamilton, 1995
- **Bush snails** aka the grim reaper – Marni showed a slide of a bush snail, *Zonitoides arboreus*. They are less than ¼ inch across; the babies are less than 1/8 inch. They eat the roots and do a lot of damage, especially in cool humid conditions.

### Growing Spaces

- Indoors by a window
- Covered patio or breezeway – not so good here but works well in southern California
- Growing under lights – could also be an enclosed orchidarium
- Unheated greenhouse
- Heated greenhouse

Marni showed slides to illustrate the different kinds of growing spaces, including several slides of her own greenhouses. She hangs plants from fishing swivels so they rotate and reorient themselves towards the sun and thus develop a more balanced shape.

### A Small Gallery:

(in no particular order)

*Aerangis arachnopus* – she grows it warm (65F nights, 80-85F days), quite bright light.

*Panisea cavaleri* – a *Coelogyne* relative from Indochina.

*Bulbophyllum pardolatum* – flowers last about ten days; they open in the morning and close in the early afternoon. It is easy to grow intermediate or warm.

*Dendrobium vexillarius* – only 2-3 inches high, a little bit more difficult to grow. She showed it mounted on a piece

of wood. Marni used to use moss when mounting plants but it degrades in about a year and roots don’t want to grow into it. Now she uses coconut fibre which doesn’t seem to degrade as much; it works well in her high humidity situations.

*Eria rhomboidalis* – from China and India, year-round water, moderately bright light, mounted.

*Gastrochilus fuscopuntatus* – has interesting squiggly roots and spotted foliage, only about an inch high, mounted.

*Sophranitis cernua* – bright orange colour, some are yellow, let dry between waterings, bright light.

*Cymbidium tigrinum* – honey fragrance, 8-10” tall maximum. It likes a dry rest in winter but Marni found it bloomed more successfully if she watered it sparingly in winter, rather than giving it a hard dry rest.

*Mystacidium braybonae* – has very long roots, so use a longer mount, fragrant, needs a distinct dry rest to bloom well but not bone dry as in nature it would get mist. Pictured left, grown and photographed by Marni Turkel.

*Dendrobium cyanocentrum* – warm grower, long lasting flowers, big variation in colours.

*Cattleya schilleriana* – warm grower, shady. Marni has always grown it mounted.

*Ceratostylis eria* – a beautiful plant, the flowers are sparkling white, evenly moist year-round.

*Promenaea silvana* – cool grower (temperature in the 50s, cooler at night), will ring themselves with flowers if grown well.

*Phalaenopsis lobbii* – from China/India/Himalayas, intermediate grower (56F nights, 75-80F days), long lasting flowers. Marni mists them two or three times a week in the winter, less often if it is humid; don’t let it

dry enough for the leaves to shrivel.

*Vanda (Neofinetia) falcata ‘Gojo Fukurin’* – *Neofinetias* are interesting plants, fairly easy to grow. Although they don’t need a dry rest, they do like a definite lessening of water. A lot of dry rest plants need more light, but *Neofinetia* doesn’t seem to care. They have wonderful fragrances.



## GENERAL MEETING MINUTES, CONT.

### A Small Gallery, cont.

*Lepanthes telipogoniflora* – very tiny plant, doesn't seem to like a lot of air movement but they do like a high humidity, grows well in moss. They don't do that well out in the main greenhouse as there is too much air movement; some people grow them in the top of a plastic water bottle, which keeps the humidity in.

*Oncidium calochilum* – likes to be dry between waterings; the roots like to dry off quickly and stay dry for a couple of days.

*Angraecum arachnites* – many people will tell you to grow *Angraecums* mounted, but Marni has more success growing them in pots. Her advice is not to believe everything you are told.

*Paphinia herrerae* – bloom multiple times during their growing season, and the flowers are huge relative to the size of the plant.

*Pleione formosanum* – they need to be kept quite dry and cool in the winter; they are a spring bloomer and spring grower. They have pseudobulbs which send up new funnel-shaped shoots. You need to be very careful how you water them; if you get water in the funnel, it could rot the pseudobulb.

*Alamania punicea* – from Mexico. They need a dry rest and like a cold dry winter but a hot summer.

*Sarcoglyphis comberi* – have interesting intricate flowers; the column looks like a weird beak.

*Dendrobium* (syn. *Cadetia*) *chionantha* – from New Guinea, have a citrus fragrance in late morning. The plant is about 1-1.5 inches tall and can be in bloom all year long.

*Lycaste campbelli* – some *Lycastes* like a dry rest and some don't. If they have pointed spikes on the top of the pseudobulb, they need a dry rest.

*Trichoceros roseus* – these flowers mimic an insect. They are sequential bloomers and tend to grow away from the mount so don't try to tie them down. They are easy to share – you just break off a growth and give it to someone.

*Polystachya pubescens* – easy to grow, long-lasting flowers, sequential bloomers.

*Aeranthes strangulata* (*longipes*) – *Aeranthes* keep their spike for 3-4 years and will bloom off the same spike, so don't cut the spike off. They have thin wiry spikes which

are nearly invisible, so the flowers appear to be just bobbing around.

*Dendrobium serranicum* – a New Guinea *Dendrobium*, grows quite moist.

*Chytroglossa aurata* – from Brazil, grows intermediate to cool, year-round moisture.

*Pleurothallis niveoglobula* – the flowers are tiny white globes. Marni's specimen plant was growing in a 2" pot and bloomed all year round.

*Macroclinium aurorae* – the flower clusters look like fireworks. They grow warm, like to go dry for days between waterings, like fairly high humidity but not misting, like quite bright light.

*Constantia rupestris* – from Brazil. Not easy to find but a wonderful plant. It sticks close to the mount and has nice fat pseudobulbs.

*Angraecum triangularifolium* – from Madagascar, not white which is unusual for *Angraecums*, smells like a warm cake coming out of the oven.

*Dracula lotax* – warm grower, 4-5 inches high, likes even moisture.

*Dendrobium jenkinsii* – gets a bit of mist but needs a cool dry rest to bloom well.

*Dendrobium prasinum* – Marni finds it very hard to grow. Warm grower from Papua-New Guinea.

*Sarcochilus ceciliae* – base of the plant needs to be above the medium or the roots will rot, sequential bloomer.

*Masdevallia rex* – warmer grower, compact, fragrant, beautiful flower.

*Pleurothallis sonderona* – intermediate grower, likes to dry for several days between waterings, moderate light, year-

round water.

*Porroglossum sergii* – flowers seem to be floating in air. This is the one with the hinged lip that Marni mentioned earlier.

*Pabstelia elegantula* (*Pleurothallis avenacea*) – lots of little flowers, from Brazil, intermediate grower, year-round water.

*Trichocentrum pfavii* – seems to go downhill periodically, seems very sensitive to water quality. Marni has grown it both warm and intermediate.

*Platystele umbellata* – flowers are carried in umbels which start out about ¼ inch across, but each flower in the umbel is complete with column, lip, sepals and petals.

Photo above, provided by Marni Turkel.





## GENERAL MEETING MINUTES, CONT.

### *That is what makes an orchid an orchid.*

Following the presentation, Calvin Lo thanked Marni for her incredible talk and amazing photos, most of which were taken by Marni herself.

Marni then took questions from the Zoom audience.

*Q.* Do you water by hand, using a spray nozzle? Having so many plants, do you group them in certain areas depending on the amount of water they need?

*A.* Yes and yes. She uses a Gardena watering wand set at a gentle spray. She hand waters everything. She separates dry rest plants into what she used to call “The Mexican Winter”. She groups them together and puts a blue tag in each of them, so she knows they are dry rest plants if they happen to migrate to a different part of the greenhouse. In each greenhouse she usually has two different dry areas. They all get watered in the summer.

She has two injector pumps, so she is fertilizing plants every time she waters. Dry rest plants therefore don’t get fertilized in the winter.

She reiterated that water quality is very important. In the US, the pH of water going through distribution lines must be at least 8.0, (8.4 where she lives. 9.4 in some places). She has to use reverse osmosis water because in her county, they use NaOH to raise the pH, but sodium kills the plants. However, RO water lacks the micronutrients. Again, she recommended switching between more than one fertilizer. She is having a lot of trouble with water quality right now and she is working with a nutritional consultant to solve her problems.

*Q.* With no orchid shows, can we buy miniatures online?

*A.* It is hard to get them into Canada, but she is about to try again. She suggests writing to a Canadian grower, telling them your growing conditions and requirements, and asking for recommendations. Or you can Google information on specific plants to see what they require and then contact a grower about them. Don’t hesitate to ask the grower questions because the grower wants the plants to do well after you acquire them. A lot of nurseries may have miniatures; they just don’t list them as that.

*Further comment by questioner:* there is lots of interest in doing an import from Marni, so perhaps members of the three societies could get together on an order some time during the summer.

*Q.* How do you manage your large collection to keep track of specific needs and plant growth? Do you use a database or some other method?

*M.* She doesn’t use a database for her plants, although she does use one for flasking, for the crosses that she does. To a degree she uses coloured tags, e.g., blue for those needing dry rest, red for plants that are for sale. On the tag she will put the elevation at which the plant is found in nature because she finds that tells you a lot about the temperatures it requires. Other things she puts on the tag: repot date, where she got it, cultural notes.

*Q.* How long are the leaves of *Sarcoglyphis comberi*, and are there any particular sensitivities for that species?

*M.* She doesn’t remember exactly, but maybe 3” leaves, and a 6” spread. It is not particularly sensitive.

*Q.* I have ordered a few *Paphinias*, and I’m worried now that I hear how sensitive they are to water quality.

*M.* Don’t be! Give it a try. Marni grows them in a fine bark mix and they never dry out. They do like good water quality. The warmer the better, and not real bright light.

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## GENERAL MEETING MINUTES, CONT.

*Q.* The absorption of minerals is best at a pH of 6-7. How do you adjust the pH to bring it down?

*M.* Most fertilizers will bring the pH down. She recommends checking it periodically. Before she started using RO water, her cloud forest plants were dying because of the sodium, but her *Maxillarias* looked fabulous, probably because they could absorb calcium more easily at the higher pH. She has used dilute nitric acid to bring the pH down. pH could even be down to 5.5 without affecting most plants very much, although mineral absorption wouldn't be as good as at 6-7.

*Further comment by questioner:* He uses Dyna-Gro, which can reduce the pH from 6-6.5 to as low as 4.5 so he adds KOH to bring the pH up to 6. With the extra acidity, the moss seems to be stimulated to grow, not so much at pH 6-7. Plant-Products fertilizer doesn't seem to reduce the pH as much as Dyna-Gro does. He has tried MSU fertilizer but finds it difficult to obtain.

*M.* Terrestrials will grow well at low pH of 4 or so, but epiphytes will not.

*Q.* Some time ago I received some advice to measure the pH of the runoff from watering. I adjust my pH to 6.5. I grow some plants mounted on cedar shakes and when I measured the pH of the runoff, it was 3, but the plant seemed to be totally fine. What are your thoughts on measuring the pH of the runoff?

*M.* She has never tried it. She is working on the nutritional side first. The plants are going to tell you how they are doing, although slowly. If the plant is doing well, go with what you are doing.

*Q.* I don't use rainwater, but I checked the mineral content in the rainwater for a friend, and got 90 ppm, so rainwater is not the same as RO water which has 0 ppm. It is picking up minerals off the roof and dust from the air. If you are using rainwater and adjusting your fertilizer to a certain ppm range, it would be a good idea to check the mineral content of the water first.

He used to use city water. However, Edmonton city water most of the year runs 280 ppm, but during runoff, it goes to 380-400. He switched to RO water at least fifteen years ago, and he finds that it gives him a lot more leeway with fertilizer. *Cattleyas* and *Phalaenopsis* are not particularly sensitive to mineral content but *Phrags* and *Miltoniopsis* and a lot of the species are.

He targets nitrogen. If he uses 300 ppm of fertilizer in the RO water, he knows he is giving them 100 ppm nitrogen, and that seems to be the magic number for most of his plants. But for his *Phrags* and the sensitive plants, he goes down to 100-120 ppm which gives about 50 ppm nitrogen. He waters once with the fertilizer water and then once with the pure RO water to flush out residue.

*M.* She uses fertilizer with nearly every watering but she uses about 160 ppm in the winter and 200 ppm in the summer, about ¼ teaspoon per gallon. She only measures the TDS (total dissolved solids), not the nitrogen.

Calvin has melted snow and found a TDS of 3 ppm.

RO water has no sterilizing agent in it, so can lead to bacterial or fungal problems. A small amount of chlorine bleach or 29% hydrogen peroxide can be added as a sterilizing agent. The chlorine stays around longer than the hydrogen peroxide.

Calvin and Tracey both thanked Marni for her fascinating talk and beautiful photography.

There seems to be enough interest to do a flask import from Marni, and perhaps an Alberta society could coordinate and receive it since there is a customs port in Alberta.

Marni Turkel's website is [marniturkel.com](http://marniturkel.com). The link to the flasks she has for sale is <http://marniturkel.com/mostlyspecies.html>.

The OSA and MOS then left the meeting, and the SOS meeting continued.

## GENERAL MEETING MINUTES, CONT.

### SOS Announcements:

Tracey welcomed new members to the Saskatchewan Orchid Society, and introduced the members of the SOS executive.

Don reported on behalf of Resources that they carry MSU fertilizer, obtaining it from Ravenision in Toronto.

### SOS Plant Orders:

Heather reported:

Ecuagenera: we got a 25% discount on the Ecuagenera order. It should arrive in Canada on April 15 or 16, and in Saskatoon on April 18 or 19.

Orchids in Our Tropics: we received a 20% discount, with delivery scheduled for April 12.

Ching Hua: the order totals more than \$5000 so we should receive a 20% discount. The deadline for the Ching Hua order is March 30, or a bit earlier. Please record the plant number and price when you order.

Paph Paradise/Gold Country Orchids: still encountering issues in the US, should be shipped at the end of May. Ross Otto in Calgary will be handling the paperwork for it.

Don reported:

Garden Slippers: March 30 is the order deadline, with delivery in April.

### SOS Problem Corner:

*Q.* A member grows several miniatures in a small fish tank with Plexiglas on top and lights suspended above it. She mists manually. Recently she put a small computer fan in to eliminate the water standing on the bottom. It runs 24 hours a day. Should she put it on a timer?

*A.* Heather replied that in her orchidarium everything else is on a timer, but the fans run 24 hours.

*Q.* Will the mounted plants dry out too much with the fan running all the time?

*A.* Heather doesn't see it as a problem. It might be dryer at night, but it is cooler then. Her humidity is still running high, about 99%.

David said that he uses fans but still finds that he has wetter spots and dryer spots. He moves his plants to take advantage of this.

Calvin said that the smaller the tank, the more challenging it is. He suggested putting water-absorbent material in there that will get wet and then release the moisture gradually.

*Comments:*

- Regarding sterilizing RO water, Tracey has been using RO water for years and has never had a problem with it.
- Heather collects rainwater and has bubblers running in her rainwater tanks. She has her Phrags sitting in saucers of RO water.
- Tracey reported that Phrag. besseae and Andean Fire like a lower pH. New growers should pay attention to the quality of the water.

*Q.* Do you recommend using a pH meter or pH strips for checking pH? If strips, what range?

*A.* Some members have bought pH meters from Amazon for \$20 or so, but they require calibration. Many members just use pH test strips which can be bought from Early's. Some use a range of 5 to 8, and others a range of 0 to 14.

### General Feedback and Questions:

- Zoom is working well, and it allows out-of-town members to participate.
- Tracey encouraged members to keep sending picture of blooming plants for the newsletter.
- Tracey thanked Calvin for hosting the Zoom meeting.

### Adjournment

3:31 p.m.

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*Sherida Gregoire*

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The news of Sherida's sudden passing on the Easter weekend came as a great shock to us. We, the members of the Saskatchewan Orchid Society, who shared with Sherida a passion for orchids, and a joy in sharing that passion with others, send heart-felt condolences to Sherida's family.

In June 2019 Sherida was awarded a Canadian Orchid Congress Certificate of Recognition and a COC Medal Award, recognizing her contributions to the Society. Below is the letter of nomination submitted to the COC, and photos taken at the September 2019 SOS General Meeting of Sherida receiving the Award.



Sherida Gregoire has been a member of the Saskatchewan Orchid Society for over 20 years. During the majority of this time, Sherida served on the Executive as Secretary, Vice President, President, and Past President.

There is no office for the work she performed for over 10 years: organizing, collecting, and caring for orchids that she obtained from Safeway and Co-op that were used for raffle draws at monthly meetings. Some months there were 12-20, or even 40, plants that she picked up and cared for and then brought to the meeting for the raffle. Her efforts went a long way in contributing to the financial stability of the Society. Members enjoyed the opportunity to buy raffle tickets, and the chance of leaving the meeting with several new orchids to add to their collections or to give away as gifts.

Sherida is a Master Gardener and she generously shares her knowledge of growing orchids and other plants with Society members. She was actively involved in both the 2002 and 2015 Canadian Orchid Congress Show in Saskatoon. She promoted the Society through her post-retirement job at the Safeway and Co-op floral departments, and through her volunteer shifts at Gardenscape. Sherida's expertise in building displays was evident in the numerous Society displays at the Calgary and Edmonton orchid shows. Her time, talent, and energy benefited the Saskatchewan Orchid Society enormously.

Below are replies to the news of Sherida's passing from members of the Saskatchewan Orchid Society. I wanted to share their sentiment of sorrow, loss, and appreciation for Sherida.

The photos are some of the orchids that Sherida brought for Show & Tell over the years to share with fellow orchid enthusiasts. I wish I had photos of the raffle tables filled with plants donated by Saskatoon Coop & Safeway that Sherida had tended for weeks and brought to the meetings for our raffle draws. Sherida did this tirelessly and passionately for years.

Thank you Sherida.

SOS President, Tracey Thue



*Rhyncattleanthe* Haw Yuan Gold

"Mom and Sherida had such fun together and they loved to sit and talk about orchids, at any time. Sherida was very kind to me, both when Mom had her stroke, and also when Mom passed away. My mother, Ruthanne Hanbidge, thought of her as a good friend and also as a colleague, sharing in the enjoyment and challenges of growing orchids. Sherida and I had been corresponding during the winter and I was looking forward to our upcoming outside coffee "date" some time this spring.

We have lost a wonderful, knowledgeable woman who loved to laugh, have the occasional glass of wine, and visit friends, and who so loved her orchids. There are many in the orchid club whom I do not know, or do not know very well. I want to extend my sincere sympathies to you all on the loss of a dear friend."

Barbara Hanbidge

"It is hard to imagine the orchid society without Sherida: her wit, enthusiasm and knowledge, and all the years of work she contributed. I loved how she always referred to her plants as "he." She will certainly be missed."

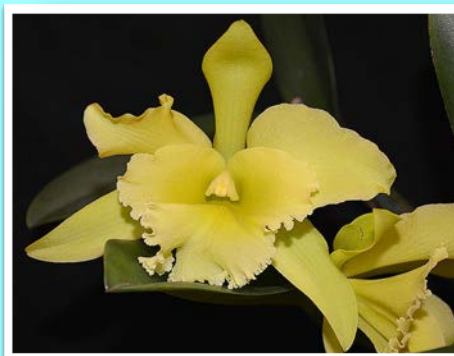
Donna Carlson-O'Keefe

"Very sad news. Sherida was such a vibrant, active member. I miss everyone in the club. Please say hello to everyone for me."

Ellen Ross

"Sherida was a great lady and a fabulous gardener and orchid grower. She will be missed."

Jan Dougall



*Rhyncholaeliocattleya* Ports of Paradise



*Phragmipedium Grande*

"Sherida was so good to me. I will always remember her great advice."

Lynn Campbell

"Sherida was the person who encouraged me to join the club."

Ramsay King

"I will miss Sherida's infinitely great personality."

Tom Kondra

"This is truly sad news. I was just beginning to see and appreciate her sense of humour, and enjoyed her monthly visit to the library table to get the latest Orchid magazine."

Deb Huculiak

"I, like everyone, was shocked to hear the news. Sherida was the reason I came to my first Orchid Society meeting. She invited me when I was at Gardenscape one year, and her little chat about orchids was what brought me to that first meeting. After that, she always had a hello and a chit-chat each time I saw her. She made a huge impression on me over the years as one of the kindest, loveliest, and most genuine people I know, or have known."

Kathryn Hiller

"It has been so tragic to lose Sherida. She has been a big part of the Society for so many years."

Heather Anderson

## ORCHID MARKET

Don Keith will provide orchid supplies to SOS members, orders to be placed once monthly, on the Friday before the monthly meeting. Orders will be ready for pick up after 11:00 a.m. the Sunday following the monthly meeting. Please pay with exact cash, by cheque made out to the SOS, or pay Don by e-transfer. Email Don at [donkeith@sasktel.net](mailto:donkeith@sasktel.net)

**For April orders**, email Don by 8:00 p.m. Saturday, April 24, 2021. He will have your order ready for pick-up from his house after 11:00 a.m. Sunday, April 25, 2021.

### SOS ORCHID SUPPLIES

| ITEM                 | DESCRIPTION                                 | PRICE             |
|----------------------|---|-------------------|
| Fir Bark             | 3L bag fine or medium (please specify)      | \$6.00            |
| Orchiata Pine Bark   | 3L bag fine, medium or med-coarse (specify) | \$6.00            |
| N.Z. Tree Fern Fibre | 3L bag, seedling mix                        | \$8.00            |
| Perlite              | 4L bag medium/coarse                        | \$4.00            |
| GrowStones           | 3L bag, 1/4 - 3/8" or 1/2 - 3/4"            | \$6.00            |
| Sphagnum moss, N.Z.  | 8L compacted<br>12L compressed              | \$12.00<br>N/A    |
| Grodan Grow Cubes    | 3L bag, 0.4" cubes<br>7L bag 0.4" cubes     | \$5.00<br>\$10.00 |
| MSU fertilizer       | 1 cup 13-3-15 for tap or RO water           | \$5.00            |
| Oyster shells        | 1 cup bag                                   | \$0.25            |

| ITEM                | DESCRIPTION           | PRICE            |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Inflorescence clips | Small, brown or green | 10 for \$1.00    |
| Rhizome clips       | Small<br>Med/Large    | \$1.00<br>\$1.25 |
| Clear Pots          | 2 1/4 x 2 1/4 square  | \$0.50           |
|                     | 2 1/2 x 2 1/2 round   | \$0.50           |
|                     | 2 3/4 x 2 3/4 round   | \$0.75           |
|                     | 3 1/4 x 3 1/2 round   | \$1.00           |
|                     | 4 x 4                 | \$1.25           |
| Net Pots            | 4 1/2 x 4 1/2 slotted | \$1.50           |
|                     | 3"                    | \$1.25           |
|                     | 3.5"                  | \$1.25           |
|                     | 5"                    | \$1.50           |
|                     | 6"                    | \$1.75           |

## Plant Products from Sherida Gregoire's Greenhouse

**If you are interested, please email Bob Lucas at [robert.lucas@usask.ca](mailto:robert.lucas@usask.ca)  
Products are offered on a first-come, first-served basis.**

1. Innova 24" LED fixture, integrated lights and hanging chain, new in box, two @ \$30.00 each.
2. Sunblaster 24" T5 HO bulb and ballast, new in packaging, one @ \$25.00.
3. Used hanging fixture, 2 48" T5 bulbs and ballasts, two @ \$25.00 each.
4. Used 24" T5 bulb and ballast, one @ \$15.00.
5. Used 24" T5 bulb and ballast, package of two for \$20.00.
6. Used 48" T5 bulb and ballast, four @ \$15.00 each.
7. Used 48" T5 bulbs, package of four for \$10.00.
8. Hydrotherm, temperature and humidity controller for terrarium, new, one @ \$15.00
9. New SaskPower outdoor timers, two @ \$7.50 each.
10. Greenearth concentrate horticultural oil, 500ml, new, two @ \$5.00 each.



*Paphiopedilum Valiant Red*  
Grown by Sherida Gregoire



## SOS MEMBER PLANTS FOR SALE

### For sale by David Schwingamer

[dms-2019@protonmail.com](mailto:dms-2019@protonmail.com)

#### ***Cattleya skinneri* Alba 'Alcemi'**

6" pot, 3 old growths, 2 new growths. \$10  
Originally purchased from Terry Letendre last November.

#### ***Drosera dichotoma* 'Giant'**

Carnivorous sundew plant which will eat fungus gnats in your grow tanks. Needs high humidity. \$8



*Cattleya skinneri* Alba 'Alcemi'



*Drosera dichotoma* 'Giant'

### For sale by Lynn Campbell

[bigsky labs@sasktel.net](mailto:bigsky labs@sasktel.net)

#### ***Dendrobium* Lucky Girl**

Purchased from Ching Hua Orchids. It has bloomed for me. \$15

#### ***Dendrobium kingianum***

Highly scented. It has just finished blooming and has 3 new shoots. \$15



*Dendrobium* Lucky Girl



*Dendrobium kingianum*

#### **Hints for blooming *Dendrobium kingianum*:**

I had this plant for a few years and tried drying it in winter, etc. Finally I just treated it like my *Dendrobium* Micro Chip, watering it once a week. It actually had quite a few flowers this year; not all at the same time. Now it is spreading out and really should be repotted. (Micro Chip never stops blooming - covered in flowers. A wonderful easy plant.)

### For sale by Heather Anderson

[heather.jane.anderson@sasktel.net](mailto:heather.jane.anderson@sasktel.net)

#### ***Vanda Sanchai* Gold Spot**

This is a plant that Sherida ordered from Ecuagenera. \$28



**For sale by Tracey Thue**

thues@sasktel.net

***Pholidota chinensis* 'Nisqually'**

1 division \$5

1 division \$8

***Blc. Love Sound* 'Dogashima' AM/AOS x  
*Pot. Dream Circle* 'SVO' AM/AOS**

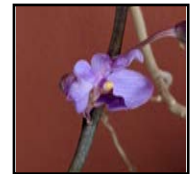
1 division \$8

***Vanda coerulescens***

In flower \$20



*Pholidota chinensis* 'Nisqually'



*Vanda coerulescens*



*Blc. Love Sound* 'Dogashima' x *Pot. Dream Circle* 'SVO'

**SHOW AND TELL**



**Grown by Robert Wilson**

***Phalaenopsis* hybrid**

It was not my intention to submit this photo because I submitted one of this plant last year at a time when it only had three flowers. This year however is considerably different! I'm essentially sending it just for you to see how well it is doing and hopefully you will enjoy its bright fuchsia colour!

*It is beautiful Bob, thanks for sharing! Tracey*

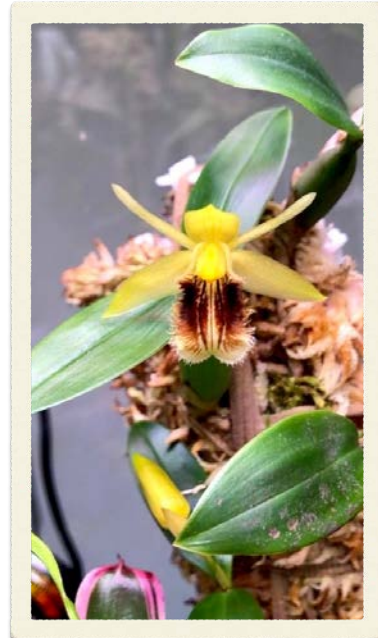
**Grown by Lynn Campbell**



***Paphiopedilum Tinicum***

I have had this orchid a long time. The tag says it was divided 2/3/99 and I bought it at an SOS meeting when we were at Dutch Growers. It came from a donation of orchids from someone retiring out of Edmonton, I believe. It sits by the sink in an east window and blooms every year so far, touch wood.

**Grown by David Schwinghamer**



***Coelogyne fimbriata***

Two blooms. Purchased from Heather Anderson in September and has since doubled in size. Grown in high humidity (85-95%) and near a computer fan for air circulation.



**Grown by Tracey Thue**

***Dendrobium x usitae* 'Red Coral' SM/TOGA x self**

This is a natural hybrid between *D. bullenianum* and *D. goldsmidtianum*, occurring in the Philippines.

SM = Silver Medal, TOGA = Taiwan Orchid Growers Association

<http://www.aboutorchids.com/blog/2011/12/14/orchid-awards/>

I purchased two of these in the April 2019 SOS garage sale following the Orchid Society of Alberta Orchid Fair. From Ching Hua Orchids, my plant has 3 mature canes around 3 feet long and is growing happily in a 2.5" pot with fir bark that hangs in my south-facing living room window. It dries out completely through the winter, watered every 1-2 weeks; in the summer, it goes outside to a bright spot and is watered and fertilized regularly.

**Grown by Tobi Fenton**



***Phalaenopsis mannii* x self**

From Ching Hua in 2015. Blooms reliably in Feb/Mar. to April. I look forward to its intense scent that perfumes the solarium. It's been sulking in its pot this year so in February I moved it from the orchidarium (too bright and not getting its dry rest) and mounted it, then hung it in a big plant in the solarium where it gets very bright shade. It instantly threw out a spike.



***Pholidota chinensis* 'Nisqually'**

I received this as a division from Tracey in 2015 (a Terry Letendre plant). I love its chubby round pseudobulbs almost as much as its fragrant little flowers. It's a bit warm in the solarium for this cool-growing east Asian orchid, but I still get flowers every spring.

**Grown by Calvin Lo**



***Cytorchis chailluana***

The first blooming for me of this magnificent central-west African angraecoid.  
Deliciously fragrant of jasmine in the evenings.



***Dendrobium yulianiae***

A first bloom seedling of a charming miniature species originating from Maluku Islands in Indonesia. Very easy grower; seedlings available.

([calvin.lo@usask.ca](mailto:calvin.lo@usask.ca))



***Dendrobium officinale***

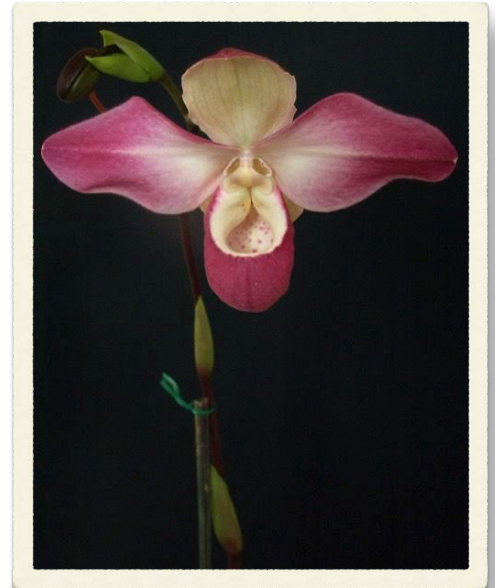
Another clone of a charming East Asian species. Used commonly in traditional Chinese medicine and now grown commercially for that purpose.

**Grown by Bob Lucas**



***Phragmipedium Belle Hogue Point***

I bought this plant in 2001 from Lynn Kasper. I have not been successful in blooming it for a show, so it has not been judged, but I think it is award-quality: large flower, vibrant colours. This time the second flower had a deformed lateral sepal. I do not know what causes this.



***Phragmipedium Suzanne Decker***

This is one of the first *Phrag kovachii* crosses made. Large flower, ns over 11 cm.



***Phalaenopsis Blood Moon***

I made this cross in 2016 and this is the second one to bloom.



***Phalaenopsis Bye Bye Baby***

I made this cross in 2017. This is the second one to bloom.



***Phalaenopsis* Mem. Diane Sarich**

This plant would be prettier if I had not hung two seed pods on it. This is the first time I have bred with it. I crossed it with *Phal.* Mem. Vivian Orban and *Phal.* Katherine Norton, pictured below. I am hoping the orange tinge of it will produce full shape and fire engine red colour with these pollen parents.



***Phalaenopsis* Mem. Vivian Orban**



***Phalaenopsis* Katherine Norton**

## THE ROOT TIP

### Experiments in Natural Pest Control

By David Schwinghamer

Have you ever heard the story of the lady who brought a tropical plant home from the greenhouse and found a lizard inside? Natural pest control is commonly employed by greenhouses in the southern States, with thousands of Green Anoles keeping pests in check. Then, before shipment, the anoles are gassed and the plants arrive pest-free. Except for the occasional stowaway who dodged the massacre. Next time you're in a pet store, ask the manager about the last time someone brought a hitch-hiking reptile into the store; it normally prompts a good story or two.

But a reptilian companion to your plants need not be accidental. If your conditions are appropriate, a Green Anole could be the economic solution to your pest problem. This November, my large orchidarium became infested with snails, which came as eggs in a plant order. My standard disinfection process of smothering new plants with Neem oil and leaving them in a quarantine bin for two weeks failed to stop the snails. And my carnivorous plants won't eat them. In my conditions, caffeine and hydrogen peroxide are both impractical for controlling snails; diatomaceous earth is useless; and, as the terrarium is housed in my office, I am against using harsh pesticides, which will remain in the closed environment. Running out of options and watching the snails terrorize my beloved plants, I decided to try the natural option. After a quick trip to PetSmart, we came home with Chester, the Green Anole. He proceeded tirelessly to hunt down every snail and fungus gnat from underneath every leaf. Initially, I was concerned that he might damage some of my delicate miniatures but even the thin stems of *Scaphosepalum giberosum* have no trouble supporting his weight. His preferred perch is surveying the orchidarium from within a *Neoregalia* bromeliad. We have since come home with two more Green Anoles and our three terrariums are now all anole-certified to be pest-free.

**Chester the Green Anole**



**Dexter the Green Anole**





Some notes on Anole care and deep-diving into the bioactive vivarium community:

- Do your research on anoles to see if they are a suitable pest control solution for your orchidarium. Anoles require temperatures between 20-30 C and humidity 70% or greater.
- Even after eating all those pesky pests, your anole will still need to be fed. Our anoles eat 1-2 mealworms a day, which I leave in a condiment cup mounted to the side of the orchidarium. Choose a cup that is high enough that the worm can't escape. Crickets dusted in calcium are fed to the anole with tweezers once a week as a supplement. PetSmart will hate you for coming in to buy two crickets once a week, but I can't stand the idea of keeping crickets in our home.
- I have always removed my miniature orchids from the orchidarium to fertilize and flush them. So fertilizer has not been a problem. Some epiphytic species are happy to receive the extra fertilizer that the anole provides them.
- I have since introduced tropical springtails and dwarf white isopods into my terrariums. These small creatures clean up after the lizards and eat mould, fungi, and algae. I have noticed an improvement in air quality and algae control, but they are too recent an addition to provide commentary on.

Display Tank 1



Grow Tank



Display Tank 2



Read more about natural pest control using predatory reptiles and amphibians:  
<https://staugorchidsociety.org/PDF/201011Tips-NaturalPestControl.pdf>

Read about the co-evolution of certain anole and orchid species:  
<https://www.anoleannals.org/2011/04/20/anole-and-orchid-evolution-what-do-they-have-in-common/>