



Greater Whorled Pogonia
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The Newsletter of the
AMHERST ORCHID SOCIETY

An Affiliate of the American Orchid Society

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President's Message

Joe Maciaszek

Hello everyone-

It's been a long time since we have had a face to face meeting for the Amherst Orchid Society. I hope everyone is doing well and their orchids are thriving. I hope the town of Amherst will allow us back into the meeting area in the library sometime soon, so we can have a face to face (even with masks) society meeting.

Well, it most likely looks like we won't have a 2021 Orchid Society show as many other societies have canceled due to the uncertain future with the COVID situation. I hope that will mean we will have a bigger crowd at our 2022 show because everyone will be in orchid deprivation and will want to come to see the show.

After a long time of no judging events, the Northeast Judging center has begun in-person judging recently and I had the pleasure to bring two plants to those judging events. One was from Steve Steiner this past weekend a *Maxillaria triloris* (now *longipetala*) a well-grown plant that brought much active discussion but ultimately no award. The other plant was from Liz Marinelli, back in August- *Phragmipedium Young Lindley*. This plant was exceptionally grown and well flowered and many of the judges fell in love with the plant. The plant received not only an 81 point CCM cultural merit but also an 83 point AM flower quality award. I was very lucky and happily surprised when Liz gave me a division of this plant now known as *Phragmipedium Young Lindley 'Dave Marinelli'*. I will take good care of this plant and hope to be able to bring it to meetings and shows.

We are truly lucky to have so many accomplished growers in Amherst society. I hope everyone in our group knows that they can contact me if they have any plant(s) that they want to be brought to judging and know I will take it there for them.

I do miss seeing everyone at our in our society at our monthly meeting and hope next year will bring about some normalcy to our lives and to the Amherst orchid society.

Well until we meet again good growing to all of you, and I expect to see a full show table at our first meeting post-COVID.

September Meeting

Join us for a virtual meeting on Zoom September 13, 3:00 pm

<https://stcc-edu.zoom.us/j/95268111473?pwd=V2RXdTQ1cjcvanBzMUdHejhzanNIUT09>

Crested Fringed Orchid Not seen in Massachusetts for 19 Years Discovered in Bristol County

A state botanist recently came across an endangered plant that has not been seen in Massachusetts in almost 20 years, a plant so rare that the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife will not say precisely where it is growing. Though botanists have searched for it regularly since it disappeared from the Massachusetts landscape in 2001, none had found a crested fringed orchid (*Platanthera cristata*) until Dr. Robert Wernerehl from MassWildlife's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program discovered eight plants of "the diminutive orchid with striking orange blooms" on public land in Bristol County.

MassWildlife said the recently-discovered group of eight crested fringed orchids is the northernmost known population of the plant in the United States and the only population known in New England. The next closest crested fringed orchids are located on Long Island. MassWildlife said the Bristol County plants remain at risk of habitat changes, invasive species, "deer browse," and climate change.



Crested Fringed Orchid

Indoor Vanda Culture For In-Home Growing *(Courtesy of Michael Wiley for R & R Orchids)*

Choice A – Bare root.

Enjoy the beauty of the blooms with the beauty of the roots. A little more challenging.

Lighting

Absolutely brightest southern facing window is preferred. Anything less should be supplemented with artificial lights.

Watering

Twice a day is required for bare root growing year round.

Do not soak a plant in a bucket. You need to drench them with running water.

A hose attachment that hooks to a sink is useful. This will be a messy process.

Water only till root run off occurs. When they stop dripping, drench them again and again till hydrated.

The Velamen (the sponge part of the roots) can only absorb so much, so fast.

If the bottom leaves of the plant are droopy or wrinkled, this is a telltale sign of dehydration.

It's a late sign so hydrate, hydrate more.

If you only have a couple of plants, get an extra tension rod and let the shower do the job for you.

Make sure your plants dry out before nightfall.

Feeding

Once a week.

A pump sprayer is your best friend for this job.

Most VandaManiacs are using the Dyna-Gro Products (Grow and Bloom) 3 weeks of Grow, 1 week of Bloom and repeat. 1tsp per gallon.

Humidity

By far the hardest and most challenging part.

Bare root growing must have high humidity.

If your home has forced hot air heating, this is the most challenging type of heat. Water based base boards or radiators help considerably. Even if you have a whole home humidification system, this will not be enough moisture in the air. Whole home systems on average only bring levels up to about 40%. Warm or Cool mist humidifiers are fine. If your heater is running, your humidifier must be running 24 hours a day on the highest setting. The higher the humidity levels, the better you will do and the easier job you will have with maintaining hydration. These humidity levels will add to the threat of mold and mildew.

Clean frequently.....this is not an option. I seal off wall areas with the window film that attaches with double stick tape and shrinks with a hairdryer before my plants come inside for the winter. Much easier to keep a wall clean if it does not get wet in the first place.

Temperature

Nighttime indoor house temps are fine.

If you want to trick your Vandas into more active winter growth, bring your air temp up during the day into the 80s. Not required, but growth will slow significantly at cooler temps.

Air movement

Vandas are like most orchids, air plants. As important as moisture is, air is equally important. Vandas have to dry out completely at night and between watering. Your plants will rot if they do not dry out.

An oscillating fan helps duplicate the outdoor air movement. It also helps keep mold and mildew down by drying out the growing area.

You also are pumping humidity into the air. The fan helps distribute this moisture. Fans should run 24/7.

Turn off to water and feed though.

Pest control

Use Talstar or Bayer Advanced 3 in 1 insect, disease and mite control for larger collections or a large bug outbreaks.

Air movement is crucial to helping to avoid bugs, especially spider mites. Keep the leaves clean.

Rubbing alcohol works great for those times when you have just a bug here or there.

If you have a plant that you think is sick or if it has a large pest outbreak; separate it from the rest of your collection until you are 100% sure it is healthy and/or pest free.

When in doubt, throw it out. Better to lose a \$40 plant in lieu of an investment of hundreds of dollars

Choice B - potted

A true V Maniac may tell you not to pot a Vanda. While this holds true in Florida and other areas where outdoor culture year round is possible, our dry indoor culture begs to differ.

You will sacrifice the enjoyment of the roots for a lot easier culture.

Potting

The potting should be done with clay orchid pots, the ones with the slits and holes in them.

Preferably, this task should be done in the spring or early summer when the roots are actively growing so they can get settled in the pot before their migration into the home for the winter.

First, water the plant extremely well. You want the roots to be flexible. The wetter they are, the better. Drenching them with Physan 20 makes them more supple and slippery and would also be helpful in case of cracking or mini cracking of a root.

Remove the wire hanger but leave the plant in the little plastic basket.

During this process, remind yourself that Vandas do not like their roots damaged and any trauma at all to the root, is a potential death sentence to the plant.

Do not rush this process. Slowly and without damaging the roots, wiggle the plant into the pot, coiling the roots as you go.

Media

For media, you will need to get charcoal. The chunkier you can find, the better you will do.

Slowly fill the pot with the charcoal, being careful not to damage the roots. You will almost want to place the charcoal in piece by piece so you can wiggle it down between the roots. DO NOT PACK THE MEDIA. Again, no damage to the roots and Vandas must get air. Fill the pot completely with media.

Staking

A smaller Vanda is fine on its own in a decent sized pot. As they get larger, the pot will get top heavy. Throw in a large spike, or better yet a double, and the pot will be even more susceptible to a tumble.

Medium to large, but not huge plants will benefit from an adjustable Cattleya ring and a couple of loose zip ties.

The media is not going to support a stake and a heavy plant. Charcoal is simply too brittle. You will need to rely on the pot for support.

As the plant grows, placing a pot in a pot will keep the pot from tumbling, but you will still have to secure the plant.

There are single rod stakes that clip to a pot. You can use a few of these and form a teepee shape (tomatoes cage like) to help support the plant.

You can also use clay pot hangers to help secure the plant.

Bottom line here, if the plant wiggles, you have to secure it. Get creative.

With time, your plant will get huge. It will get to a point where indoor culture simply is not possible. When you get to this point, sell that plant to pay for the greenhouse to house the remainder of your collection!

Culture

Culture will be almost identical as above, except for watering. You can now water once every 2 or 3 days. If it is cold and the home heating system is really running a lot, 2 days.

If it is really humid out, but not cold and the heater is not drying the house out as quickly, you will probably be able to stretch it out to 3 days.

Remember, the drying of the roots is just as important as the soaking. These plants need to breathe.

Take the plant to the sink and still drench them. Don't forget to wet down the leaves.

Vandas do take in moisture from the leaves as well as the roots.

Placing them in the shower and turning it on is also an option.

If your shower has a slow drain though and water collects, do not use this method.

Shower pans are full of stuff that you do not want in your plants.

Shelving

Since the plant is now in a pot, you can put the plant on a shelf.

The portable shelves that enclose with a plastic zippered enclosure will help with humidity and you will get a nice temperature rise during the day as well.

Don't forget the fan though!!!

Placing the shelving unit in a baby pool helps to protect the floor and keeps drips contained. At a minimum, put the legs of the shelving unit in plastic cups and off of your flooring. Rust stains are hard to clean.

Cleaning

The potted method will be easier as you will not be spraying feet of roots with water twice a day. You have a high moisture content in the air. Mildew sets in quick. Vinegar works great at killing mold and mildew and it does not have the smell of bleach. Clean frequently. The cleaner the area, the less chance you will have for inviting bugs and disease into the collection.

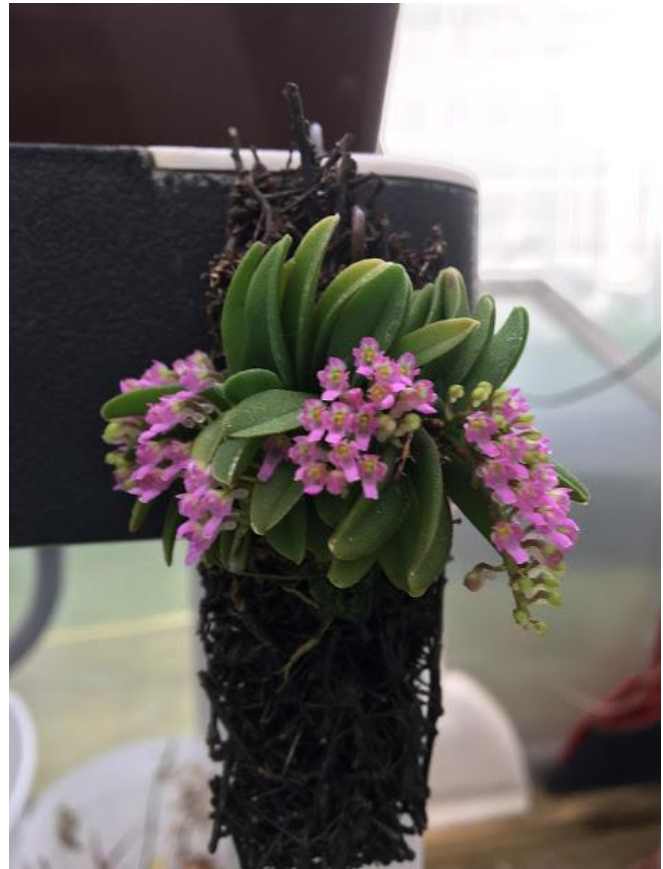
Whichever method you choose, when the weather outside warms up and nighttime temperatures remain above 50 degrees, get your plants outside. They will thrive in the natural breezes, warmth, and humidity. Provide them with a constant mixture of 50% shade to 50% sunshine. The longer the duration of sun you can provide them, the happier they will be.



Maxillaria triloris (longipetala)
Steve Steiner



Phragmipedium Young Lindley 'Dave Marinelli'



Schoenorchis fragrans