

Orchid Society of Coral Gables



Monthly Newsletter | June, 2026

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.

**Next meeting at Fairchild Botanical Gardens
Garden Room
Tuesday June 2nd 2026
6:45 Beginners class
7:30pm Meeting**



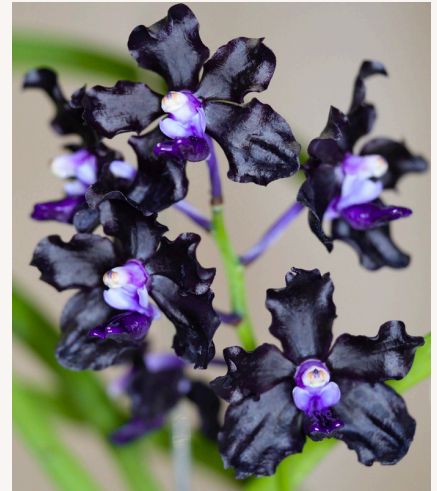
Carter and Holmes Orchids - Zoom Presentation

Bridget Uzar is a fourth-generation green thumb and a second-generation orchid grower. Following in her father's footsteps, she has been at Carter and Holmes Orchids for over twenty years but has been around orchids her whole life, essentially growing up under the benches.

Bridget began working at C&H in 2002 in an everyday potting and watering capacity, eventually being given charge of the collection and breeding houses. She made her first Cattleya cross in 2008 and hasn't stopped since. Starting in 2009, she began working on the digital photography, catalog publications, and other marketing work for Carter and Holmes Orchids.

Today, Bridget has been the chief grower and hybridizer for over fifteen years, overseeing greenhouse management and production. She also handles the company's marketing emails as well as promotional material and social media.

ORCHID SOCIETY OF CORAL GABLES



PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Dear Members,

Well, we haven't really had our first of the season rains yet! Normally, by mid-May we start with some heavy rains — but not this year! In one way, this is good. We have control over the water and can prevent any early black rot. But in another way, we have the problem with thrips during dry weather. Keep your insecticide regimen up, remembering to alternate products for more effectiveness.

Hopefully everyone has already begun a series of fungicide applications before the rain does start. If not, you can still apply fungicide during these dry days, especially if you have to play catch-up. Take advantage of the rainless weather to get those plants treated with fungicides.

Most fungicides prescribe a monthly application, alternating with a different fungicide group. For example, we use Banrot (Group 1) one month and Mancozeb (Group 33) another month, and sometimes even a third type the following month. We have reprinted an article from the AOS on Black Rot to help — see page 12.

It was unfortunate that Jason Downing became ill for our May meeting. I am pleased to say he has recovered well, even being able to attend the Chelsea Flower Show to represent the Million Orchid Project. But don't worry — we are going to have him come speak soon. Jim and I are just happy we were there to fill in. One of our favorite things to do is answer the questions our members have!

This month we have Bridget Uzar from Carter and Holmes. She will be joining us via Zoom and always gives a wonderful presentation.

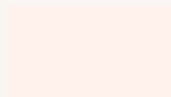
Next month we are having a special summer meeting — Orchid Bingo! Lots of fun and lots of orchid prizes! Food, ice cream, orchids, and good times — don't miss it! July 7th, 7:30!

We will be having a Silent Auction this month, so if you have anything you'd like to sell — orchids or orchid related — please bring them in. Of course, bring in your blooming orchids for us to see and be inspired by! And we are having Pulled Pork Sandwiches for dinner, so please bring salads, sides, and desserts for our dinner table.

See you all at the meeting!

Melana

Member Spotlight Removed



June Orchid Care from Motes Orchids

“excerpted from Dr. Martin Motes, Florida Orchid growing”

June is the most dramatically tropical month in South Florida. As the southeast Trade Winds blow cool moist air off the Gulf Stream daily, as surely the heating effect of the center of the peninsula percolates up massive thunder heads. The increased cloud cover drawing a veil across the afternoon sun provides much cooling relief for our plants late in the day. Because of this additional cloud cover, our plants are less stressed than in the brightest of May sunshine. The increased humidity makes June feel hotter to us, but this humidity brings blessed balm to our plants from the unrelentingly dry heat of late spring. The shading clouds are also the harbinger of the almost daily rains that arrive like clockwork with the thunderstorms that re-circulate the moisture laden air back toward the ocean in the afternoon. These showers can drop the temperature 10-12 degrees in almost no time, again bring our plants relief when they need it most in the peak heat of the day. In June, such soaking rains that can sometimes be an inch or more an hour, are the norm rather than the exception. For orchids grown outside in South Florida this month, how to dry them out becomes more the question than how or when to water them. For most sympodial genera (cattleyas, dendrobiums, oncidiums, etc.) the natural rainfall of June is sufficient. Only in those rare once or twice times during June when no rain falls for nearly a week is it necessary to think of watering sympodial orchids in June. Even then it usually is a thought that can be dismissed. A thorough, “hard” drying in this first month of the rainy season is usually of much more overall value to sympodial orchids than the slight extra push of additional water.

Harder plants that have not been pushed with extra water are much more disease resistant than softer more lushly grown orchids. Vandas and other high water requirement plants may still need periodic watering in June but remember that these types too relish occasional “hard” drying and the heavy often lingering, rains of June are just the nostrum for re-hydrating them even when they have become as dry as the cork in a wine bottle dry. When watering in June, remember at no season is the standard ‘water early in the day’ rule more relevant; those extra hours of drying are crucial. If your vandas or other orchids really need water, water early in the morning to allow time for them to dry not merely by night but by the time the all too likely afternoon thunderstorms arrive to soak them again. Be sure when you water that the roots of the vandas are saturated until they turn overall dark green. This will still take two applications of water spaced a few minutes apart. June is the archetypical month for careful but totally thorough watering. For those of us committed to sloth, this month is one in which benign neglect becomes a virtue.

With an eye to efficient drying which the season demands, June is an excellent time to review the spacing of our plants. Always give your plants sufficient space to allow for good air circulation to permit rapid drying.

Crowded plants stay wetter longer encouraging fungus and bacteria. Scale and mealy bugs also thrive on the soft lush growth generated by overcrowded, overshadowed plants. Mites too love the extra protection from dislodging rain that overgrown plants

provide. When looking at the spacing of your plants also allow some extra space for the new growth that will be rapidly developing in the new growing season. Remember your well grown



June Orchid Care from Motes Orchids

plants will be much larger at the end of the rainy season when the fungus are ravagely on the prowl. Plants and trees in your yard also will have grown in the past year and will be growing more in the rains of summer.

June is a good time to think of pruning vegetation that is blocking light and air from our orchids. Come the true heart of hurricane season in September you will be glad that you did! Tree pruning alas, slips to a low priority in the face of an approaching storm. Your orchids will be glad right away that you pruned, rewarding you with harder, healthier growth sure to produce yet more lavish blooms in season.

A persistent problem in June is how to apply liquid fertilizer to our plants under these often persistently wet conditions. As all of our orchids are in rapid growth in June they need to be fed, ironically this comes in the face of super abundant moisture. While rain contains minute quantities of nitrogen, heavy persistent rain can in fact strip nutrients from our plants by reversing the normal osmotic process. To a degree this effect of the heavy rains can be positive leaching away any excessive fertilizer salts that have accumulated over the dry season but overall the rain leaves them needier than before. Those of us who have kept our plants well nurtured in May will be ahead of this curve but we all must keep our plants fat and happy at the onset of the heavy growing season. For orchid grown in pots with media, the relatively new, slow release fertilizer widely sold as “Dynamite” (i.e.. Nutri-cote) is of especial value at this time of year. Other brands of slow release fertilizer have not proven to be as reliable (neither consistent nor durable) under the hot humid conditions of South Florida. In general, a good rule in June, is that when some opportunities to water present themselves, think rather of applying liquid fertilizer instead of just water. Remember too, the oft repeated bad advice to water your plants before fertilizing them is particularly erroneous in June when over-watering can quickly have negative consequences. In June, as always, replace a watering with an application of the proper concentration of liquid fertilizer. Another frequently sought strategy is to apply fertilizer in conjunction with fungicidal sprays. In general it is not advised to combine balanced fertilizer (20-20-20, 18-18-18) with sprays because with South Florida’s highly alkaline water. Any phosphorus in the fertilizer tends to bind up most of the trace elements when conjoined to South Florida ground water. Phosphorus (a very active metal) can also have adverse reactions to the fungicide itself, lessening or abnegating its effectiveness. The solution to this dilemma is to use a fertilizer without phosphorus when a bit of nutrition is desirable. The best source is potassium nitrate 13-0-44 (available at farm supply stores in 50lb. bags) which provides the additional potassium our plants crave. 1 Tbs per gal can be added to the spray solution. Be sure to use “Spray Grade” not “Prilled” which would need to be dissolved in hot water. Thiophanate Methyl, Cleary’s 3336 or its combination Banrot or Duosan should be applied prophylactically in June.

June Orchid Care from Motes Orchids



Keep a sharp eye on your plants for any signs of black rot (Pythium). Should soft black or brown spots appear, they should be excised immediately using a sterile knife as this disease can spread quickly in wet conditions. Banrot gives good control but Alliette is the best fungicide to control this disease if it persists. Is and other genera. Hopefully, if we have been doing a good job, our plants will have grown significantly since last year's rainy season. They all may well need more space. Remember that old time orchid growers would say one needs a cat to be a good grower in South Florida because a cat should be able to walk orchid benches without knocking plants down when they are properly spaced.

Snails and slugs will have the whole world as their stage in June and can travel considerable distances to eat our tender orchid shoots. Baits containing metaldehyde are very effective if applied evenly and often. Remember, bait draws the pests; spread it thinly but repeat weekly for thorough control. Snails and slugs always require multiple applications. Overly heavy applications of bait will merely waste in the heavy rain.

Although mites and to a degree thrips are washed away by the heavy rains of June, the warm conditions of summer speed the growth of scale and mealy bugs. At the first sign of either of these pests spray with Soap at 2 oz. per gal or an appropriate insecticide. Oil is no longer an option in the heat of summer. If the soap doesn't prove effective enough, try something stronger but apply with care early in the morning or late in the evening as the high temperatures of mid-day in June can exacerbate phytotoxic reactions.

June is a great month for top cutting strap leaf vandas, teretes (papilionanthes) and reed stem epidendrums. Most sympodial orchids are already in growth and unless their media in totally broken down are probably best left undisturbed till their new growths have matured and they have flowered. If you have not gotten your Phalaenopsis out of last year's sphagnum moss wait no longer! Phal roots in soggy medium in June is a receipt for "Fails".

For those of us so in love with Florida that we would never think of insulating ourselves with air-conditioning, the rains of June provide pleasant relief from the harsh Mediterranean sun of late spring. As my son Bartholomew at age two so aptly said "Rain sweet as honey". Enjoy! Our orchids do.

ORCHID SPOTLIGHT



Rhizanthella gardneri is not only the world's rarest orchid, it is also one of the most mysterious. It's the only known plant that flowers underground. It also grows, germinates, and sets seed totally underground, and is thought to be pollinated by termites.

The orchid is able to survive underground thanks to an intricate and complex three-way alliance: it connects to an above-ground plant, the *Melaleuca uncinata* bush, through a white, thread-like fungus. The connecting fungus transfers nutrients from the bush to the orchid.

This kind of beneficial bond with fungi, known as a mycorrhizal association, is in fact typical of orchids in general.



A huge shoutout to our amazing volunteers for representing our society at recent events! 🌸

🌿 Pinecrest Farmers Market: Len Domingo and Vicky Benitez 🌿 Rare Plant Festival: Josie C., Vicky B., Alina P.S., and Bill C. 🌸 Orchid Hotel: Jim Wheeler and Linda Wheeler

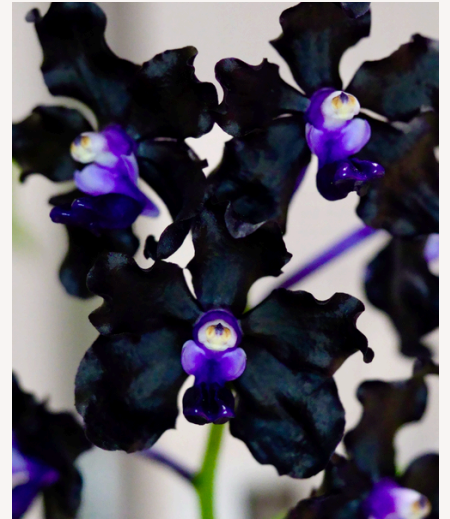
Thanks to their enthusiasm and dedication, we have new newsletter subscribers and potential new members headed our way.

Each volunteer shift for Tamiami, Redlands, and Rare Plant Festival also earns our society \$65 to support our programs — so every helping hand makes a real difference!

Volunteering is a fantastic way to give back twice over! 💚



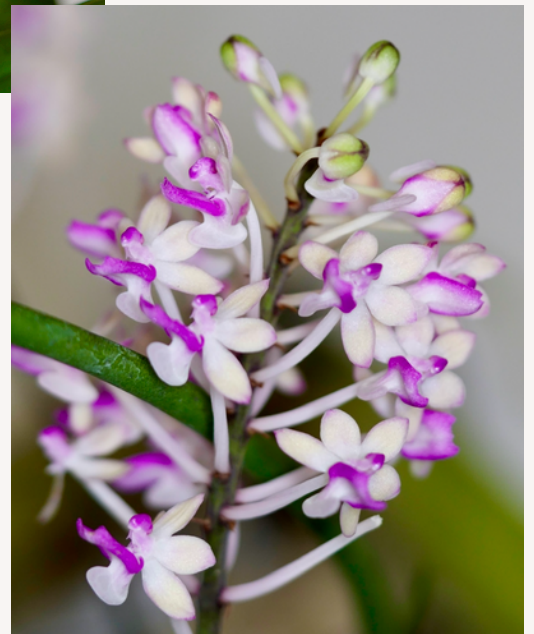
PHOTOS FROM MAY MEETING



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PHOTOS FROM MAY MEETING



A well-deserved round of applause goes out to member Alvaro Palache, who was recently recognized with an award for his invaluable contributions at the Fairchild Orchid Festival. Alvaro went above and beyond in his efforts to make the event a success, from climbing stairs to carefully placing orchids in just the right spots, to offering creative and thoughtful ideas that helped elevate the overall presentation.

Alvaro's dedication and enthusiasm are a true reflection of the passion that drives our club, and his efforts did not go unnoticed. It is members like Alvaro who make our participation in events like the Fairchild Orchid Festival something to be proud of.

Thank you, Alvaro — your hard work and commitment are truly appreciated, and this award is very well deserved.

We are lucky to have you as part of our club!

NEW ORCHID DISCOVERIES

A new orchid species, *Diplozentrum papillosum*, was discovered in Kanthalloor, Marayoor, in India's Idukki district in January 2026. It grows on rocks and tree branches, produces fragrant pink and white blooms, and belongs to a genus found only in the southern Western Ghats.



- Royal Botanic Gardens Kew announced their top new species of 2025, including a "bloodstained orchid" from Ecuador — *Telipogon cruentilabrum* — named for its striking bloodstained lip. It grows epiphytically on tree daisies in the high Andean forests of Cotopaxi, and is one of four spectacular new *Telipogon* species described in 2025.

- Kew scientists also described a "caterpillar orchid" (*Dendrobium eruciforme*) from Indonesian New Guinea, named because the tiny, creeping plants resemble a colony of caterpillars on a tree trunk — the smallest of six newly identified Indonesian species.



Words of Wisdom from the AOS

Black Rot

By Susan Jones

A danger to orchids any time the weather is rainy or damp for extended periods, black rot can quickly destroy an entire plant if left unchecked. Caused by one or both of the fungi *Pythium ultimum* and *Phytophthora cactorum*, black rot affects a wide variety of orchids. Cattleyas seem to be particularly susceptible.

Life Cycle

The fungi that cause black rot in orchids can live only in environments where water is available to them. They consist of spores capable of independent movement, called zoospores, which swim through the water. If that water happens to be sitting on an orchid leaf, the zoospores can penetrate the plant tissue and begin the next stage in their life cycle. At this



Black rot moves quickly through a plant and can decimate an orchid collection if not treated.

point, the fungus develops a vegetative part or mycelium consisting of hyphae (thin, thread-like tubes), which spread quickly through the affected plant tissues. Once this occurs, the visible signs of infection - small, watery, translucent spots - expand quickly and change to brown and then black. Left untreated, the affected plant or plants may infect others and will probably die themselves.

Symptoms

When the fungus attacks seedlings, it is usually at the soil line. This can cause the little plants to topple and die, and is referred to as damping off.

In mature plants, the disease can strike at any point on the plant (leaves, pseudobulbs or roots), but often starts in new leaves or growing leads, and progresses downward through the plant until reaching the roots..

Black rot moves quickly through a plant and can decimate an orchid collection if not treated. As its name implies, black rot shows up as dark blackish spots or lesions on the affected plant part. The black spot or spots enlarge rapidly and can spread throughout the plant. If allowed to reach the crown of a monopodial (single-stemmed) orchid, the rot will kill the plant. Affected leaves may turn yellow around the infected area, and the lesions themselves will be soft and exude water when pressure is applied.

Prevention

Unsterilized pots, media or water sources, as well as water splashed from affected plants nearby, are all excellent means of spreading the fungus. In addition, plants that spend time outdoors should be elevated 3 to 4 feet (90 to 120 cm) above the ground to avoid



Proper growing area is key and can help plants dry. The addition of a fan or fans to the growing area

Words of Wisdom from the AOS

(cont.)

can improve airflow and help prevent rots. At the first signs of infection, segregate all affected plants to avoid contaminating healthy plants. Finally, some growers recommend the use of a high-calcium fertilizer in the spring to help avoid black rot in new growth.

Mechanical Treatment To stop the spread of black rot in your orchid, begin with a sterile knife and cut out the diseased portion of the plant. Remove all infected plant material, taking out a small amount of healthy tissue bordering the infected area as a safety precaution. Examine the cut portion carefully. It is sometimes possible, especially in pseudobulbs, to see a brownish discoloration extending into the interior of tissue that appears healthy on the surface. In sympodial (many-stemmed) plants such as a cattleya, it may be necessary to cut below the leaves and into the pseudobulb to stop the spread of the disease. If the plant is badly infected, cut into the rhizome, growth by growth, until you reach healthy tissue. For a monopodial orchid such as a vanda or phalaenopsis,

- remove the infected portion of the leaf, or the entire leaf if necessary, to halt the
- spread of the fungus before it reaches the crown. Place the plant in an area that
- receives good air circulation to allow the cut to dry.

- **Chemical Treatment** Once the infected plant
- parts have been removed, a fungicide should be
- applied to protect the remaining healthy tissue.
- Cinnamon is an excellent fungicide, and ground
- cinnamon may be applied straight from the spice
- jar directly to the exposed area where infected
- portions of the plant have been excised. First Rays
- Orchids also recommends mixing cinnamon with
- either casein- based glue (such as Elmers) or cooking oil
- is fairly waterproof and can be used to cover the wound.



- Another poultice developed specifically for use on orchids is StopRot.
- The product contains a Bordeaux mixture in lanolin. The Bordeaux, a mixture of
- “copper sulfate and lime”, has fungicidal properties. The lanolin seals the wound to
- keep moisture out.
- Whatever method is chosen, be sure to cover all of the exposed (cut) area with the
- fungicide or sealant so that no new infection can be introduced to the open wound.
- Drenching the affected plant with fungicide is also an option. Drenches of a
- protectant fungicide such as Truban or Terrazole are recommended if the disease is
- diagnosed early. For more advanced cases, a systemic fungicide such as Aliette or
- Subdue is more effective. Captan, Dithane M-45, and Physan 20 have also been
- recommended by some growers for control of black rot.
- To protect seedlings against damping off, water with the fungicide of choice (at the
- dilution rate for seedlings specified in the products instructions) as soon as they
- are deflasked and potted in compots. Afterward, treat with a preventive fungicide
- at two-week intervals.

Words of Wisdom from the AOS

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Meeting Recap: Orchid Tips and Myths



Last month's meeting brought an unexpected but delightful change of plans. Our scheduled speaker, Dr. Downing, was unfortunately unable to attend due to illness, and we wish him a speedy recovery. Stepping up on short notice, our very own Jim and Melana Davison graciously offered to lead the session, delivering an engaging and informative class on orchid tips and orchid myths. We are grateful to Jim and Melana for stepping in so seamlessly.

We look forward to welcoming Dr. Downing at a future meeting and hope to hear more from Jim and Melana again soon. Thank you to all who attended and made it another great gathering!

Beginner's Class – Fungicides: Which ones to use 6:45pm

This month will be about the ins and outs of fungicides: which to use, how many, how much, and when. Many of us have been through bad summers with our orchids, but we have many new members who may not realize some of the hints and tips we can share about summer prep. And as always, Jim will be available to answer any orchid questions you may have, any season!

Hospitality Corner! Summer Pulled Pork Sandwiches!

We are starting off the summer with Melana's Homemade Pulled Pork Sandwiches. These sandwiches are always a treat for summer munching!

This means we need coleslaw, salads, sides, and desserts. And of course, the society will bring drinks. Help make our dinner table wonderful!

