



Manitoba Orchid Society

For the Love of Orchids Newsletter

Next Meeting: 21 June 2009
Salle Académique, Rm. 1531
St-Boniface College,
196 De La Cathedrale Av.

Novice Programme

To be announced

Starts at 1:00PM

Regular Programme

Bulbophyllums with Bill Thoms

Starts at 2:00PM

Bring Plants for Show & Tell

At the time the newsletter went to press, it was uncertain if our guest speaker would be bringing plants for sale, thus assume there will be no selling of plants by members at the June meeting until/unless informed otherwise.




Goodies will be provided by Rob Parsons, Darlene Moar, Ilsa Chaytor & Sheila Pilgrim

Website: <http://www.manitobaorchidsociety.ca>

Executive email: president@manitobaorchidsociety.ca

Newsletter email: newsletter@manitobaorchidsociety.ca

Submission deadline 20 August 2009 for September 2009 Issue

<p>Elections</p>	<p>Our June meeting is election month. I know our Past President, Joyce Jaworski, and her crew have been hard at work looking for members to fill positions. If you have any interest in helping to keep our society functioning smoothly, I urge you to say yes if Joyce approaches you for taking on a position. Only those who have impressed the committee are likely to be approached so consider it a compliment to be asked. If you are new to the society and have some ideas on the direction you'd like it to take, we want to hear from you! Call or e-mail Joyce at 253-4160 or joycejaworski@shaw.ca.</p>
	<p>June 21st: A presentation on Bulbophylums by Bill Thoms.</p> <p>September 20th: A presentation by Jason Fischer of Orchids Limited, tentatively dealing with Phrags. Jason will be bringing plants for sale, and we will be able to preorder.</p> <p>October 18th: Annual Auction</p>
<p>Hearts & Flowers</p>	<p>If you hear of any good/bad news regarding members or their families, please call Morganne Jerome and let her know.</p>
	<p>To Arturo Alejandro, Ilsa Chaytor, Denise Fortier, Lorne Heshka, Joyce Jaworski, Ben Landry, Kyle Lucyk, Ed Maza, Jim Roy & Garnet Ward for bringing flowering plants to the May Show & Tell.</p>
	<p>The Executive encourages all members to provide feedback, comments, suggestions by filling out a comment sheet available from the Secretary at all General Meetings.</p> <p>All signed comment sheets should be returned to any member of the Executive. They will be reviewed at the next Executive Meeting and you will be informed of follow-up action taken.</p>

2007/2008 Executive

Elected

President Dave Moran
 Past President Joyce Jaworski
 1st V.P. Kyle Lucyk
 2nd V.P./Show Chair Lorne Heshka
 Treasurer Garnet Ward
 Secretary Morganne Jerome

Appointed

Membership Gary Jaworski
 Social Eva Slavicek
 Public Relations
 Special Orders Jim Roy
 AOS/COC Rep Kevin Duerksen
 Library Lilianne Foster
 Newsletter Robert Parsons
 Webmaster Robert Kato

ASPIRIN AND GROWING ORCHIDS

Newsletter excerpts No. 201 –F - G

by Dot Henley

Besides the fun, the good thing about teaching biology for years was learning more.

When I taught, I started the school year with a lab where students diluted aspirin (325 mg adult dose) in water and then poured the solution on radishes, oats or other quick-growing vegetables. The lab never failed, The strong (1 part aspirin to 1,000 parts water) stunted the seedlings; the medium (1/10,000 dilution) groups grew remarkably better than the water control group; and the weak (1/100,000 dilution) grew no better than the water control group.

Students learned that aspirin contains salicin (C₁₃H₁₁O₇), which is found in the bark of willow trees. Native Americans chewed on willow twist to relieve headaches, and later botanists found that duckweed and other aquatic plants that grew in willow-edged streams grew better and matured faster due to the salicin. Turn salicin into salicylic acid and voila! Aspirin is made. Recent literature indicates that aspirin is also an effective agent in treating some human fungal infections.

About a year ago, armed with all this information. I began treating our orchid collection to a weekly dose of aspirin. I found that I could approximately duplicate the good 1/10,000 dilution by adding three quarters of one aspirin (325 milligrams) to a gallon (4 liters) of water. We have about 2,000 orchids and I used 15 aspirins in a 20-gallon hose-end sprayer. In the growing season, I added 6 tablespoons of fertilizer and a squirt of Whisk or Dawn. In winter, I used 3 tablespoons of fertilizer. (Forgive the teacher repetition, but one whole aspirin per gallon of water will stunt growth and you may not want to use this system if you have acid water. Our water has a normal pH of 9.0 and the aspirin lower the pH to 8.6. Of course, the orchids receive rainwater or tap water as needed during the week.

To make 12 gallons of fertilizer solution, combine 9 aspirin with 12 gallons of water; for 4 gallons, add three aspirin to 4 gallons of water; and for only one gallon dilute one aspirin in a cup of water, discard 1/4 cup of this, and then add enough water to make one gallon.

Our plants have more blooms, bigger growths and fewer fungal problems since aspirin became part of our culture. The only changes in culture have been the addition of aspirin once a week. Maybe it is the lower pH, or perhaps the magic that things our blood and stops our aches and pains can also help us grow better orchids.

The other thing I learned that I have used for several years came from a science project done by one of my students. It was not applied to orchids, but to six or so varieties of garden plants where the student tried to show that the highest metabolic rate occurred at 11 am by the sun and that fertilizer and weed killer were best applied at that time. Even half-strength worked as well as full-strength. Fewer chemicals can't be all bad.

ed. note:- I have read in very old gardening books that if you want to make a cutting of a difficult shrub you put it in water with some lengths of willow twig as it will make roots grow faster on the chosen cutting. It is interesting to find out that aspirin originated with willow twigs.

Taken from the January 2009 issue of the Newsletter of the Orchid Society of Nova Scotia and originally published in Orchids - The magazine of the AOS, Oct. 2001

Keeping Windowsill Cattleyas Healthy

Ned Mattinen

Although I greatly admire the *Cypripedium*, *Phalaenopsis*, *Cymbidium*, *Odontos* and many other orchids. . . the *Cattleya* will always rank top on my list as I find it the easiest orchid to grow, the hardiest, longest-lived and one of the most fascinating that I have had in my windowsill collection. How many other orchids can be obtained in as many different colors as the *Cattleya* (hybrids, especially), and the many fragrant *Cattleyas* also! They are definitely of very easy culture for home windowsills, but I will mention, for the amateur grower especially, how to avoid a few pitfalls while growing these exotic orchids in the home.

Seedlings. . . Mature Plants and Sunlight

Fresh air and sunshine are needed for *Cattleya* plants, but young plants in 3" and smaller pots should never be in full sunlight, as they will weaken badly (especially in the summer months). Keep small pot seedlings between larger pots where the sun isn't quite so intense (young plants should never be in the very front of the window). When the plants have reached 4-inch pot size, move them gradually into more sunlight. There are times when a young plant or mature plant will show shriveling foliage. If all the foliage is shriveled on the plant, correct the cause and move the plant a bit farther away from strong sunlight. (Over-watering. . . stagnant potting media. . . too much sunlight (if the entire group of leaves are yellow and shriveling) are some of the causes.

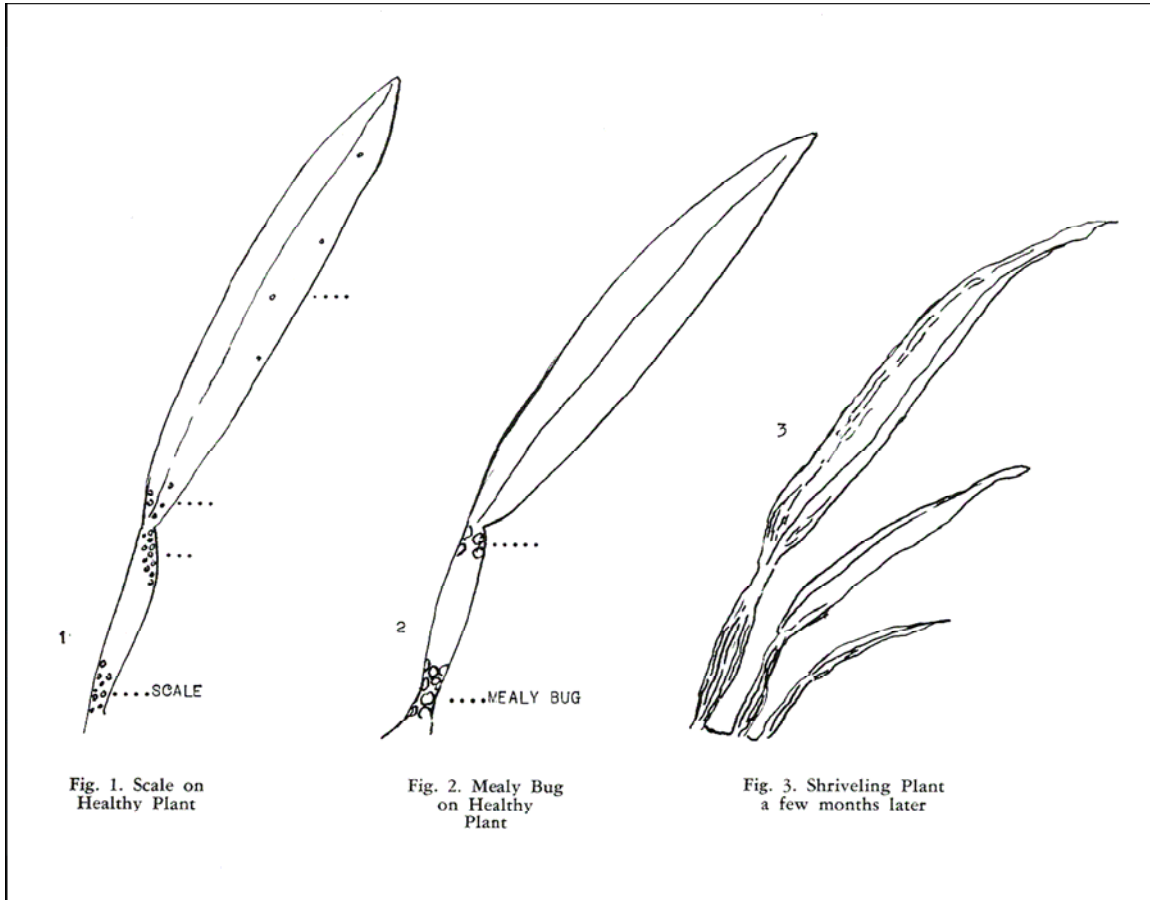
Potting Media

Stagnant or decomposing potting media is very detrimental to *Cattleya* orchids. . . affecting flower quality, size and production of blooms, besides weakening the plant. Very little root growth is noted during decomposing or stagnant conditions in the potting media. Some redwood bark in the pots may appear very dry and hard in appearance, with an "off" coloring to the bark chips as though a dirty grayish-brown color. When the bark has this appearance, do not depend on a stagnant odor to be prominent, as it will not always be prevalent when the topmost bark (surface) is drier than the bark underneath. Dig down into the bark a few inches deep and you may then note a stagnant odor and find a few bark chips covered with stringy white patches of fungi. It is time to repot . . . and fast (that is, if there are no buds or flowers on the plant. . . if so, wait until after they have flowered before repotting)!

If you are a user of redwood bark for potting media, I would highly recommend Dimmick's redwood bark as one of the best that I have ever used. No other redwood bark has surpassed this brand with me. I have noted after using this product over a year that every *Cattleya* orchid potted with Dimmick's redwood bark produced new growth quicker than any other bark I've used, and the plants established themselves without any setback. No millipede problems with this bark to this day. Looks as though I will leave my favorite sphagnum far behind! I use the medium size bark for pots from 4-inch to 10-inch size. At only \$6.95 a bushel size bag, shipping charges paid, you can't go wrong!

Rest Period for Cattleyas

After your Cattleyas have finished blooming, give them a rest period for about a month with a little less sunlight, and stretch the watering period to a couple of days longer. (If you have been watering the plants every seven days, do it every nine days instead. . . for a 30-31 day period.) After my plants have finished blooming, I move them back a bit from the window and put other plants (which are due for buds or bloom) in their place. Keep rotating plants all year around.



The approximate size of scale is shown. Also illustrated is the coming "coup de grace" from both pests

Root System of Cattleyas

Most healthy Cattleyas have at least several roots creeping out of their pots. Dead roots appear tannish or brown and are very dry to the touch, whereas live roots are white with green tips and quite brittle. The live aerial roots serve as an excellent watering gauge and will let you know just how much water you have given the plants. I have found that Forman & Krumpke's method of "reading the roots" is quite accurate, with perfection being when the green of the root tips measure about 1/4 inch. . . and, over one inch indicating that the plants need more watering. 1/16 of an inch of green tip or less indicates a bit too much watering.

Less Fertilizing For Windowsill Cattleyas

For home windowsill growers of Cattleya, I believe that fertilizing of Cattleyas more than once a month in winter months can hold back blooming of the plants. Fertilizing more than twice a month during spring and summer months may also hold back blooms and only produce a lot of new growth.

Cattleya and other epiphytic orchids grow on trees and cliffs in their natural environment and do not receive as much nutrients as the terrestrial orchids. . . so why kill them by over feeding! I very seldom fertilize my Cattleyas, and only in the late spring and summer once a month on 1/2 strength solutions of fertilizer, *if I do* (after watering the plants). I find the best time to do this is when foliage is more on the chartreuse side than green, in mid-summer to retard chlorosis. I will say that very young plants from 1" to 3" pots can use fertilizing more than mature plants, as they need it in order to mature. (Greenhouse grown Cattleyas of all sizes are fertilized more often than home windowsill grown plants, as the latter plants are grown under more light and other conditions, which will allow for more fertilizing.)

Scale and Mealy Bug

I recall about six years ago visiting a woman who grew orchids and other plants together in a large sun porch. (The invitation to her home was mainly for me to diagnose her ailing and shriveling Cattleya orchids.) One cannot imagine what a jolt I received to observe 35 orchid plants covered with mealy bug! Every Cattleya was loaded with mealy bugs. . . and a sorry sight it was! A number of the plants were too far gone to be remedied or saved. The cottony patches of bugs seemed especially fond of the basal area of the pseudobulb, but also were noted near the leaf-bulb conjunction area. If these pests should be found on any of your Cattleyas get rid of them as quickly as possible. . . by handpicking with tweezers. (Destroy picked up mealy bug by flame.) Spray the plants with a good pesticide after picking most off the plants. Another very injurious pest to Cattleya orchids is scale, like mealy bug, scale can shrivel both foliage and pseudobulbs in no time at all. About 12 years ago, one of my Cattleyas had a bad case of scale from an unknown source, which I handpicked off the plant and sprayed the plant afterwards with Acme indoor plant spray. That was the first and last case (I hope) of scale. A tiny tannish "scab" is what scale exactly resembles. New orchid growers should watch for both of these pests and get rid of them pronto! Poinsettia, gardenia, African violets and several other plants have been known carriers of injurious pests. Perhaps that is why I haven't had these pests on my Cattleyas only once. . . twelve years ago, when I threw out all other house plants!

Misting Your Cattleyas

If you do not have a humidifying system in your home, try misting your Cattleyas a couple times a day. They'll love it! Especially if the humidity content in the room is below 50%. Here in the north, humidity is quite low outdoors during cold months and very low

indoors, if one does not have a humidifier. I depend mostly on my humidity trays underneath the plants, but when I find the time I fill my one-quart size "science trigger spray gun" with water and empty about 3/4 of it out over the plants in mist form. (I do not spray over plants with open flowers or buds which are just opening. . . but I do include buds which have no open seams.) Plants which have just arrived from the nurseries, via mail especially, are almost immediately misted at least three times a day since they have been accustomed to higher humidity than what my apartment can furnish. Buds can shrivel on these plants quickly if the home humidity is much under 50% at that time. (Do not aim your spray gun directly at the plants, but more towards the ceiling so that a fine soft mist will slowly settle on the plants. You do not have to "drench" the plants, , , but just enough moisture like a thin, visible film over the foliage and buds.) Do not mist the budded plants if the sun is shining on them.

Cattleyas Outdoors in Northern United States

Recently, I have begun using my outdoor windowsill ledges for cooler night temperature growing to force buds more quickly. It works nicely! While indoor night temperatures remain between 72-76 degrees F. for the month of August (which has been Duluth's hottest season in years), I find our recent outdoor temperatures at night between 50-58 degrees F. and the plants now setting buds after being set on the outside window ledges. The plants are returned indoors for the daytime. Plants which had lost their "zip" from the heat of the day showed a marked improvement from the cool night treatment!

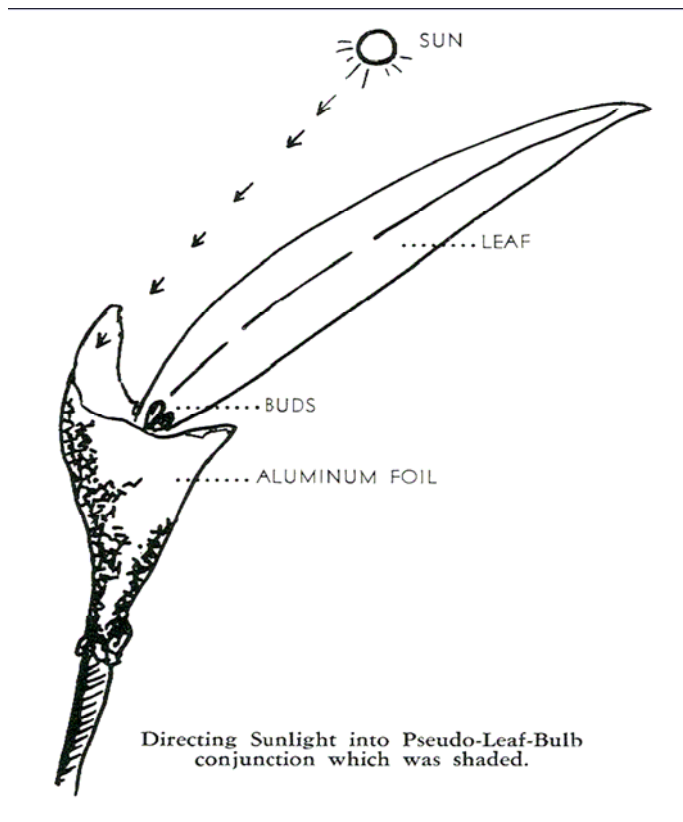
If you plan on leaving your Cattleyas outdoors day and night in summer months, be sure to spray the plants with insecticide once a week without fail. I spray the entire area thoroughly before setting the plants in position. Do not set plants directly on the ground, but on boxes or ledges, which are several feet off the ground to avoid damage by insects and animals. Cattleya orchids outdoors will dry out quicker than indoors and may have to be watered twice a week or more depending on the pot size.

In the northern states, Cattleyas may have to be brought back into the home before the latter part of September to avoid freezing. Sunburn to Cattleyas can be very severe if there is no overhead protection or shading of the plants. (Do not select a windy spot for your plants or the blooms may not be on for long!)

Shaded Bud Problem

There are times when the home windowsill grower of Cattleyas will note that due to the position of his plant(s), which cannot be turned to face the sunlight (when in bud), he will have to resort to other methods in order to have the sunlight reach the new starting buds in the leaf-bulb conjunction.

When plants are too large or foliage extends in the way of other plants, some budded plants cannot be turned to have the sunlight enter the leaf-bulb conjunction. I then use my aluminum foil technique or method to introduce more light into the leaf-bulb conjunction as illustrated.



I use about a 3-inch square of aluminum foil, , keeping the bright side of the foil facing the bud and the upper part of the foil about 2 ½ inches from the conjunction. This method is especially helpful to northern windowsill growers whose orchids do not receive quite the amount of sunlight as other portions of the United States do. I have no idea how the aluminum foil method would affect Cattleyas grown in states with a bit more sunlight, that is, if burning of the buds can occur or not, , . but if you are from such an area and wish to try this method it may be best to use a 4-inch strip of aluminum foil and keep the topmost part of it about 3-3 ½ inches from the conjunction to avoid too strong sunlight. (When buds are high enough on the plant for the sunlight to reach them I then remove the foil.) Crinkling the aluminum foil should help prevent burning somewhat and distribute the light more evenly. As yet, I haven't had any burning problems of the buds here.

Originally printed in Orchid Digest, December, 1970 and reprinted in the October 2007 issue of the Central Vancouver Island Orchid Society Newsletter. Reproduced here with a few editorial changes.

Minutes - Manitoba Orchid Society General Meeting May 24, 2009

Recorder: Morganne Jerome

1. Call to order:

Dave Moran called the meeting to order at 2:03 pm

Dave welcomed all members to the May meeting.

One new member was welcomed, as well as 2 guests from central BC.

Approved Executive Meeting minutes and suggestion slips are available from the Secretary (Morganne Jerome) at all General Meetings (please include your name on the suggestion slip for follow-up purposes, and submit it to any Executive member).

Volunteers to bring refreshments to the June Meeting: Rob Parsons, Darlene Moar, Ilsa Chaytor, Sheila Pilgrim.

Program

Kyle Lucyk introduced Joe Kunish from Bloomfield Orchids in Rochester New York, who gave a presentation on the subject of 'Growing Under Lights', followed by a slide show of interesting plants currently in bloom.

At the conclusion, Dave thanked Joe for his very interesting presentation.

2. Minutes of the last meeting:

Motion to accept minutes, as published, by Morganne Jerome, seconded by Robert Kato, carried.

3. Financial report: Garnet Ward

Garnet presented the financial report (copies available).

Motion to accept the financial report, as presented, by Garnet Ward, seconded by Sandy Carroll, carried.

4. Programs: Kyle Lucyk

June: Bill Thoms from Florida will be speaking on the subject of Bulbophyllums. Kyle will keep members updated through the newsletter on whether Bill will be bringing plants to sell.

Sept: Jason Fisher from Orchids Ltd will be speaking (subject TBA). Jason will be bringing plants to sell.

Oct: Annual auction

November: No speaker is currently booked. If you have any suggestions on a topic for presentation, or would like to give a presentation, please contact Kyle.

5. Show Chairperson Report: Lorne Heshka

The 2010 Show will be an AOS judged show. Judges will have to be booked as soon as possible.

6. AOS/COC Representative: Kevin Duerksen

The COC newsletter is available online.

All Societies are now eligible to receive the COC Medal even if they do not hold a show.

COC Show October 16-18 in Langley.

7. Hospitality: Eva Slavicek

Nothing to report.

8. Library: Lilianne Foster

Email Lilianne with any book requests (library list can be found on the MOS website), and they will be available for pick up at the next General Meeting. Please have a look for any overdue books and return them to Lilianne at any General Meeting.

9. Public Relations:

This position is vacant.

10. Membership: Gary Jaworski

138 members signed up so far.

11. Newsletter: Robert Parsons

Nothing to report.

12. Website: Robert Kato

Nothing to report.

13. Special Orders: Jim Roy

Cloud Orchids order: all plants have been distributed.

The MOS did not receive a discount, but 6 extra plants were included in the order and have been donated as raffle prizes.

14. Unfinished Business:

Volunteers are still urgently needed to fill the Public Relations position on the Executive.

A volunteer for bringing the PA equipment to each General Meeting is also still urgently required (the person bringing the equipment to each General Meeting will not have to set it up).

Please contact Dave if you are willing and able to help.

15. New Business:

Elections will be held for the following positions at the June General meeting: President, 1st Vice-President, 2nd Vice President (Show Chair), Treasurer and Recording Secretary. The Nominating Committee will put forward some nominees, but all members are welcome to participate in nominations (nominees must be present at the meeting, or supply a letter stating they agree to be nominated).

16. Raffle draw:

Winners were Garnet Ward (x2), Elaine Moran, Caroline Lenover, Denise Fortier, Lorne Heshka, Kyle Lucyk, Neil Dunham, Lilianne Foster.

17. Show & Tell:

Guest speaker Joe Kunish described the plants, assisted by Dave Moran and Kyle Lucyk.

18. Adjournment:

Motion for adjournment - Pat Turenne

Note: Minutes of the Executive Meetings are available to be picked up at General Meetings on request from the Secretary.