



Greater Whorled  
Pogonia

*The Newsletter of the*  
**AMHERST ORCHID SOCIETY**

*An affiliate of the American Orchid Society*

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### **Christmas Party**

**Roger West**

They were late in arriving, but eventually a nice crowd was present for the annual Christmas party. Hardly any business was discussed as the food aromas beckoned. The varieties were delightful, and main dishes dominated the food table. Dr. Steve Steiner was not present for the show table so those little bloomers didn't get their just due. Instead, the large cattleyas received the most attention. The back table near the library had on it objects that will be discussed next month: the dreaded clip boards containing those sign-up sheets, so come prepared. Late January is the Cape show, so if you have plants for that show you can bring them in and they can go home with me and then the following week the plants will go to the Cape.

### **Horticultural Oil**

As I was presenting the show table, I noticed some scale on a cattleya plant. In the tradition of the late Bill Hutchinson, I had to point the scale out and explained my cure. If you go through my cattleya collection you will find some white scale, not many but they are present. There are two types of scale that we see around here. Hard scale is brown and looks like a beaver hut. Present in large colonies, they form a sticky mess. Rarely seen in my cattleyas, they love the soft-leaved oncidium intergenerics. Brown scale can colonize anywhere on the leaf but are real nasty down low where the leaves coalesce with its pseudobulb. Soft scale is white. It forms as a single white spot on the leaf that soon forms a light halo around it. The scale is sucking the juices out of the leaf, hence the halo appearance. Soft scale can coalesce and this is usually on the underside leaf or under the papery pseudobulb sheath. It also gets down onto the rhizome. You will notice the last three positions are out of sight as you take a quick glance through your orchid collection. Whereas hard (brown) scale is very sticky when colonized, soft (white) scale is, well, soft, fluffy and flaky. Under these soft masses your orchid plant will be yellow and desiccated. The scale are gorging on the orchid fluids. If this situation persists, you will lose the plant. Mealybugs can appear like soft scale but there are differences. Mealybugs, although white, are a little bigger and have a tail. In my collection, mealybugs are rarely seen on the cattleyas. They have come in when I purchase a box of oncidium types with the single mealybug hiding in an expanding bud. A toothpick quickly removes this bug. Keep observing these plants as more will hatch along the series of buds. When I used to grow many phals, mealybugs were the main insect problem.

There are many treatments for scale but diligent observation of your plants is the best. A few spots on a leaf are quickly wiped away with your finger. But if you will see one there will be others. I have used alcohol/water solutions in the past, Neem oil has been tried (smells bad). Scrubbing with an old toothbrush dipped in water works

well especially around the rhizomes and the old corrugated pseudobulbs. For the past ten years I have been using Horticultural or fine oil. This is a fine oil as compared to dormant oil which is used on fruit trees in the early spring. An all seasons (horticultural and dormant combo) is also ok to use. I pour in a tablespoon of oil into a 32 ounce spray bottle. This bottle is always found in the greenhouse along with an old toothbrush. I see scale, I spray then brush then spray again. Can't emphasize how important that brush is around those hard to get at rhizomes. Be careful with the brush around the new emerging bud at the base of last year's pseudobulb. As a precaution, don't used oils on a warm day or leaf damage can occur. I have yet to see any leaf damage on the cattleyas. Spray the whole plant (not the blooms) while constantly shaking the bottle to keep the oil in suspension. Hard scale is treated the same way along with the brush to get at those hard out of the way places. Oil works by smothering the insects. Mites can also be smothered with oil usage. You can't see the mites but they cause an anemic appearance to the leaves. Spray the whole plant.

## **Leaf Oddities**

**Steve Reardon**

During the plant table presentation at our October meeting, I was asked about one of my Paphiopedilums and why the leaves were misshaped with ridges. I did not have an answer for that question so I had to do some research to find out why. Was I doing something wrong in the culture? Was it too cold in my sunspace, was it too shady, or any other myriad of things to go wrong? Visiting all kinds of websites afforded no answer. The answer that kept popping up was relating to crinkled leaves on other species due to a loss of roots or a lack of moisture. Finally I found the answer, which I hope will explain why some Paphiopedilums have ridges on their leaves. Hybridizers are in search of bigger and better flowers. These flowers catch the customers' eye. Yet, in this quest for improvement comes a few oddities. The breeding and genetic manipulation the hybridizer wanted to accomplish can increase the amount of chromosomes (ploidy). Most orchids are normally diploids, or having two sets of chromosomes. But, with breeding and the genetic manipulation the chromosomes can be increased to triploids (three sets) or tetraploids (four sets) or even more. The results of this breeding are improved orchids with better color and maybe even bigger blooms. With the increased chromosomes some oddities may occur, the most common being increased tissue in the flower, or longitudinal ridges in the leaves. It may appear strange to see leaves like this, but you should be able to grow and bloom the orchid.

## **My Sunspace**

**Steve Reardon**

My growing area originally was designed as a sunspace to supplement heat to our home during the spring and fall months. My family and I added the sunspace onto our home in 1985 and completed in 1986. Being a typical energy collector structure, it faces south. The angle of the glass area was also figured for optimum exposure – solar-wise, for heat. The structure is 35 feet long, 16 feet high at the peak and 10 feet wide. One Father's Day about 20 years ago, my oldest daughter gave me a Phalaenopsis. Wow, what a beauty. Not knowing anything about orchids, I placed it in the sunspace to live. Well, the cold nights of our dreary winters killed the orchid. Of course I had to go out and buy another



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one and try that. No way would they live in that area. We added shelves to our windows in the house to augment the growing Phal collection and even at that I managed to lose most of them. Then I was introduced to Cattleyas. Holy cow! What can I say about a Cattleya that hasn't been said before. I was able to grow them in the sunspace, but winter once again proved to be too cold in the growing area. The addition of a propane stove worked great when temperatures outside hovered in the 20's. Any colder and the stove could not keep up. We then installed a pellet stove and this seems to work much better and costs less to run than the propane. We also built a misting system used mainly in summer to lower the temperature and raise humidity. Over the years one learns what they can and cannot grow. Phalaenopsis, Cattleya and Vanda struggle along with most other warmer growing lovers so I cannot grow them successfully. I have learned that researching where the orchid is from in nature, along with the climate and elevation where they grow and if they have a rest period or not has changed the way I grow and what I grow. Watering is accomplished by hand and fertilizing, during the growing season, is also done by hand using kelp emulsion or weak fertilizer. The addition of calcium chips and magnesium (Epsom Salts) is also applied to most of the Paphiopedilums. Insect control is generally one plant at a time – inspect and remedy. Normally I use insecticidal soap alternated with Neem oil. The Neem does not seem to work well alone and I find alternating from one to the other surprises any bugs before they are able to adapt to the treatment (keeps them confused). The sunspace has dipped to 34 for a week at a time in winter when the stove failed, and does not get over 80 in summer. I try to keep the sunspace heated in winter to 48-50 degrees at night and 60-65 during the daytime (with some help from the sun). Shading, moisture and ventilation in the summer keep the temperature from going over 80 degrees. Restrepia, Schoenorchis, Polybulbon (Dinema), a few Dendrobium, a few Cattleyas along with a lot of Paphiopedilum are growing well presently. Some cactus and other succulents also share the space with wintering bulbs from the garden. This adapted growing space gives my orchids the warmth of the day and the cool of the night which they prefer. Growing orchids continues to amaze me and the more I learn about them and their habitat, the better I am able to grow and flower them.



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**Show Table December 2016****Maryanne Laukaitis**

Paphiopedilum insigne  
 Cattleya Mini Purple 'Blue Hawaii'  
 Jumellea comorensis  
 Rhynchovola Jimminey Cricket  
 Brassocattleya Memoria Bernice Foster

**Marge Tanguay**

Bulbophyllum arfakinaum var. alba  
 Rhyncholaeliocattleya Yen Corona 'Green Genie'  
 Paphiopedilum spicerianum  
 Cattleya Alice B du Pont 'Waldor'  
 Rhyncholaeliocattleya George King Southern Cross

**Donna Petitt**

Phalaenopsis hieroglyphica  
 Paphiopedilum Magical Contrasts

**Roger West**

Rhyncholaeliocattleya Hawaiian Avalanche 'Aiden'  
 Cattleya C.G. Roebling 'Sentinel'  
 Rhyncholaeliocattleya Goldenzelle 'Lemon Chiffon'  
 Rhyncholaeliocattleya Moon Miss 'Lunar Dawn'  
 Rhyncholaeliocattleya Ports of Fortune 'Dragon King'  
 Cattleya labiata 'Sherwood Forest'  
 Bratonia Charles M. Fitch  
 Rhycattleanthe Roy's Magic  
 Bratonia Shelob 'Okika'  
 Brassocattleya Binosa 'Kirk'

**Marc Gray**

Leptotes bicolor  
 Phalaenopsis Jiaho's Pink Girl 'A06158'  
 Phalaenopsis Sogo Vivien 'Marginata'  
 Trichopilla suavis  
 Phalaenopsis deliciosa  
 Dendrochillum uncatum  
 Dendrochillum magnum  
 Trichotisia pulvinata

**Steve Reardon**

Paphiopedilum Petula's Pulsar  
 Paphiopedilum Petula's Presence  
 Paphiopedilum Macbeth's Amazement

**Liz Marinelli**

Tubecentron Hsinying Girl  
 Paphiopedilum spicerianum  
 Lycaste Memoria Olga Anton

**Maggie Sleeper**

Oncidium Twinkle  
 Paphiopedilum Hybrid

**Upcoming Events**

**Next meeting is January 15, 2017 at 2pm at the Munson Memorial Library. Members with last names starting with A, B, C, and D, please bring a dish to share!**

**Cape and Islands Orchid Society will have their show on January 28th and 29th, from 9am-5pm.**

**Announcing the dates for the Amherst Orchid Society Orchid Show! It will be held at the Smith Vocational High School:**

**Saturday, February 25, 2017 9:00 am to 5:00 pm and**

**Sunday February 26, 2017 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.**