



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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March Meeting

Roger West

There was a small gathering for this meeting at the Pulaski club. A few things were brought up by Marc who ran the meeting. The school scholarships were sent out by Maryanne and they would be awarded in the name of Herb Fishman in gratitude for his orchid generosity. I thought this was a nice gesture by our board of directors. A discussion followed on where to purchase potting medium seeing there are few shows and not many commercial orchid growers left in New England. I used to buy in bulk (2 cu. Ft. bags) from Tropical Plant Growers in Apopka, Fla. but not anymore because of my orchid reduction and the transportation costs more than the material. I have tried the box stores orchid medium and it's not good stuff. Someone mentioned Amazon Prime because of the free shipping. My wife Beth gets a great deal of things from Amazon so I checked out their orchid material. The site posted all kinds of orchid media but in small quantities and much of it was pine bark which I don't think is very long lasting. I found one 8 qt. size of fir bark listed as Miracle-Gro 8 qt. Orchid potting mix fir bark in a coarse blend. I ordered three bags (as much as I could order) and it arrived looking good. So time will tell if this bark will last 2 years inside a pot.

Steve Reardon and Bill Benner were at the meeting, first time seeing them since the pandemic. Steve gave a report on the club's finances. There were also two new members who showed up, welcome. The display table was nice. Bill brought in a large pink cymbidium specimen along with a very large coelogyne outgrowing its basket. Betsy Higgins brought in a bunch of plants including a real clean paph maudii cross with two coloratum-type blooms. The most intriguing orchid was brought in by Zoe. I don't remember its name but it was tiny and growing on a large postage stamp size chunk of something. It had many hair-like flowering stems with many purple blooms upon them. Well it looked like they were purple but I would have needed an electron microscope to make out their detail. Where was Steve Steiner so that he could have given this little beauty its just due? It was quite remarkable. Future date of Herb's final orchid sale will be April or May, stay tuned.

Show Table March 2022**Bill Benner**

Brassavola Little Stars
 Cymbidium Last Supper
 Coelogyne cristata
 Coelogyne mossiae

Marc Gray

Blc Don O'Neil
 Lycaste macrobulbon

Betsy Higgins

Dendrobium delicatum X Ira Butler 'Trident's
 Snow Shavers
 Dendrobium flexuosom
 Dendrobium kingianum
 Dendrobium Microchip
 Lc Carolyn Reid 'Glowing Embers'
 Paph Puma Moon
 Phal Nobby's Shadowing 'Burma Jade'
 Zootrophion atropurpureum

Zoe Loughman

Lepanthopsis astrophora
 Phalaenopsis stuartiana
 Phalaenopsis NO ID

Steve Reardon

Dinema polybulbon

Roger West

Lc Drumbeat 'Heritage'
 Rlc Fritz Nickolaus 'Spring Dance'

Kasia Wynn

Clowesia Rebecca Northern 'Grapefruit
 Pink' CCM/AOS

Karen Steward

Aerangis hildebrandtii 'Gold Country'
 Oncidium croesus



Lepanthopsis astrophora
 Zoe Loughman

April Meeting of the Amherst Orchid Society

Location: The Pulaski Club, 79 Maple Street, Easthampton

Date: Sunday, April 10, 2022

Time: 2:00 p.m

The newsletter needs you.....

to send us some material!

Here are some ideas for articles:

- A visit you have made to a public garden or orchid nursery
- A book review
- An orchid you grow that has a story behind it
- Any growing tips you have discovered

Articles don't need to be lengthy or elaborate, a photo with a sentence or two would be welcome. The newsletter will be better with more voices chiming in! Send to:

ewmarinelli@comcast.net

A visit to Betsy Higgins' custom growing spaces

Liz Marinelli

A few weeks ago, Dave and I visited Betsy Higgins' house to check out her indoor growing areas. I had seen Betsy's beautifully grown plants at meetings and on her Facebook page, and I was interested to see how she got such great results. Like many plant enthusiasts, she makes use of natural indoor light on windowsills and puts plants outdoors in the summer. What sets her growing areas apart are the innovative light setups in her basement. Early in our visit, Betsy made sure to give her husband Doug full credit for the design and construction of the apparatus, as well as being supportive of her plant shopping.



The windowsills in the living areas of Betsy's house are alive with plants taking advantage of the natural sunlight. Orchids share space with African violets, succulents, Bromeliads, Tillandsias and begonias, Betsy's other favorite plant categories. Many of the plants are in bloom, moved upstairs from the artificial light areas to be enjoyed while they are at their best.



We headed down to the basement, and were very impressed to see the additional growing areas. There are two benches lit from overhead with either LED grow lights or T5 high output fluorescents. The plants were all very healthy and thriving in these surroundings.



In addition to the bench areas in the basement, Betsy has a type of plant accommodation that was new to me- a cool tent. She unzipped the flap to reveal Cymbidiums and other cool growers enjoying their home with a fan and grow light.



One challenge with growing a large number of plants indoors is water- a source and a method for watering, and a means to catch and drain the excess. Betsy has an ingenious rainwater system designed and built by Doug, her husband/enabler. Rainwater is funneled to barrels outdoors then transferred through tubing to a re-purposed water heater in the basement. The water then comes to room temperature so it is not a shock to the plants. The water heater has a transparent tube on the outside so that the level of water can be easily seen. She draws

water from the tank and uses a pump sprayer to water the plants, with the excess water accumulating in trays under the pots. The trays are fitted with stopcocks so the runoff water can be drained.



In the summer, many of Betsy's orchids and other plants go outside to enjoy the sunshine and fresh air. Her back deck is attractive to wildlife (I recently saw photos on her Facebook page of a good size bear) so she has several custom-built screen cages to protect the plants yet allow in the sun and rain. Again, Doug's handiwork is evident. One cage is even on a track so it can be easily moved to take advantage of the sunlight.



Betsy has a very lucky collection of orchids- they are living their best life with abundant rain water, good light year-round, and a summer vacation. Add in the excellent care and attention that Betsy provides and the result is healthy growth and beautiful blooms. If you have any questions about Betsy's growing apparatus, you may email her at higgins.elizabetha@gmail.com.

President's Message

Joe Maciaszek

Hi everyone-

It was an exciting month! Sorry I missed the last meeting- Marge and I went on a vacation, and the New Hampshire Orchid Society was able to pull off a show. This was the first show since the Massachusetts society show in October, and it looked like another big success for NHOS. There were many great displays at the show including a single plant display of Cym. Pauwelsii 'Kessander'. The plant was a 7-foot plant with 43 inflorescences and over 1100 flowers. Unfortunately, many flowers and inflorescences got damaged in transport and this prevented the AOS judging team from upgrading the prior award of a 96-point CCM.

The Amherst society so had a great display at the show. There were plants from 5 society members. Roger, Liz/Dave, Connie, Maryanne, and I brought an abundance of plants, 50 to 60 I would guess. When I got there, we had only one round table so went on a mission to get more space. Start off getting a second round table and need more so I found a quarter round table to fill in the front. Still need more space to put the shutter display that Dave brought so I found another small round table for that. I think our display was one of the better displays there, we had good quality plants and a good variety.





Aerangis hildebrandtii 'Gold Country'
Karen Steward



Dendrobium kingianum
Betsy Higgins



Amherst Orchid Society display at the New Hampshire show



Coelogyne cristata
Bill Benner



Oncidium No ID
Betsy Higgins



Cymbidium Last Supper
Bill Benner



Oncidium croesus
Karen Steward



Cymbidium Pauwelsii 'Kessander'
At the New Hampshire show



Epidendrum polybulbon- Steve Reardon