

Orchid Society of Coral Gables

Merry Christmas!!! Our Holiday Party is here!!!

Tuesday, December 12

Party starts at 6 pm!

Ends whenever we are done!

\$10 per person if you bring food;

\$20 without food

If you haven't RSVP'd, please do so now! Last chance!

We need to make sure we have enough goodies

For everyone!

Good food, good orchids, good friends! Chinese auction for plants and misc. items, and raffle for Centerpieces!

Tickets \$1 each. Buy one, or buy more!

We still need help with setup (3-5pm) or food table help. Please email orchidiva@att.net if you can help!



President's Message



Dear OSCG members:

The board members and I wish all of our members a very Merry Christmas and a Happy Holiday.

I hope everyone had as much fun as I did at our Thanksgiving meeting. A special thank you to Melana for cooking those delicious turkeys. And the sides everybody brought were very yummy. And a big thanks to our own Javier for teaching us about the genus Stanhopea!

And now our Holiday party is almost here. Remember, we are meeting on the 2nd Tuesday, December 12. We look forward to seeing all our members and their guests. If you have not signed up to attend, please let Melana know you are coming and what you will be bringing.

As usual, we will start at 6pm with appetizers. Please do not come early and expect to start eating. 6 pm is the start. If you happen to be bringing appetizers, please come on time!

Everyone at the party gets one ticket for one glass of wine. Soda, coffee, and water will be available all night at no charge.

After a few announcements, very few, we will start dinner. Members who are working at the Chinese auction, the bar, or are in a wheelchair or walker will be allowed to be served first. After that, the tables will be called by table number chosen randomly out of a hat.

During dinner, we will begin choosing our orchids. Please stay alert to hear your number. Only a few members at a time will be called to select their holiday gift plant.

There will be an assortment of high grade flowering plants and orchid items available in our Chinese auction. And also the wonderful centerpieces will be raffled. Tickets will be \$1 each, so buy as many as you can and increase your chances! Bring your wallets/checkbooks!

A reminder that our first 2024 meeting will be January 9 instead of January 2, so everyone can recover from New Year's Day!

And one last item: the Tamiami International Orchid Festival! It will be held on Jan. 12-14, and we will be very involved.

Check your calendars before coming to the meeting and let us know what days you are available to volunteer. We need members to organize and stage our OSCG display—Always a highlight of the Tamiami Festival. We usually win an award for our display and receive a beautiful trophy and a monetary prize. This is an easy and fun way to earn your required volunteer hours and get them out of the way for the year!

Start reviewing your orchid collection to see which orchids you may be able to bring in for the display. I won an individual award a few years back and I was thrilled. Remember no orchid is too small or too large. More information on page 8.

Wishing everyone a joyous Christmas and Holiday Season, and we will see you at the party!

Laura Aiken
President

Reminders:
No Show
and Tell for
this meet-
ing!
And, our
yearly
member-
ship fees are
due next
month for
2024!

More Holiday Party Info

So we don't have any misunderstandings, here are a few party protocols we should all know about!

1. Fairchild will not allow us to have the gate open by the kitchen, so you do have to enter through the door by the guard shack.

2. The party will begin at 6pm. You can come in earlier if you'd like, but please no earlier than 5:45. And no appetizers will be set out until after 6pm.

3. **Sign in at the door and receive your party packet before selecting a place to sit or giving your food to the food elf-helpers.**



4. Please do not bring your good serving spoons/forks, etc. We don't want to lose them, and the society has lots of serving utensils.

5. Have a good time! Friends, food, laughs, orchids...what more could you want!



Tamiami International Orchid Festival - Volunteer Information and Opportunities

The Tamiami Show is coming soon - Jan 12-14, 2024. There are two opportunities for members to help out both the show and the society.

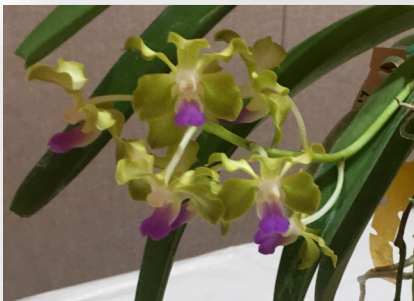
First, The Tamiami organizers need volunteers to work the show during various time and for various tasks. For each shift worked, you will earn your volunteer requirement hours AND the society will receive \$65! This is called a win-win! If you are interested in helping, please send your name, email, and phone number to our President, Laura, at lauraiiken54@gmail.com and let her know you are interested. She will be giving the names to the Tamiami organizers who will get in touch with you with details. If you are interested, please do this ASAP before the positions are filled by other societies!

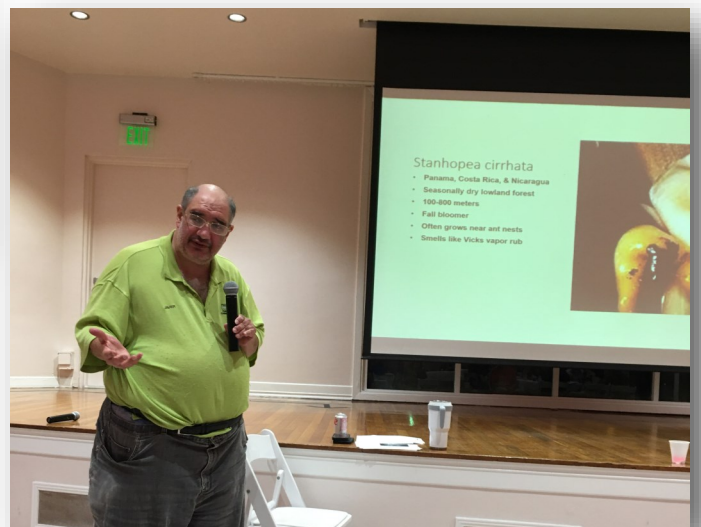
Second, we need help at the membership table located in front of our display. We don't get the money, but you do get your volunteer hours. It is a fun job, you meet a lot of people, and it helps with PR for our society. Once again, if you are interested, email Laura at lauraiiken54@gmail.com and she will sign you up!

Lastly, we also need help installing the display on Thursday, Jan 11. See page 10 for more information.

Photos from the November Meeting

By Adrienne Hochman





Upcoming Events



The nonprofit Fort Lauderdale Orchid Society will present “Orchid Jungle,” our 64th annual orchid show and sale, with dozens of vendors at the **Charles F. Dodge City Center, 601 City Center Blvd., Pembroke Pines**. Admission is \$15 available at FLOS.org. Parking is free and plentiful.

Show hours are: **Friday, Jan. 5: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday, Jan. 6: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday, Jan. 7: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.**

Additionally, an exclusive pre-sale VIP cocktail reception with open bar and heavy hors d’oeuvres and dessert will be held from 7 to 10p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 5 where society members and attendees can get first dibs on orchids. Tickets are \$80 for members and \$100 for nonmembers.



2024
TAMIAMI
INTERNATIONAL ORCHID FESTIVAL

JANUARY 12, 13 & 14, 2024
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY FAIR & EXPO CENTER
10901 SW 24TH STREET • MIAMI, FL 33165

ORCHIDFESTIVAL.COM

Dr. Martin Motes' December in Your Orchid Collection

• TASKS FOR DECEMBER

- Water judiciously and well
- Protect cold-sensitive genera
- Provide extra potassium and magnesium
- Repot flowered-out plants; be sure they are secure
- Save the date for the Tamiami International Orchid Festival: January 12-14, 2023



V. Crystelle Smith (V. insignis x perplexus)

Progress of the Season

The longest of rainy seasons has concluded with an incredibly wet November. With the shortest of days still ahead of us the most extreme care should be taken in watering our orchids, particularly all the sympodial genera and especially those which are resting fully. Drying cattleyas and dendrobiums extra hard is an essential strategy this year. Until the dry season is well established, additional water is likely to do more harm than good. With the higher than usual air temperatures as soon as the relative humidity is consistently low, our plants will soon be dry enough to resist disease. A lingering stalled cold front must always be expected on occasion and will deliver enough or too much water. Bright light and good air movement are our friends in all seasons but especially now and especially this year.

Our vandas are relishing the higher temperatures and higher humidity. Water them carefully but thoroughly and be sure to feed them with the recommended low phosphorus, Cal/Mag fertilizer. Peter's XCell 15-5-15 is an excellent choice and is readily available from the "Sources" listed in *Florida Orchid Growing*.

Now that temperatures are consistently moderate, we can safely apply the user-friendly control for mites and *Thrips*: oil. Two tablespoons of oil per gal of water, kept as agitated as possible should be applied to the point of run off to all plant surfaces with particular attention to the undersides of leaves which are mite's favorite redoubts. In precisely 7 to 10 days, apply liquid dishwashing soap (we like Ajax) at two ounces per gallon in the same way. This second application will eliminate any mites missed or newly hatched. This order, oil followed by soap is dictated by the precautionary need to remove excess oil should an unprecedented spike in temperature occur. The two applications are extremely effective in eliminating mites and controlling *Thrips*.

While we have hopes of a warm winter and climate change has moved South Florida up by a half zone in terms of warmth according to USDA, protection from north and northwest winds is always beneficial to our plants. It keeps us more comfortable while tending them as well.

So much beauty and beautiful weather to enjoy.



December in Your Orchids

December marks the beginning of the dry season in South Florida. While this additional dryness provides relief from the autumnal rains that can bring so many fungal problems, December is also the month of shortest day lengths. This contracted period of light, on the contrary, reduces severely the drying potential for our plants. Nature thus both gives and takes away from us in December. We must make sure, therefore, that we do not aid the dark side of the force by improper watering. In December, above all, one must stick strictly to the two cardinal principles of orchid watering: water early in the day so your plants have as many hours as possible to dry, and water heavily when you water, allowing longer intervals between watering to dry plants thoroughly. This practice maximizes the benefit of the dryer air of December and minimizes the adverse effect of the shorter day lengths.

When nature has delivered a light overnight or early morning rain as she so often does in December at the leading edge of a cold front, add to her efforts by watering thoroughly that same morning and skip out watering for an extra several days afterward. With this method you can use the general dryness of December to give yourself much of the advantage of a greenhouse in terms of controlling watering. As in all aspects of orchid culture, keen observation is the key to success. In cooler weather your plants need much less water and cool air even at the same relative humidity, strips less water from your plants because cool air has less water holding capability. Always be sure that your plants really need water before you roll out the hose in December. Remember to use at least one of the standard tests for dryness: the finger dug slightly into the media test or the newly sharpened pencil coming dry like a knife from a well cooked custard, or test by hefting a pot that you know the weight of, both wet and dry and be sure that it has attained sufficient lightness. When you are sure they are dry, water them until you are sure they are very wet, then let the drying air of December do its magic to ward off leaf spotting diseases.

Himalayan dendrobiums of the *nobile* and *callista* (*D. aggregatum*, *chrysotoxum*, etc.) Sections require no additional water (beyond rain) in December. Remember, those of you who water (or, even worse, fertilize) these dendrobiums in December, will be punished by having your flowers taken away in the Spring. Some growers who have the space isolate these dendrobiums along with other types that want hard drying such as *Catasetum*, *Cynoches*, *Mormodes*, and *Calanthe*. Another strategy is to hang these plants high or at the edges of the collection reminding oneself to neglect them and also to avoid watering them by mistake. Some growers achieve the same result effect by turning the pots of these genera on their side in November or December, to avoid catching water from whatever source. Plants of some of these genera that have finished flowering can even be removed from their pots and stripped to bare roots in anticipation of re-potting them in new media when they break growth in the spring.

Most sympodial orchids are resting in December and require less fertilizer. Biweekly or even monthly applications of a balanced fertilizer are still desirable. Nitrate nitrogen is the most readily absorbed in cooler weather; therefore at least one more application of the potassium nitrate/magnesium sulphate (at 1 tbs. each per gal.) recommended in November is still a good idea. *Vandas*, *Phalaenopsis* and other monopodial orchids should be fertilized right through the winter although both the amount of fertilizer and the frequency of application can be reduced. Remember reddening of the foliage is not natural, nor is it a response to the cold per se but rather a symptom of nutritional deficiency.

(Continued on page 8)

Dr. Martin Motes' December in Your Orchid Collection Continued

December can be cold. Frost has occurred in the first week of the month and unforgettably, the coldest temperatures ever recorded in South Florida were registered on December 25, 1989. If you haven't taken some of the precautions outlined in the November Newsletter, get busy! Keep a close eye on the forecasts during this volatile month. Remember that hard cane dendrobiums of the sections Spatulata and Phaleanthe are the most sensitive of commonly cultivated orchids. They resent temperature much below 60 degrees F. Phaleanopsis are next most sensitive, then vandas. Protect all these genera.

If you are getting a jump on Spring potting chores by repotting sympodial orchids that have finished blooming, it is particularly important that you take extra care in securing them in their containers. These plants may not be sending out new roots for several months, enough time for them to be shaken loose from insufficient staking. Passing cold fronts can bring brisk winds in December. When new roots start to form on insufficiently secured plants, wind moves the plant and chafes the new root tips off. Improperly secured plants are never able to root properly and slowly pine away. If you love them you must tie them up, tie them down. This is also especially true of mass produced orchids sold in Home Depot, K Mart etc. The soft, peat based media used to grow these commercially produced plants in the controlled environment of a greenhouse often does not provide sufficient purchase to secure the plants in the rough and tumble of a South Florida orchid collection buffeted by harsh winter winds. You probably should have already re-potted these into more durable medium but until you do, tie 'em up!

Tamiami Show Display Coming Up!

The Tamiami International Orchid Festival is coming soon - Jan 12-14! Setup will be on **January 11**.

We would like to win the first prize again! There will be many other orchid societies competing against us this time, so we really need your plants and your help!

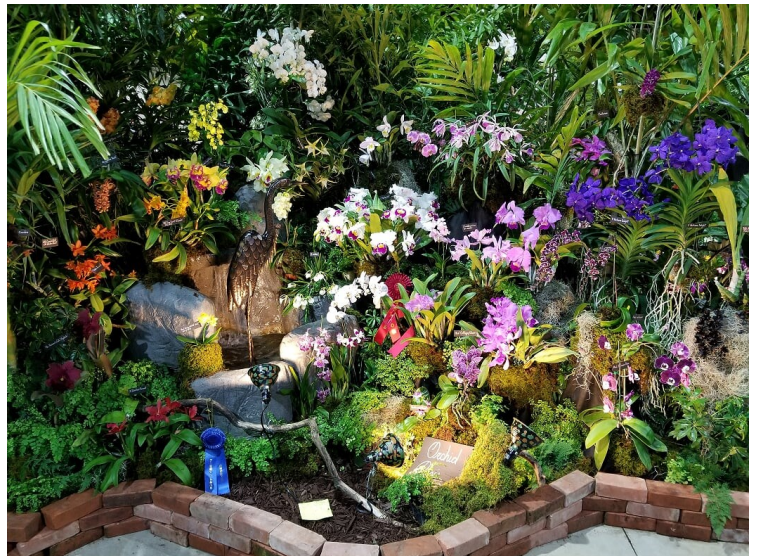
If you have plants in spike, right now is the time to stake them up so there is a good presentation for the display. Also, those plants in spike or bud should be protected from the cold that may come before the show. Please bring them in to protect the buds!

As usual, we need any plant that you have, large or small, that will be in bloom on **Jan. 11**. We may not use all of them, it depends on how the display will be set up. But we never know that until we start building, so anything you have is great!

More info will be sent to you after the party about this but please keep Jan. 11 on your calendar for plant drop off or helping with the display!!!!

Please help to make our display a winner again and show what a great society we have!!!

Email Laura at lauraiiken54@gmail.com and let her know you can help. Or sign up at the Holiday Party!



From the O&Cg Board to all its
wonderful members and their
families,

We wish you a very happy
holiday season and a
wonderful New Year!!

