



# North Eastern New York Orchid Society

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**May 2018**

www.nenyos.com

## The Wonder of Roots

With almost 80 people packed into the Stedman Room at the William Sanford Library in Colonie, Greg Griffis of Longwood Gardens delivered a masterful lecture on root care. He brought into focus why those funny things often hanging out of pots have such power over the show we get from our plants.

About 90% of orchids are epiphytic (air plants – grown attached to another plant without symbiosis). Roots are crucial since orchids metabolize very slowly but live in areas where they have to grab their food and water very quickly. So they have developed systems to make it work namely velamen-dead cells which can absorb water like a sponge.

Greg pointed out the life of the plant is in the new roots and we need to cultivate and build up our supply of roots for success. Epiphytic roots are actually long-lived while terrestrial roots only have a life expectancy of about 3 years.

Remember to repot when roots are just starting to grow. Often new leaf growth = new roots but not always. You have to check.

Orchid roots also have an interesting tendency when they contact surfaces like pot walls or a mount, the root becomes more flat and they grow hairs to help them adhere to

the surface. Perfectly logical actions when you remember in native habitats they grow by hanging on trees.

Pay attention to your plants for a different kind of show since orchid roots come in many different colors.

### Aspects of Absorption – 3 key concepts

The conditions we create for our plants has a dramatic impact in their success. Understand what your plant wants and compare with what you are actually offering.

Wet-Dry cycle – or how often you water

Length of time in contact with moisture – is it a quick shower followed by sun and wind or a cloud forest fog all day and night?

Thoroughness of watering – make sure the media get wet.

Greg showed videos of him watering some of his plants and he waters until liquid pours out of the pot. And he tries to do that twice to allow for soaking the fully.

He also weighed in on the debate...water before or after fertilizing

Answer: No Difference in nutrient uptake...so you can say *tomayto* or *tomahto*....their still red fruit used in sauce and BLT sandwiches!

### Roots in Pots

That is not where they want to live. It is not what they were designed for or desire. Plants are in pots only to make us happy.

Regular repotting is key. He rec-

ommends repotting every other year because you don't want the medium to breakdown.

Greg's next point is the center of the pot should be the healthiest area. Never leave old media in the center around roots. Just be gentle when removing. Water the plant before repotting to soften the roots. Put the plant in the smallest pot possible and pack firmly to hold the plant securely. You should be able to lift the plant by the top and raise the pot too.

-Sandy Buxton II

A member talks to Greg Griffis about a plant problem using her phone.



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## Upcoming Meetings

**May 5—Dr. Ron McHatton, Education Director of American Orchid Society, in Colonie**

**June 9—Piping Rock Open House in Galway**

**July—No Meeting**

**August 4—picnic at Stan & Fern Lee's, Scotia**

**September 8—TBD in Colonie**

**Oct 6— in Colonie**

**November 3—Auction!! In Colonie**

**December 1—Holiday event in Colonie**



## Upcoming Events in the Northeast

**April 21 CJOs Auction—Central Jersey OS, Princeton, NJ (see Page 4)**

**May 10 NJOS Meeting, Wade Hollenbach**

**June 14 NJOS Meeting—Francisco Miranda, Brazilian orchids**

**July 12 NJOS Meeting—Joe Silva,**

### UPCOMING WEBINARS

American Orchid Society: Greenhouse Chat with Ron McHatton

**Tuesday, April 24th, 2018 @ 8:30 PM – 9:30 PM EST** Open to all

Please join Ron McHatton, American Orchid Society Director of Education and Science Officer, who will discuss a variety of topics on orchid culture based on questions submitted by attendees. Please send you questions to [stillisch@cox.net](mailto:stillisch@cox.net) by Saturday, April 21st.

Register now using this link: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/7767746573645081858>

Green With Envy with Ron Midgett

**Tuesday, May 8, 2018 @ 8:30 PM – 9:30 PM EST** Members only

Please join noted speaker and orchid breeder Ron Midgett as he discusses the history and breeding trends with those gorgeous green cattleyas.

Register now using this link: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/8470919444902657537>

American Orchid Society: Greenhouse Chat with Ron McHatton

**Wednesday, May 16th, 2018 @ 8:30 PM – 9:30 PM EST** Open to all

Please join Ron McHatton, American Orchid Society Director of Education and Science Officer, who will discuss a variety of topics on orchid culture based on questions submitted by attendees. Please send you questions to [stillisch@cox.net](mailto:stillisch@cox.net) by Sunday, May 13th.

Register now using this link: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/3940385080263812610>

Some of the gift plants awaiting new owners and Katherina Imor hanging out with her new plants at the meeting.

### MAKING IT WORK FOR NENYOS OFFICERS FOR 2018

Donna Wardlaw	Co-President
Janet Vinyard	Co-President & Treasurer
Deb Lambeth	Secretary
Sandy Buxton	Director
Mark Conley	Director
Alex Shepherd	Website
Stan Lee	Past President
Sandy Buxton	AOS Rep
Patty Boggs	Name Tags
Joan Gardner	Refreshments
Mark Conley	Raffle
	Greeter

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Sandy Buxton Newsletter Editor



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**JUNE 9, 2018 OPEN HOUSE/PICNIC at PIPING ROCK ORCHIDS**

The June NENYOS meeting is scheduled for SATURDAY, JUNE 9th 10:30 am to coincide with the very popular OPEN HOUSE at PIPING ROCK ORCHIDS, 2270 Cook Rd, Galway, NY 12074. [www.pipingrockorchids.com](http://www.pipingrockorchids.com). In addition to tours through his greenhouse, Glen has countless orchids and plants for sale and a special discount table. This year, Daryl from **Kelly's Korner Orchid Supply** will be the featured speaker. [www.kkorchids.com](http://www.kkorchids.com), (Since he can't carry everything, check out his website, order and prepay ahead using discount code PIPINGROCK2018 for an automatic 10% off) His "show and tell" demonstration will focus on the variety of unique ways he grows his orchids: terrariums, basket and mounts, finding that some orchids prefer something other than the typical plastic pot and bark medium.

As the second speaker, Glen will add shocking and fun cultural tips..... always spur of the moment and adventurous.

**Onto the picnic lunch!**

Glen provides a variety of meats/protein, and the Society adds beverages, condiments, paper products, etc. As attendees, OUR BIG PART of the bargain is to provide sumptuous salads, side dishes, desserts, and the ever necessary help during the event. We need parking attendants, food runners, folks to refresh food and drinks at the tables, hospitality check in, raffle and greenhouse helpers, and cleanup crew.

Sign up sheets for tasks and food contribution will be at the May meeting. Contact Janet Vinyard if you want a short, fun job, are coming, what you are planning to bring yet won't be at the May meeting.

Those who sign up for a task, please arrive 9-9:30am. Glen offers a 10% discount for working NENYOS members who will receive the discount at check-out.

I encourage you to attend. It's a full day of interesting topics, good food, new friends, camaraderie, 2 raffles and shopping opportunities from our neighborhood orchid grower and NH supplier. Please let us know you are coming, sign in for a job spot and indicate your culinary specialty of choice.

**Remember to Bring your own chairs. CONTACT** Janet Vinyard: [ro-land@vinyardschoice.com](mailto:ro-land@vinyardschoice.com) or call 518-673-3212



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**VENDORS WHO HELPED WITH THE 2017 AUCTION & Activities****Island Sun Orchids –**

Karen Kimmerle; PO Box 909, Keaau, HI

**Lehua Orchids**

Mountain View, HI  
808-968-8898  
[www.lehuaorchids.com](http://www.lehuaorchids.com)

**Piping Rock Orchids**

2270 Cook Rd  
Galway, NY 12074  
518-882-9002  
[www.pipingrockorchids.com](http://www.pipingrockorchids.com)

**Sunset Valley Orchids**

**Fred Clarke**, 1255 Navel Place  
Vista, CA 92081 (760) 639-6255  
[www.sunsetvalleyorchids.com](http://www.sunsetvalleyorchids.com)

**The Orchid Works**

[Rayna@theorchidworks.com](mailto:Rayna@theorchidworks.com)  
P.O. 278 Hakalau, HI 96710  
wholesale and retail lists online

**Walter Scheeren**

44-3265 Kalopa Mauka Rd  
Honokaa, HI 96727  
808-775-1185  
[WFScheeren@juno.com](mailto:WFScheeren@juno.com)

**Woodstock Gardens–Elaine Grega**

845 679 6531 or  
[woodstockorchids@gmail.com](mailto:woodstockorchids@gmail.com)

**Editor Note:** I would suggest bringing a camera, a notebook, writing implement, some cash for the Special Raffle, walking shoes and a healthy curiosity. Several other orchid societies are hoping to have members attending so there will be much opportunity for cross-pollination of ideas and information.

To see plants, large and small, in growing environment is exciting!

**THE 2018 APRIL AOS CORNER –**

From the desk of Denise Lucero,  
Vice Chair, American Orchid Society  
Affiliated Societies Committee  
dluceroaosmembership@gmail.com).



From Haiti

- Tales of a Student Judge
- Genus of the Month - Miltoniopsis

**ALSO FEATURED IN ORCHIDS MAGAZINE!**

**UPCOMING WEBINARS**

It's easy to find the scheduled webinars and to register on the AOS website. You'll find the link under the All About Orchids tab. If you check there, you will find any webinars that have been scheduled after the production of the monthly Corner.

**Tuesday, April 24th, 2018 @ 8:30 PM – 9:30 PM EST** American Orchid Society: **Green-house Chat with Ron McHatton** Open to all Please join Ron McHatton, American Orchid Society Director of Education and Science Officer, who will discuss a variety of topics on orchid culture based on questions submitted by attendees. Please send you questions to stillich@cox.net by Saturday, April 21st. Register now using this link: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/7767746573645081858>

**Note:** After registering, you will receive a confirmation e-mail containing information about joining the seminar.

**WHAT ARE WEBINARS?** Webinars are an Internet conference where you can hear the speaker and view his presentation, ask questions, and hear interactions from other members of the audience. You can join either on your computer or by phone. You can join from anywhere, via your Mac, PC or even your mobile device. Audio is included, so attendees can phone in or use VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol). You will need a microphone for your computer to use VoIP.

**WANT TO LEARN, BUT CAN'T MAKE THE DATE?** The live webinars will be recorded and posted on the AOS website, where you will find a link allowing you to view the webinars at your convenience.

**THE APRIL ISSUE OF ORCHIDS MAGAZINE–** Our annual Judging Issue will feature great articles and beautiful pictures on:

- Quality Never Goes Out of Style - The 2017 FCCs
- Orchids Illustrated - Lorenz Oken
- "Really Special" Orchids - The 2016 Year-End Annual Awards
- A New Species of Vanilla
- Two New Species in Acianthera sect. Antilla

16-page award gallery of breath taking pictures of recently awarded orchids

**RECENT ORCHID AWARDS PICTURES ON THE AOS WEBSITE:** See fabulous pictures of the most breathtakingly beautiful orchids receiving awards from the AOS! Visit the new "Latest Orchid Awards" page on the AOS website to enjoy these stunning photographs! Click on the thumbnails to see them in larger format. Free to members and nonmembers.

*Cattleya purpurata* (hort. var. *rubra*) 'Shoguns Fire' FCC/AOS; Photographer: Glen Barfield



*Miltoniopsis vexillaria* var. *alba* 'Princess' CCM/AOS; Photographer: Alexey Tretyakov





## Feed Me

From the April 2013 issue of Orchids Magazine  
Prepared by the AOS Education Committee with Photographs by Greg Allikas

### The Basics of Choosing a Fertilizer and Application

IF THEIR OTHER REQUIREMENTS are met, orchids will grow and flower for fairly long periods without fertilizer. Witness the people in tropical areas such as South Florida who grow them mounted on trees and let nature do the rest. Indeed, that is how epiphytic orchids grow in nature. But hobbyists generally try to give their orchids more than the bare minimum so that the plants flower at or above their potential.

There are many different points of view on how to fertilize orchids and what fertilizer to use. Everyone has a favorite fertilizer or supplement. There are so many variables that how and when you fertilize depends on what kinds of orchids you grow and how and where you grow them. This article will offer a brief explanation and general guidelines on fertilizing orchids. For more specific application, join your local orchid society and ask someone there who grows the same kind of orchids as you. It is unlikely that you will kill any orchids with orchid fertilizer so following the recommendations here will provide your plants needed nutrition.

Good cultural practices that include regular fertilizing will produce well-flowered orchids, such as this Vanda ampullacea (Ascocentrum ampullaceum) Grower: Greg Allikas and Kathy Figiel.



If you are a gardener you are probably familiar with the N-P-K listings on fertilizer bags. Orchid fertilizers have them too. Let's go over these three elements and see how they affect plant growth. Nitrogen (N) helps make plants green and helps them grow faster. It is the element responsible for vegetative growth (the leafy parts). Phosphorus (P) is good for root growth, disease resistance, seed and fruit growth, and especially for blooming and flowering. Potassium (K) helps with increasing root growth, drought resistance and disease resistance.

**OPTIONS** There are three main types of fertilizers used for orchids: balanced, high nitrogen and bloom booster.

◆ Balanced fertilizers have been traditionally recommended for use with orchids potted in inorganic potting media such as lava rock and Aliflor, and tree fern (which has fallen out of favor due to conservation concerns). Plants mounted on cork bark or other substrates also benefit from using a balanced fertilizer. An example of a balanced fertilizer would be represented by the numbers 20-20-20.



Vandaceous orchids that were under fertilized (left) and received adequate fertilizer (right).

◆ High-nitrogen fertilizers have long been recommended for use with orchids potted in fir bark or fir bark mixes. The reason for extra nitrogen is that the bacteria that cause the bark to decay use up much of the available nitrogen, thus depleting the orchid. This practice has recently come into question. Nonetheless, using a high-nitrogen fertilizer, especially in spring at the beginning of the growing season, can promote strong vegetative growth under ideal conditions. An example of high-nitrogen fertilizer would be 30-10-10.

◆ Bloom or blossom-booster formulas are high in phosphorus. Typically, high-phosphorus fertilizers are applied every other week for four to six applications the season before expected bloom. For winter-spring blooming orchids, bloom booster is usually applied in the autumn. Vandaceous hybrids and other orchids that bloom throughout the year can be given bloom booster every third or fourth fertilizing. An example of a bloom booster would be 10-30-20. Fertilizers used on orchids should contain little or no urea. This is because soil organisms must first convert the nitrogen in urea to a form useable by plants, and since orchids do not grow in soil, this conversion does not occur efficiently.

Continued on page 6

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Most experienced growers use fertilizer at  $\frac{1}{2}$  the label-recommended strength.

**APPLICATION** How fertilizer is applied varies as much as orchids themselves. Typically, plants are fertilized once a week during spring and summer and every two weeks in the autumn and winter. Regardless of the fertilizer that you choose, most experienced growers use  $\frac{1}{2}$  the label-recommended strength. Remember, in nature epiphytic orchids' roots are exposed and the only nutrients they receive are from bird and animal droppings, decaying insects and detritus. The old saying about fertilizing orchids is: Feed them weekly weakly. Fertilizer is best applied in the morning on sunny days. For mounted orchids, or orchids with exposed roots, such as vandas in empty baskets, many growers routinely first water the plants and then follow with fertilizer a half hour later. The watering before fertilizing prepares the spongy velamen of the orchid roots to better utilize the fertilizer. Orchids in pots are usually not watered first but some growers have their own techniques.

There are requirements specific to certain orchids. For instance, do not fertilize nobile-type dendrobiums after early autumn. This rule actually applies to all orchids that have decided rest periods and all deciduous orchids. Fertilizing them while in their rest period keeps them in continual growth instead of resting before producing flowers. In other words, you may get a lot of growth and no flowers.

There are also many secret recipes growers use that supposedly produce stronger plants or more flowers. Certainly, vitamins and micronutrients are as essential as the building blocks of plant growth mentioned above. Elements such as magnesium, boron, calcium, carbon and others are required for strong plant growth. All in all, alt-



hough there are certain practices that are documented as being helpful, it has not been proven that supplements actually contribute to improved growth in orchids — but it probably doesn't hurt to use them.

### Non-Show Table Shots



Genevieve Wiech sent a photo of her first ever Cattleya blooms. A proud moment!

Lots of action before the meeting as members checked out the Show Table, looked at Sale Plants, got a snack and networked. With bark and other supplies available at some meetings, it can be a great time .





Show Table Tales



Wake Gardner's white Cattleya

Donna Wardlaw brought Paph St. Swithin, Sarcophilus and Leptodes bicolor whose roots are mainly outside of pot.



Janet vineyard brought a Paph micranthum which Greg said had a great shape.

Larry Litwin is shown carrying his Phal exhibit—a NOID with 4 side branches. Greg recommended staking to try to encourage them to separate for display.

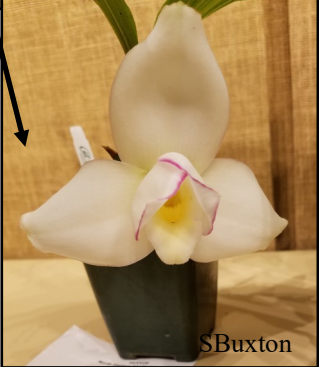


Orchid are amazing and come in ALL shapes and sizes—from the big Cattleya above to this mounted Maxillaria from mark Conley.

Wake's Lycaste was so very delicate looking.



Mark Conley brought Sarcophilus plants of several different colors. Blooms last 3+ weeks in his cool greenhouse.





# North Eastern New York Orchid Society

NENYOS c/o S. Lee, 130 Johnson Road, Scotia, NY 12302 [www.nenyos.com](http://www.nenyos.com)

## NEXT MEETING

**May 5, 2018**

**1:30 p.m. Announcements  
and Beginner Talk**

**1:50 p.m. Show Table,**

**2:10 Dr. Ron McHat-  
ton, Education Direc-  
tor of American Or-  
chid Society,**

**Questions and Raffle**

**Member Plant Sale oppor-  
tunity**

The meeting is at the William K. Sanford Library, 629  
Albany Shaker Road, Colonie (Loudonville, 12211)

**.....Congratulations! April Raffle  
Winners:** (and many thanks to the  
members who donated plants to the  
Raffle)

Dorothy Heffernan  
John Lemelin  
Bonnie Lilly  
Debra Hotaling  
Diane Cross  
Jane Wang  
Ray Bouchard  
Katherina Imor  
Val Trzcinski  
Ludmilla Popova  
Phil McDavid  
Alison Platt  
And 2 others



Wow—actually caught a shot of Alison buying  
her lucky ticket from Mark and Mary!!

## Raffle Winners

Don't forget, Raffle winners are asked to  
bring a "goodie" to the next meeting (April) to  
help celebrate their good fortune.