



APRIL 2026

Orchid Society of Coral Gables

The Orchid Society of Coral Gables is a non-profit organization established for the purpose of showing the cultural and economic importance of the orchid, as well as the intrinsic beauty, and biological and ecological importance of this group of plants. We promote the scientific research and study of orchids including their classification, evolution, propagation, culture, care, and development. Additionally, we support the conservation of orchids in nature, and disseminate educational information and knowledge about the orchid family to the general public.

www.oscg.club

Highlights in this Issue

NO Beginner's Class YES Silent Auction

Because of the format of this meeting, there will be no beginner's class. But there will be silent auction.

Page 3



April Tips from Dr. Motes

Spring is coming!
Repotting is starting!

Page 6-8



Fairchild Show Pics!

It was a beautiful show!

Page 10-11

April Meeting • Tuesday, April 7, 2026 • 7:30 pm Members Night!

Four of Our Own Members Share Their Knowledge!

Sandra Farwell Elliott, Tom Rothrock,

Jim Davison and Melana Davison

It's Our Member's Night - the yearly event when some of our experienced growers share their expertise with cultural tips and demonstrations. This year we will feature Jim Davison teaching Cattleya Culture, and Mounting, Sandra Farwell Elliott focusing on Dividing Large plants, Tom Rothrock teaching on Phalaenopsis, and Melana Davison discussing Catasetum, Bulbophyllum, Vanda and Other Orchid Culture. Members will be free to go to the station where they feel they need the most help, and to circulate and ask questions.



Sandra Farwell Elliott has been growing orchids for about 30 years. Initially she started with a few orchids while running an executive recruiting business and raising 2 children. Being an avid gardener the few orchids quickly became a large collection with now 3 orchid shade houses, many orchids hanging on and attached to trees, and now little space to squeeze more in! She has learned what she can and cannot grow and she has admittedly killed as many orchids as she has purchased over the years but now kills far fewer and can recognize the signs when there begins to be a problem with any of her orchids. In addition she has learned how to repot and/or divide her plants, which is quite intimidating for a newbie and frequently for her!

(Continued on page 3)



President's Message

Dear Members:

This month is our **once-a-year Member's Program**, where we have separate tables with our members sharing their tried-and-true wisdom on many species of orchids. Join us for dinner, silent auction plant sales and a Show and Tell of your plants growing in April.

Fairchild Orchid Festival went very well. We won first place and received a Show Trophy award and a Silver Certificate from the AOS. Thank you to all that made this a fantastic event.

May 1-3 is the Rare Plant Festival. It is being held in a new place, the Fair Expo Center in Miami, Florida (where the Tamiami Festival was held.) The festival will showcase a variety of rare and affordable plants, including orchids and ar-oids.

JOIN US and volunteer for an **OSCG position with either a morning shift 10:30a-2:30p or afternoon shift 2p-6p. When you volunteer you get in free for**



the other shift that day.

RARE PLANT FESTIVAL **Contact Laura at**
laura54orchid@gmail.com

Festival details:

- **Location:** Fair Expo Center, 10901 SW 24th St., Miami, FL 33165
- **Hours:** 11 AM–6 PM
- **Tickets:** \$20. Go to RarePlantFestival.com and **buy tickets in advance or bring cash** at door. You can also scan the **square code** and use a credit card when you get there. Children under 12 are free.

April 26 we will be at the Pinecrest Market to promote our great Orchid Society of Coral Gables. This is the two Sundays before our May meeting.

The market at Pinecrest Gardens is held every Sunday from 9 am till 2 pm and is always well attended.

Please join us on that Sunday for a few hours to share your experiences about our wonderful orchid Society and recruit new members. The market is open from 9am to 2 pm.

Once again, contact Laura at
laura54orchid@gmail.com

See you at the April meeting on the 7th.

Melana Davison



Continued from page 1 – Members Night



Melana Davison has a well-rounded collection of species and hybrids of all genera and is currently trying to repot as many Cattleyas as she can before summer! She is an Accredited AOS Judge, current OSCG President, and owns her own orchid maintenance company.

Tom Rothrock began killing orchids in 1984 after moving to Miami from New York. First by trying to resuscitate grocery store orchids and then in the 1990's receiving some Cattleya skinneri and other orchids from friends who had brought them from Costa Rica to Miami in the 1970's. Near retirement he took Fairchild orchid classes from Sandra Schultz (former CG Orchid Society President and UM Biologist) and then Martin Motes where he bought Martin's book. After that, the health of his orchid collection greatly improved and he has a particularly good collection of Phalaenopsis.

For those new to this venture, you can travel from table to table, or stay at the table that most interests you. Questions are encouraged! And there is no “dumb” question! Everyone has been a beginner at one time, and we all love to help out our fellow members!



Jim Davison is always willing to share his knowledge and experience with growing orchids. His personal orchid education began when he was just 17 years old and continues today. This year, besides speaking on Cattleyas, Jim will be sharing the a,b,c's of mounting your orchids. Many orchids feel right at home on a mount and Jim will show how to help them thrive 'au natural'.

No Beginner's Class This Month! But Yes to Silent Auction!



Because of the format of this month's Members Meeting, there will be no Beginner's Class.

We will, however be having Silent Auction! Bring in any extra plants or divisions, or anything related to orchids to put on the Silent Auction table!

Hospitality Corner

This month's meeting calls for mingling and moving around the grower tables. So we will not have a “sit-down” style dinner, but rather a “moving” dinner. This means empenadas, deli plates, veggie plates, and cookies, etc. Things that are easy to eat while ‘moving’ between tables.



Please bring items that are easy to eat, handheld, etc. That way we can mingle and learn easily!

Society is donating sandwich platters and drinks.

Progress of the Season, April 2026

- by Dr. Martin Motes

Quick note from Bart: As we recover from a successful trip to the 24th World Orchid Conference in Dresden where our display, expertly designed and executed by Karina Motes, won third place and our hybrids won multiple awards including a silver medal, we are enjoying pleasant South Florida weather and getting ready for two big events: our April 18 Open House and the growing Rare Plant Festival (with many Redland growers now joining us) at the Fair Expo Center. We hope you can join us for both.

One of the longest droughts in memory was finally broken in March. The heavy rain in a short period served our orchids well, rehydrating media and roots. The subsequent dry weather was exactly what our plants needed. With the long-term forecast calling for another patch of rainy weather, the growing season is off to an excellent start. The rains have washed most of the mites away and the cooler than average temperatures have staunched the *Thrips*. Scout for the latter as temperature rise to the mid -eighties and control them with the methods explicated in *Florida Orchid Growing*.

Careful watering is called for particularly early in the growing season when new growth on sympodial plants is near the growing medium and vulnerable to fungus if over watered.

Our vandas are drying quickly in the low humidity and high temperature. Be sure to water them first, then again last when watering. If the roots do not turn overall dark green with the second application, not mottled half white half green, a third watering a few minutes later may be required. This is also the one season when vandas in Florida benefit occasionally from an extra watering or misting mid to late afternoon.

April mornings are mostly delightful and it is not too late to plant a late crop of tomatoes.

**MOTES ORCHIDS OPEN HOUSE APRIL
18th 10 am to 4 pm!
25000 SW 162 Ave Homestead, FL 33031**

**Come for amazing deals on big Made in the
USA vandas. We are not open very often so
don't miss this chance to see our nursery and
say hi to Martin and Mary**



March / April Checklist
from the American Orchid Society
...by Ned Nash and James Rose

Cattleya

Although March is, in many parts of the country, still a cold and blustery month, the lengthening days and warmer temperatures allowed by increased light are long-awaited harbingers of the coming change of season. Some of the best standard cattleyas of the year will be in bloom, or will be blooming soon. The last of the winter-flowering hybrids will join the earliest of the spring hybrids in a wonderful display. Be on the alert for senescing sheaths that need removal. If these yellowing sheaths are not removed, the moisture they trap can lead to bud rot. Careful removal of the sheath will allow the buds to develop, although they will need additional support. Changing light conditions can also be a problem in March and April. An exceptionally bright day, especially immediately following a rain, can lead to sunburn of the foliage if shading is not attended to properly. There can still be periods of dull days where spikes can be weakened owing to the lower light. Lengthening days will mean increased metabolic rates necessitating increased water and fertilizer. The plants will indicate needs by drying more rapidly, which means more frequent watering and fertilizing.

With the passing of the season for winter bloomers, and the beginning of the season for spring bloom, it is also the time to be on the lookout for plants that will need potting after they bloom. Immediately after blooming has proven to be the best time to repot winter- and spring-flowering cattleyas. In most cases, they will be ready to grow roots, so if potted at this time, they will root right into fresh mix with little or no setback.

Lycaste

This genus of superb orchids will be coming to the end of its flowering season. Soon you will see the beginning of new root growth, which is an excellent time to repot into fresh media. As new growth emerges, provide ample fertilizer and water. A sign of good culture is an increase in the size of pseudobulbs with each successive year.

Phalaenopsis

In most of the country, March is the peak blooming month for phalaenopsis. Staking needs to be carefully attended to, so that the flowers will be displayed at their best for orchid shows and judging -- even those intended for your home will look best if properly staked. One of the most decorative aspects of phalaenopsis spikes is the way they gracefully arch. If not staked properly, the spike will lack this grace and will not be as pleasing. Most growers like to have the final support just below the first flower, allowing maximum support, without sacrificing the beauty of the arching spike.

Rapid-growing spikes and open flowers place extra demands on the plant. Careful monitoring of watering and feeding will give the plants the energy they require to give their best floral display. Remember, too, that the lengthening days will also increase the frequency at which plants need water.

Beware of the invasion of sucking pests that accompany the flowering season. Flowers and spikes are favorite targets of mealybugs and scales. Be on the look out for their presence, often indicated by the appearance of sooty mold resulting from the exudate of the bugs, and treat before flowers or buds are too advanced. If flowers and buds are too far along, the chemical treatment may damage or abort them.

Orchid Tasks for April - by Dr. Martin Motes

- Full speed ahead on repotting
- Water heavily and well
- Don't forget to fertilize
- Spray for thrips and mites

April Climate Data
Average high: 83.8
Average low: 67.6
Average mean: 75.7
Average rainfall: 3.36"

April in Your Orchid Collection - by Dr. Martin

Excerpted from *Florida Orchid Growing: Month by Month* by Martin Motes. All rights reserved.

Far from the cruelest, April is the kindest month to South Florida orchid growers. The weather in April is definitely settled into warm, even deliciously hot, with passing cold fronts only adding the delight of a pleasant change in temperature. The clean, bright days brimming with abundant sunlight and the low relative humidity create the high drying potential that orchids love.

Now we can get our orchids off to a great start on the growing season by practicing our very best watering skills under ideal conditions. Water heavily when you water and allow the plants to dry thoroughly before watering heavily again. Drying 'hard' in the Spring will produce benefits all season. We want to get our plants well launched while leaving all the fungi high and dry.

The new shoots of *Oncidinae*, *grammatophyllums* and *dendrobiums* are quite cup-like; care must be taken that water does not stand too long in these immature growths. Water these types very thoroughly with two or three applications of water spaced 10-15 minutes apart. Water should run freely through the pot on each application. Saturated thoroughly in this fashion the plants will need only weekly watering.

Even more care should be taken with the

soft plicate leafed genera like *Cattasetum*, *Mormodes*, *Cycnoches*, *Gongora*, *Calanthe* and *Thunia*

The new growths of this type are rolled together (the fancy word is convolute) like a collapsible drinking cup. These should be grown in water retentive media that should be saturated at each watering to permit the developing roots to have abundant water but allow the vulnerable new growth extra time to dry. Feel the weight of a pot when you have finished watering. Be sure it is heavy with water. If it's not water one more time. With plants properly spaced, good drying should not be difficult in the hot dry air of April. But do be careful to water early enough in the day to allow the tender new growth to thoroughly dry by twilight.

With vandaceous orchids grown in slatted baskets, most growers find that they dry altogether too well in April. Vandas can be watered almost every morning in April. Indeed, a second light watering or misting in mid-afternoon in April and early May is often beneficial provided the crowns and leaf axils of the plants have time to dry completely by nightfall.

Another strategy under high drying condi-



tions is to bend the rules, at least occasionally, and water heavily in mid to late morning. Late waterings on weekend mornings (you didn't want to get up early, any way) provide relief for plants that are more stressed on week days with their owners absent. Very occasionally, one needs to break the rules absolutely and water thoroughly (not just mist) in the mid to late afternoon so the plants can slowly absorb the water across the cool hours of the night.

This is the season that one must be sure that Vanda roots have turned overall dark green when we have finished watering. Two applications of water to the point of runoff spaced several minutes apart should accomplish the required color change from white to totally green. Saturated roots are absolutely necessary to provide the plants the moisture the plants need to withstand the heat and dry air typical of April. Sometimes, particularly at this season, the roots will not change color even after the second or third application of water. This lack of response to water is because the roots have become so dry that they are repelling rather than absorbing water. They are behaving like a cork in a wine bottle. The grower must exert special effort to re-saturate the

roots. Often this will require 4 or 5 waterings to the point of run off spaced 15 minutes apart. Once the roots have been changed to the healthy overall green, normal applications of water should bring them around in future.

With increased heat and light and the onset of growth, fertilizer becomes more crucially important to the plants. Balanced time release pellets (13-13-13) can still be applied to potted plants provided the duration is 180 days or less. Most time release fertilizer breaks down faster under South Florida conditions and should be exhausted by October when we will want our plants to slow down. The brand marketed at retail as "Dynamite" is generally considered by professionals as superior in reliability to other types.

In April, 15-5-15 can be applied to most genera at the rate of 2 tsp. per gal every two weeks. Vandas, ascocendas, *Aerides*, *et al* will benefit from a full tablespoon of 15-5-15 weekly during this high energy period. One can also apply high phosphorous 'Bloom Booster' fertilizer once or twice at this time to stimulate them to flower for Mothers' Day or failing that to win those trophies and A.O.S. awards at the Redland International Orchid Festival the next weekend. High phosphorous (we use Millers' *Solugrow* 8-48-12) also stimulates root action and is important in getting all genera off to a good start on the growing season. This is one of the few times that high phosphorus is perhaps beneficial. During the rest of the year it is to be avoided particularly with our alkaline water. Current science recommends fertilizers lower in nitrogen, much lower in phosphorus and higher in potassium, magnesium and calcium. Peter's Excel 15-5-15 is now the standard for year round use.

The warmth of April, alas, stimulates the growth of bugs as well as plants. Both thrips and mites thrive in the dry heat of April. Liquid dishwashing soap (at 2 oz per gal) will control both but be mindful that soap should not be applied to plants that are suffering from drought stress. Be sure that your plants are well hydrated before



you apply soap. Water them extra hard the day before. To be effective soap must be used profusely. The plants should be washed in the solution to the point of wetting every nook and cranny of both the plant and its container. Only such thorough treatment can reach the reclusive thrips and be sure to touch all of the ever prolific mites. A second treatment at 7-10 days is necessary to control mites and a miticide such as *Kelthane* might be advised. *Orthene* which is the insecticide of choice for thrips (because of its residual action) is compatible with many miticides. Check with your county agent if in doubt.

April is the classic month to catch up with all the re-potting which you meant to do across the winter. New roots form fast in April; don't rot them off by over-potting or break them off by allowing the plant to wiggle in the pot. Tie them up: tie them down!

April is a month for great moral decisions. When turning on the air conditioner for the first time, consider how much better an orchid grower you would be if you set the thermostat 2 or 3 degrees higher. You will find that you spend more time with your plants when you are accustomed to slightly higher

temperatures and it is the master's shadow that makes the plants grow. Besides spending more time enjoying your orchids, when the FPL bill arrives, you can celebrate with some splendid additions to your collection.

April is a great month for naturalizing orchids in the garden. Perhaps its time to think of new homes for some of our burgeoning collection.

Sign up to receive Dr. Motes' newsletters at

<http://redlandpress.com/subscribe.html>

You can also text ORCHIDS to 22828.



Membership News

Just a reminder! If you haven't paid your dues, please do so at the meeting. Also, don't forget we have a Student price. If you know of a student who is interested in orchids, invite him/her to join. It is only \$20 for students for a full year! We need to get the younger generation involved in orchids!





Orchid Society of Coral Gable Membership/Renewal Application
PO Box 560092, Miami, FL 33256-0092

DATE: _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____ Zip Code _____

PHONE: (Home) _____ (other) _____

Email: (Important!) _____

PRINT CLEARLY:

Birthday: _____ (month/date)

Business name _____ Occupation _____

American Orchid Society member? _____ Expiration date: _____

I would like to become involved and assist with the following: (Please check at least one.)

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| ☐ Phone Committee | Re- ☐ freshments | ☐ Newsletter |
| ☐ Orchid Shows (2 per year) | ☐ Auction- | ☐ Public Relations/Social Media |
| ☐ Welcoming Committee | ☐ Membership Committee | |

Other _____

Do you consider yourself a beginning, intermediate or advanced orchid grower (circle one)

Have you taken any orchid culture classes? _____ Where _____

Do you have any feedback on club programs from this year or any ideas for programs you would like to have for next year? email a board member or Linda Matanis at lgmorchid@att.net.

(Dues are: \$30 single membership / \$50 couple - same household) Add \$5 after March meeting.

****MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE FIRST TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 7:30 PM IN THE GARDEN ROOM AT FAIRCHILD TROPICAL GARDENS, SOUTH ENTRANCE ****

Pictures from the Fairchild Orchid Festival

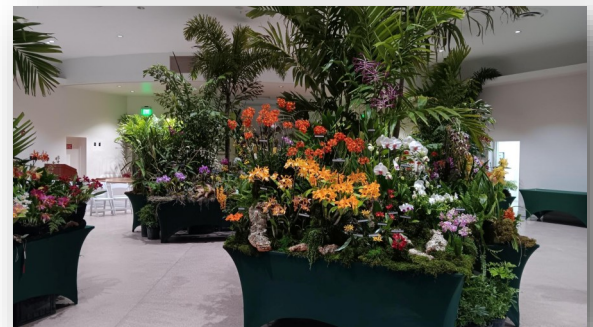


Our Award Winning Display!



One of our Three Raffle Winners!

Some of the Vendors Displays



"The path to greatness is along with others." – Baltasar Gracián