



SEPTEMBER 2025

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

President's message!

Helping the society

Page 2



Room Change:

This month we meet across the way in Corbin Room A.

Upcoming Events!

This month starts the Fall Orchid Show season.

Page 8 -9

Dr. Motes Talks About September Culture

Pages 6-7

What to do this month in our collection!

September Meeting • Tuesday, Sept 2, 2025

No Beginner's class General Meeting 7:30 pm

Meeting will be in Corbin Room A, Not the Garden House

Tomas Bajza, Tarzane Group

“Giant World of Miniature Orchids & Growing in Simple Setups”

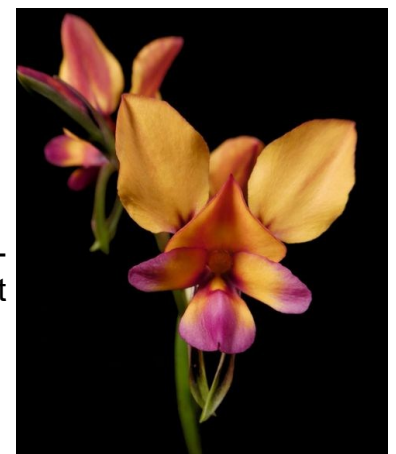
This month we have a special speaker. He is local and goes to the local shows, but his orchids are very unique and specialized. Tomas Bajza spoke to us a couple of years ago and he was well received. His specialty is miniature orchids and some of his plants are so very cute!



Tomas will be bringing many of his special orchids for sale, so don't miss this talk. Below is a bio he sent to share with all of you.

“Hi to all orchid lovers! To introduce myself — my name is Tomas Bajza and I am an orchid lover and addict. I originally came to the USA from the Czech Republic and settled down in hot tropical Miami.

I adored orchids during my teenage years, but at that time there were not many to see in my country. My orchid beginnings were funny and sad, all at the same time. I managed to obtain few orchid plants back in Czech, two Phalaenopsis plants, and one Cymbidium plant. I had neither knowledge nor options to do some research (the Internet was really not present), so I grew as I felt. That approach was



President's Message

Hello fellow OSCG members,



The end of summer has been a very hot one. It has been pretty unbearable for us, but many of our orchids are loving it! Yes, the true tropical ones!

We had a great meeting in August. I think everyone had a great time at BINGO and we had lots of winners!

This month we have Thomas Bajza speaking and teaching us about miniature orchids. So, bring your wallet and get ready to see some interesting and beautiful orchids and take some home.

Our ambassadors are doing a great job helping members at the door and for information. If you are interested in helping with this, please get in touch with me, Laura (laura54orchid@gmail.com)

If you can, during the meeting **help us** by taking pictures of our members, their orchids, and our events. We will share your photos in the newsletter for the following month. We really need help with this - we all like seeing our orchids in the newsletter. Send them to Melana (orchidiva@att.net)

We have 2 members helping with the Hospitality (food) table. Thank you to Ariel Girardi and Marting Rivas for stepping up! Don't forget to sign up with them and get your food ticket when you bring in your food dishes!

In **October** our members can participate in the **Redland Orchid Festival** at the Fruit and Spice Park by volunteering to help. The Festival is on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday; Oct 17, 18, and 19. We will have volunteer sheets available to sign up for the shift of your choice at the back table.

Remember Redlands organizers **donate \$65 per shift** worked to the society. And if you volunteer for a shift with the festival, you will get in free for the other shift that day. And you will be included in a separate volunteer raffle by the festival.



Another way to help is at the Orchid Hotel, where we watch attendees' orchids while they shop for more. We receive donations from them for watching their special new additions to their collections. Also, you will get free admission to the festival for working the hotel too!

The money we earn from both the festival and the orchid hotel will go into our general fund to help to pay for room rental for our meetings, speak-

Don't Forget to Wear Your OSCG Shirt to the Meeting!

ers fees, as well as **our Fantastic Holiday** party in December. We hope to see many of you volunteering at the **festival**.

Remember, we are collecting recipes from all the delicious dishes you bring each month or make at home. Please send them in to Melana at OSCGcookbook@gmail.com. We have only received recipes from 8 members - we know you all have something you can send in to us! And you can send in more than one recipe. We don't have enough recipes right now to make it happen, so please help us!

And lastly, we will be having a Halloween Costume Party at the October meeting with orchid giveaways. Start thinking about your favorite funny, scary, and/or most creative costume to wear, and maybe you'll get a fabulous orchid!

See you soon,
Laura Aiken

*"No wise man
ever wished to
be younger."
--Jonathan Swift*

(Continued from Page 1)

of course totally wrong. My poor Phals were over-watered constantly and kept by the window right above the heating, so the humidity was at zero. They must have hated me all these years as they were suffering and barely surviving, but I got at least one spike once, before they both went to orchid heaven.



My Cymbidium was even “better”. That sucker did nothing except grow leaves for years. Then I went to college and moved out of the house, completely forgetting about the plant. Once I came back home in the fall, my mother called me outside to our courtyard, when I got there, she pulled out from behind the Oleander bush my forgotten Cymbidium with absolutely amazing long spike carrying some 40+ green waxy blooms. I was shocked, as I was not able to bloom this plant for many years. So, I asked her what did she do with it. She replied, “I just threw it outside behind the Oleander bushes early spring, watered it with the hose when watering oleanders, and fertilized it with chicken poop when fertilizing my oleanders, that’s it!”

I was laughing my a** off about my over-caring this plant for so many years with no success while my mother just threw it outside

behind the bushes. That’s it, she gets the blooms!

Even though I am living in Florida surrounded by orchids, I got into serious orchid growing only over a decade ago, starting with the usual grocery store Phalaenopsis and Dendrobiums, slowly adding Cattleyas and Vandas since these were the orchids that everyone in Florida grew! All of these were large orchids and mostly hybrids. I was constantly searching different online orchid forums and saw post about *Leptanthopsis astrophora* — that was the very first time I had ever seen a miniature orchid. I had no clue that such a thing even existed! I fell totally in love and immediately ordered a few. When they came, they were even smaller than I ever imagined!

That was it, I’ve got bitten by a “huge” miniature orchid bug — and in the past years I was fortunate enough to collect hundreds of micro and miniature orchid species, many of them pretty rare. I am a very stubborn grower — I do not listen to anything, and I do not like the word “impossible”. I like all orchids, but I do love huge amount of cold or intermediate growing species. Many growers in Florida told me that I cannot grow these here, because it is too hot or they are too hard to grow. I do not believe any of this till I try things myself and either succeed or fail!

Through extended research, reading and being active on different orchid boards and in orchid groups, I’ve learned tremendously. I do not



(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from Page 3)

consider myself in any way orchid expert, but someone once told me that a beginner orchid grower is someone who killed less than 10 plants, advance orchid grower is someone who killed more than 100, and an orchid professional is someone who killed over 1000 and doesn't count anymore. By this yardstick, I do belong to advance growers.

I've been very fortunate with meeting and becoming friends with many international or-



chid growers and nursery owners. At the beginning, I bought only plants sold by US nurseries. Nowadays, nearly all of my orchids come from abroad. Buying orchids from US growers is safe and the majority of

the plants come nicely established. Unfortunately, there are no species I am looking for

offered by the US vendors anymore. I was really pushed to search and start my own importing because I could not just find any of the plants I wanted to own.

There is another "hobby" I do have, love for photography. With a growing miniature orchid collection, there were endless opportunities for taking the pictures of these amazing, sometimes microscopical blooms. Posting my pictures online caused quite a "buzz" leading to first invitations from various orchid societies to provide speeches for their members about growing miniature orchids and cold growing species in hot environment.

Here we are today. What used to be a "hobby" slowly grew to a small business that is expanding. We found out there are hundreds of growers, like me, searching for these hard to find, unusual, uncommon and rare micro and miniature orchids. Thankfully we can share our babies with the rest of the orchid world via our website and educate people interested in growing miniature and small orchids through my speech engagements across the USA. Number of my articles about miniature orchids were published in orchid magazines across the globe as well.

Doing what you love is the most rewarding thing in life!

Upcoming Elections for 2026

We will be holding our elections in November for the 2026 year. If you are interested at all in being on the OSCG Board, or possibly becoming an officer, please let Laura or Melana know. We welcome "new blood" and it's a great way to help our society.



The slate of officers and board members will be printed in the October newsletter, with voting to take place at the November meeting.



Hospitality Corner

We'd like to thank everyone who brought food last month for our August dinner table. This month is the start of football season so we are celebrating Football! Melana will be serving a Cowboy Casserole for the entrée, one of her favorite tailgating dishes! Bring your favorite football season side, if you have one! Or anything else you'd like to bring.

We can use sides, desserts, salads, etc. As usual, the drinks will be supplied by the society.

Don't forget to sign-in and get your food ticket from Ariel or Martin. Also, let them know if you can help out with Hospitality!



Other Area Meetings:

AOS Judging at Fairchild:
Saturday, September 20

Coalition for Orchid Species: Monday, September 15

Pan Am Orchid Society: Tuesday, September 16

SFOS Meeting: Wednesday, September 17

Eastern Airlines Orchid Society: Friday, September 19

East Everglades Meeting: Tuesday, September 23



Upcoming Events:

Mounts Botanical Garden Plant-A-Palooza, Sat & Sun,
Sept 20-21, West Palm Beach

Tampa Orchid Club Show, Oct 4-5, Tampa

Redland Orchid Festival, Oct 17-19, Fruit and Spice Park

A Tropical Plant Fair, Nov. 8-9, Wilton Manors

Ft. Pierce Orchid Society Show, Dec. 13-14, Ft. Pierce

Think big thoughts,

but relish small pleasures.

---H. Jackson Brown Jr.

Remember: Meeting Etiquette!

1. Turn off cell phones while in meeting. And don't talk during speakers.
2. Don't fill your plate like there's no tomorrow - everyone would like something to eat. You can always have seconds after everyone is served.
3. When you've placed your bid at the silent auction table, put the pencil down and walk away for awhile. No hovering! Everyone gets a chance to bid!
4. If there is Beginner's Class going on, please keep your voice down.

Excerpts from Dr. Martin Motes'

September in Your Orchid Collection

September looms as the only truly dismal month in South Florida. Even without the prospect of the unspeakable 'H' word, September disheartens since it is easily the dampest, dulllest month in the year. Although more inches of rain fall in June, more hours of rain occur in the often slow, seemingly endless drizzles of September. Frequently a day or two can pass without so much as a solid hour of truly bright sunshine to lift our spirits and dry out our plants. Days are growing much shorter also, with long nights when our plants are wet from the frequent rains. Coming at the end of the rainy season when disease pressure has been building, September presents the maximum opportunity for fungal and bacterial diseases to take hold of our orchids. Hopefully careful watering practices and the judicious use of fungicides (as recommended last month) will have diminished the potential for disease in our collections. But even in the best managed collection, September calls for extra vigilance. Keep a close eye out for problems and remove immediately any plant that shows the first sign of fungus to a dry location to prevent the disease being spread by splashing rain drops. Good hygiene is particularly important this month. Clean up growing areas and remove any dead leaves, twigs or other organic debris from the plants and the ground. In September numerous diseases that linger in decaying plant material find the ideal conditions that allow them to jump to the living tissue of our prize orchids. Such problems can develop more quickly in September than in any other month. September is a month to stay home and be there for your orchids. Look at every plant, every day.

September, above all, is the month that the old Florida growers' adage that "One needs a cat to grow good orchids," holds true. By leaving enough space between plants on a shade house bench for a cat to walk around without knocking them down, one provides the good air circulation which is absolutely essential in periods of protracted wet weather. Well spaced plants are much less likely to encounter disease problems this month. Remember that your plants will have grown considerably over the summer and that the space they occupied comfortably in the Spring has now been filled by their own growth as well as their neighbors. Space them out. Now is perhaps the time to decide to hang some of the larger ones where they will dry much more quickly. The small cute ones left behind on the bench will be very appreciative of the extra air and light.

Another excellent way to increase air circulation and enhance rapid drying is by trimming excess (particularly vertical) branches from all trees which support orchids or are near to orchid growing areas. By increasing the light and air flow one will also garner the benefit of reducing the possibility that such trees will be knocked down in a severe storm. Trees trimmed to permit proper air circulation and light for orchids were frequently the only ones which survived upright after Andrew. As there is rarely time to do such pruning when storm warnings are actually posted and creating extra debris is not then wise, now is the time to protect both your orchids and your trees. Days are shortening quickly now and more hours of rain and overcast skies mean that your orchids will benefit from all the additional light that they can get. Beginning the process of "hardening off" our plants by allowing more light to reach them will give them a leg up on the coming cool weather as well.

As orchids grown outside are so frequently wet in September, it is often difficult to apply fertilizer or fungicides to the plants because they are already damp. Catch 22! — the plants need extra protection because they are wet and because they are wet one can't apply chemicals to protect them. In these circumstances, many growers find Quaternary ammonium compounds useful. Sold as Physan, Consan, Greenshield or Triathalon these disinfectants dissolve totally in water and can be applied to wet plants. Strengths vary so follow the la-

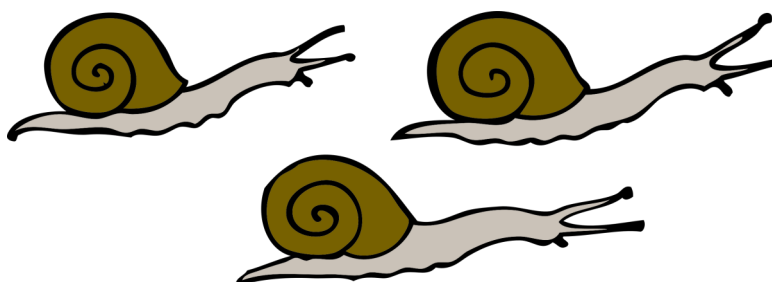
bel. Although Federal regulations say they should not, many growers substitute the cheap and readily available pool algicide which contain the same active ingredient. Home Depot sells a brand called "Pool Time" which could be purchased legally to disinfect walks and pathways at the rate of 1 to 2 tsps. per gallon and would certainly do no harm at that rate, if it came into contact with the orchids no more frequently than every 7-10 days.

This month when those brief periods of dry weather permit growers to think of applying other pesticides, they are tempted to think of giving their starving charges fertilizer as well. This is generally not a good idea with any fertilizer containing phosphorous (the second in the numerical series of three numbers). Phosphorus changes the PH of water and tends to interact with many other chemicals reducing their effectiveness. In September we need as much fire power from our chemical arsenal as we can get. A much better strategy in general to add some nutrients employs potassium nitrate (KNO₃) 13-0-43 at a rate of 1 tbs per gallon of water. One should ask for the type usually referred to as "spray grade". In general sympodial orchids are reaching the end of their growth cycle as September progresses so a reduction in nitrogen from the potassium nitrate substitution or a missed fertilizer application usually does little harm to orchids grown outside in South Florida. Soft cane dendrobiums of the "Nobile" types will actually benefit from the reduction in feeding. It's time to wean these deciduous types before cutting them off entirely from the grub next month. Vandas and *Phalaenopsis* on the other hand can be fertilized as often as weather permits and will bloom all the stronger for this extra attention in the coming months.

Snails can also be a problem again in September. Even if you earlier used the "lightly, frequently" baiting suggested in July, snails can travel long distances on wet ground in the dull, dark weather of September. Chances are your neighbors have not been as good as you on snail control. So, once more with feeling: snail bait "lightly, frequently" to give a warm welcome to any recently arrived mollusks. With an eye to the heavens (or at least to the TV screen), removing any old boards, empty pots or other debris that might fly about in a storm will also render the humble snails homeless. An opportunity to re-double your virtue and save some precious moments in the face of the storm that we hope never comes!

Tasks for September

- Space plants to permit more air circulation.
- Trim trees to permit more light and lessen the wind load on them.
- Clean up growing area removing any dead leaves or other organic matter.
- Tidy up old pots or other objects on the ground.
- Apply snail bait; lightly, frequently.
- Spray quaternary ammonium chloride.



Upcoming Events



SAT, SEPT 16: 9 am – 4 pm

SUN, SEPT 17: 9 am – 4 pm

\$15 (adults); \$12 (seniors 65+, college students and military with ID); \$7 (ages 6-17);

Mounts Botanical Garden's Exotics & Orchids sale features the highest quality of well-known plant growers and orchid experts from across the State of Florida. Visitors have the opportunity to fully engage in the world of plants and learn new gardening techniques, discover what's trending in floral design, and enjoy Mounts Botanical's tranquil tropical oasis all at the same time.

50 sought-after top growers and vendors.

Shop a wide variety of rare, exotic, and hard-to-find orchids, plants, trees, herbs, ornamentals, succulents, cactus, bonsai, butterfly/native plants, shrubs, and fruit trees, as well as garden accessories, baskets, fine crafts, and more

Learn about South Florida's plant culture by speaking directly with growers.

Fun and informative presentations by speakers and authors who are experts in their respective fields.

Plus ~ additional horticultural 'must-haves' are also available in the Garden's Nursery.

More info/ticket sales: www.mounts.org/event/summer-2023-plant-a-palooza-exotics-orchid-sale/

12th Annual TROPICAL PLANT FAIR

Saturday, November 8 | 9AM-5PM

Sunday, November 9 | 9AM-3PM

Richardson Historic Park and Nature
Preserve

1937 Wilton Drive, Wilton Manors, FL
33305





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REDLAND
INTERNATIONAL
ORCHID FESTIVAL**

**3 DAYS
OF PEACE
& ORCHIDS**

OCTOBER 17, 18, 19 2025

Same amazing venue
with cooler weather this fall!

www.redlandorchidfestival.com

THE FRUIT & SPICE PARK
REDLAND, FLORIDA

Wanted - A Few Good People to Help the Society!

It takes a lot of people working together to have a successful orchid society, as well as each meeting or event. We are always asking for help during specific events, and our turnout for those is great. But we need more help during the meeting.

One is helping with Hospitality. We have 2 wonderful people, Ariel and Martin, managing it now. But they can always use help.

Another is helping with Membership. Checking members in, making sure everyone gets their tickets, selling shirts, all of these are tasks that need to be done, and we need your help.

Additionally, we need someone to take photos at each meeting and send them to Melana for input into the newsletter for all of us to enjoy. You don't have to be a professional photographer, just take photos with your camera and send them. This job should be easy, peasy, and yet no one has come through to do it on a regular basis. Please, think about helping out with this very easy task. Everyone can help with this.

Please think about helping our society with one of these tasks! Get in touch with Laura or Melana if interested!



Join us on Facebook and Instagram!

Many of you may not know that we have a presence on social media! Yes, we have both a Facebook account and an Instagram account. Linda Matanis is our administrator for both sites and makes sure it doesn't get filled with ads or scammers. (Thank you, Linda!) All we want is wonderful photos and questions about your orchids!



Our **Facebook** site is Orchid Society of Coral Gables. There is another one out there, Orc Society of Coral Gables, but that is our old one. **Please use Orchid Society of Coral Gables Official Group.** And our **Instagram** page is **OSCG.group**. Let's fill these pages up with photos of your beautiful orchids!!



Instagram

No Beginners Class this month

Due to Jim still being in California taking care of his mom, and because of us having our meeting in a smaller location, we will not be having a Beginner's Class this month.

But we will have one next month, for sure! Jim should be back, and if he is not, Melana will be teaching it!

We know how much everyone loves the Beginner's Classes, and it pains us not to have it, but the circumstances this month are unavoidable. Never fear, it will be back next month!

Don't forget to sign up for our November meeting Thanksgiving Dinner. The society will be supplying the turkey and you will be bringing the sides! Sign up sheets will be at the Membership Desk.

