

THE SHEATH

P.O. Box 6894, San Mateo, CA 94403-6894 • penorchidsoc.org

OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING

Date: October 25, 2019
Time: Doors open at 7:00PM
No skill session this month.
Place: San Mateo Garden Center
605 Parkside Way, San Mateo, CA

Take the Alameda de las Pulgas exit off Hwy 92, turn South. The Garden Center is located between 26th and 28th Avenues.

Speaker: Ken Jacobsen

Topic: The Oncidium Crispum Group

Ken was first introduced to orchids by his uncle in the 1960's and has been growing orchids for well over 40 years. His collection includes Cymbidiums, Oncidiums, Odontoglossums, Lycastes, Cattleyas, Laelias, Masdevallias and several other genera. Ken and his wife, Amy, enjoy travelling to all areas of the world where orchids are grown, visiting the local growers, and seeing various species in the wild. Together, Amy and Ken have over 7000 orchids.

Ken is a judge in the AOS judging program and the CSA judging program. Amy is a judge in the AOS judging program.



MEMBER NEWS

It's time for the Peninsula Orchid Society to select members of the POS Board for 2020 ... a process we go through every year. Several of our members have privately suggested a willingness to serve on the board but have been reluctant to step forward. But whether you are a new POS member, or long-time member please consider volunteering on the Board to represent the interests of our members.

Most Board memberships do not require an excessive time commitment or prior knowledge, just a willingness to volunteer to keep our society going. And it's critical to the continuation of our society that we have volunteers who participate as Board members.

I'm eager to discuss the pros and cons of Board membership with any member, new or long-time, by phone or email. Please consider volunteering to join the POS Board ... and give me a call or email.

Eric
POS President
650-793-1227

October Birthdays

Carol Armendariz, James Baxter, Betty Chinn, Mary Kunitake, Kathryn Parker, George Spangler, Olga Stakhovsky, Abraham Chih Wang, Helena Wee, Robert Anderson Jr., Allan Wofchuck, and Barry Zimmerman.

Orchiata bark

This year we can again order Orchiata bark by combining the order with Gold Coast Cymbidium Growers (courtesy of Carol Armendariz). The bark comes in 40 liter bags (approx. 10 gal) and can be ordered in 5 sizes: Precision (1/8-1/4 inch), Classic (1/4-3/8), Power (3/8-1/2), Power+ (1/2-3/4) and Large. Last year we paid \$26/bag, a substantial discount from retail prices. My understanding is that the order will be placed in January 2020, for delivery in February-March. I will be circulating a list at the meetings, or you can contact me with your requirements. I will consolidate the list and forward it to Carol. The orders need to be picked up at Carol's house in Monte Sereno, or we can talk about combining pickups as the time comes. If there are any changes in dates, I will communicate with the people ordering. -Jaunsz

MEETING REFRESHMENTS AND CLEAN UP

Bring Refreshments When it is Your Turn or any other time too:

If you read your newsletter carefully you will note that members are requested to bring refreshments based on the first letter of your last name. And of course, refreshments from members not on that month's list are always welcome too. Everyone who brings refreshments should be sure to ask for their free raffle ticket. If you bring two refreshments then ask for two.

Clean up:

One of the duties of the members whose last names are chosen for a particular meeting is to be responsible for the cleanup. No one has volunteered to be the Refreshment Chair, so everyone needs pitch in to set things out and clean them up. But it is always the same three or four board members putting things away in the two storage cupboards at the end of the meeting. One of those people is usually me. I am not happy about this. I can only believe that people are just not reading the newsletter carefully and comprehending what is needed. I know all of you and you are nice people!

Leave Nothing Behind:

Lastly, and this is part of cleanup, if you bring refreshments and there are some of yours left, it is your responsibility to take the left overs home or throw them in the trash. We don't have storage space for large containers of wrapped treats from Costco. Please take the remainder home with you and bring it to the next meeting if you like. None of the people doing clean up wants to take cookies, etc. home after the meeting. So please, be responsible for your treats at the end of the meeting or, if you leave early, take them with you then.

Thank you to those that brought refreshments to the August Meeting:

Mike Drilling, Helena Wee, Chen-Hao Hsu, Janet Hawley, Lisa Pace, Leo Kusber, Annie Green.

And Thank You to all who brought refreshments for the auction!

Refreshment Calendar

Jan: A - B

Feb: C

Mar: D - G

Apr: H - J

May: K

Jun: L

Jul: M - Q

Aug: P - Q

Sep: R

Oct: S - V

Nov: W - Z

Dec Potluck: Everyone




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Find us on Facebook and Instagram:

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UPCOMING ORCHID EVENTS

October 18 - 20, 2019

The Huntington International Orchid Show

The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA.

AOS Judging October 17, 2019 at 1:00 PM

website: Huntington.org

October 25-27, 2019

Gold Country Orchids & Paph Paradise Open House

390 Big Ben Road, Lincoln, CA

9:00am-5:00pm Oct 25 & 26

10:00am-4:00pm Oct 27

November 2-3, 2019

Santa Barbara Orchid Estate Open house

1250 Orchid Drive, Santa Barbara, CA

February 21 - 23, 2020

Pacific Orchid Expo – “Orchids in Focus”

County Fair Building ‘Hall of Flowers’, 9th Ave. at Lincoln Way, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco

10:00am-5:00pm

March 13-15, 2020

Santa Barbara Orchid Show “A world of adventure”

Earl Warren Showgrounds, Santa Barbara, CA

9:00am-5:00pm

Notes for fertilizer skill session by Chaunie Langland

On July 27, 2019, Roy Takunaga gave a presentation that included this information and much more. I have also included information from an article written by Sue Bottom and printed by the St. Augustine Orchid Society. Plus information from an article on How Stuff Works.

Orchids growing on trees may look like they are receiving no fertilizer, but the tree excretes excess nutrients through its bark and the orchids have access to this.

When you are fertilizing, the amount you use is cumulative. You may dilute your fertilizer more than your neighbor, but if you fertilize more often, you may actually give your orchids more fertilizer than your neighbor. This can result in over fertilization. Roy recommends 1 teaspoon per gallon every three weeks. If you fertilize every week, then use $\frac{1}{3}$ teaspoon per gallon.

Tom Perlite once recommended to me that I bring the TDS up to 350ppm with fertilizer for every watering. That is what he does (or did at that time). He is a top grower with many AOS cultural and quality awards. However, he grows in a lower light and lower temperature coastal environment in a large greenhouse and waters a lot less often than I do in my sunny warm greenhouse. Remember, when considering adopting someone else's culture methods, to consider the whole picture and adapt your plan of action accordingly.

The macronutrients, nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) are required in the greatest amounts for plant growth. The percentage is normally listed in easy to find numbers on the fertilizer package. Jack's Classic Orchid at 7-5-6 contains 7% nitrogen, 5% phosphorus and 6% potassium.

Nitrogen

Nitrogen comes in three forms in fertilizer: Nitrate, Urea and Ammonium. You will find these itemized on the fertilizer container content list.

Ammonium is easily absorbed by orchids. It promotes vegetative growth, and discourages flowering. Ammonium causes the pH in the root zone to decrease (become more acidic) when it is absorbed by the roots.

Nitrate needs high amounts of light to be used by the plant (high being relative to the plant's light requirements), however nitrates promote flowering. Nitrate causes the pH in the root zone to go up (become more basic) when it is taken up by the roots.

Urea must be converted to ammonium before the orchid can use it. It is generally recommended that you avoid fertilizers with this form of nitrogen as it is not immediately accessible. Urea causes the pH in the root zone to go up (become more basic) when it is converted to ammonium by microorganisms.

Ammoniacal: Urea and Ammonium may have their percentages combined under this designation.

Phosphorus

You can find many “flower booster” fertilizers with high phosphorus - that is the second number you see on a fertilizer. Studies done show 3% phosphorus is sufficient for phalaenopsis. There are no studies showing that your orchids benefit from a higher amount of phosphorus - that is all marketing.

Potassium

Potassium content is the third number listed on your fertilizer. Potassium is needed for overall growth and flower development and is essential to plant metabolism.

Secondary nutrients include sulfur, calcium and magnesium.

Calcium is needed at 8%. Calcium is fixed in plant cells and can not transfer to new growth. During growth periods you will want to be sure to provide sufficient calcium. Roy recommends adding dolomite to your media as well as using a fertilizer with calcium.

Micronutrients are needed in very small amounts: Boron, cobalt, copper, iron, manganese, molybdenum and zinc.

Your orchid CAN get micronutrients for new growth or flowers from older growth - hence your dying bottom leaf where the cells are breaking down to supply nutrients to new growth. Calcium can not transfer from older cells, but most other nutrients can. (Of course, your dying older leaf may also be due to dead roots or to plant habit.)

Roy recommends $\frac{1}{8}$ t per gallon of micronutrients for orchids. Ideally weekly for the three months prior to flowering. The micronutrients come with a recommended feeding rate of 1 t per gallon. This is a recommendation for plants growing in soil, not your orchids.

One of Roy's friends decided to follow the 1 t per gallon and had good results. Another decided to follow that and experienced a decline in the health of his orchids.

Roy recommends Millers Microplex or J.R. Peters STEM at $\frac{1}{8}$ t per gallon. Or use Peter's Cal-Mag at 1 t. per gallon every three weeks.

Millers Microplex

Mg 5.43%

B 0.50%

Co 0.05%

Cu 1.5%

Fe 4.0%

Mn 4.0%

Mo 0.10%

Zn 1.5%

J.R. Peters STEM

Sulphur 13%
Iron 7.5%
Manganese 8%
Boron 1.75%
Copper 2.35%
Molybdenum .040%
Zinc 4.5%

Peters Cal-Mag Special is a complete fertilizer that has the macro, a secondary and most of the micro nutrients.

N 15% Nitrate - 11.8%, Ammonium 1.1%, Urea 2.1%
P 5%
K 15%
Mg 2.0%
Ca 5%
Fe .08%
Mn .04%
B .02%
Cu .019%
Mo .0075%
B .02%

These are sold in large amounts, however you can find people repackaging and reselling these in smaller amounts. Try eBay.

In order for your plants to be able to absorb nutrients, the pH of the media needs to measure between 5 and 6.5. How to measure this would be another skill session.