



Victoria Orchid Society

August 2023 Newsletter

Next Monthly Meetings:

September 20th (Wed)

October 18th (Wed)

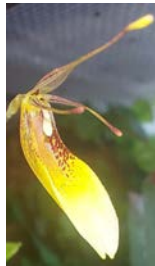
Doors open at 6:30 pm

Eastern Star Hall, 3291 Harriet Rd

Upcoming Events

September AOS Judging

The next judging date for the AOS is Saturday, September 9th at 11:30, taking place at Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary, 3873 Swan Lake Road, Victoria, BC V8X 3W1.



Victoria Cactus & Succulent Society Fall Show & Sale

The show and sale will take place Friday, September 8th (11 - 5 pm) and Saturday, September 9th (10 - 4 pm) at 510 Mt View Ave., Colwood (Church of the Advent).

Free Admission



President's Message

I'm sitting looking at the waves and beach in Tofino under an overcast sky. This is typical West Coast weather and a reprieve from the heat we have experienced in the last several weeks. I won't be attending the meeting of the COC today because we (Rick and I) are here for a precious few days. I am asking a member of the Club to consider taking on the Canadian Orchid Congress contact for the Club. This is an excellent way to Volunteer for the Club and it is not that demanding a task, one AGM a year and if the COC has something else to contribute the member will be the contact. Please let me know if you are interested.



At this time of year, I'm interested in looking ahead to what to achieve in the upcoming year and I want to suggest some of the ideas we have discussed at the Executive meetings. One idea was a mentorship program which fits well with all the new members we have acquired over 2022-23 year. If any of you experienced growers would like to share your knowledge, please contact myself or another member of the Executive. The other idea was to interview experienced members and publish the interviews in the Newsletter, if you don't volunteer to be interviewed you might be approached during the year.

Reading the Club's Constitution is not what I would call gripping and exciting, but it is useful to understand the parameters in which we function, we even have a Code of Conduct! Let's remind ourselves of the Objectives of the Club.

- a) to promote interest in the cultivation of orchids.
- b) to further the improvement and preservation of all kinds of orchids and their habitat;
- c) to actively support the collection of information, research and distribution/dispersal of knowledge on all aspects of orchidology;
- d) to co-operate and /or affiliate with other orchid organisations.

Let's entertain how to refocus how the Club moves forward in these challenging times, we would love to see you at our Executive meetings going forward, so please reach out to any executive members for details.

Enjoy the rest of your summer and pick up a Yam magazine because Bryan and Pat and I are chatting about Orchids.

Leda Bower

Yam Magazine Article

An article titled “Smarty Plants: Why Orchid Lovers are Obsessed with these Exotic Blooms” was published in Yam Magazine, which can be viewed online, involving interviews with VicOS society members Leda Bower, Bryan Emery, and Patrick van Adrichem. Analyzed is the enamoration of orchids and why we just can’t get enough. Absolutely worth a read!



Obscure Orchid Spotlight: Porpax

Porpax is a genus of epiphytic orchid native to South and Southeast Asia. It possesses minuscule, flattened pseudobulbs covered in a net-veined sheath that grows pressed onto the trees on which they grow. Leaves are deciduous, emerging starting in spring and falling off in winter, and flowers emerge from the pseudobulbs before or after leaves fall off.



Porpax lanii (Jack Smart)



Porpax reticulata (Wikipedia Commons)

Plantaholics Sale Photos (June 3rd)





VicOS Display Table



Orchid Sale Tents

Orchid Companion Plants: *Nepenthes*



As an orchid society, I can imagine that many of us have some sort of specially set up space, with particular conditions suited for the group of orchids we like to grow. From greenhouses to terrariums, one needs to take into consideration aspects like humidity, temperature, light, and airflow. Well, unsurprisingly, the conditions that your orchids love will also be conditions that many other incredibly enjoyable plants will love as well. The purpose of this (and potentially future) write-up(s) is to highlight some of these other plants, which can be regarded as orchid companion plants, beginning with the tropical pitcher plant—genus *Nepenthes*.

Companion planting is the practice of growing different plants in close proximity, and can be for all kinds of reasons. Agriculturally, it is frequently carried out with numerous benefits, ranging from pest control, to pollination, to maximising space. One prevalent example is the companion planting of carrots and onions, of which the smell of the onion detracts the carrot root fly, and the smell of the carrot detracts the onion fly.

When it really comes down to it, all a companion plant needs to do is tolerate the conditions of the plant(s) it is being grown with, and hailing from the tropical climates of predominantly South and Southeast Asia, as well as Madagascar, The Seychelles, Australia, and New Caledonia, *Nepenthes* can grow excellently alongside your tropical-growing orchids.

As a very brief introduction, *Nepenthes* is a genus of carnivorous vining plant which produces modified leaves in the form of pitchers filled with a fluid containing digestive enzymes. Most often, the pitcher is specially designed to attract insects through the utilization of ultra-violet colouration (which insects can see) and the secretion of nectar, and possesses structures which can cause those insects to fall into the interior of the pitcher and be digested. This mechanism, as with all carnivorous plants, is used to harvest essential nutrients that are deficient in the substrates they grow in.

When it comes to care requirements, most plants will require high humidity (75%+, but trickier species may appreciate 85%+), bright light with minimal direct, unfiltered sun, and good airflow. Plants must be grown in a substrate that contains little nutrients, and watered with water which has very few dissolved solutes. For the substrate, generally, the one preferred by growers is an approximately 50/50 mixture of long-fibre sphagnum moss and a larger-sized perlite. In Victoria, we



are lucky in that our tap water is already extremely clean and contains very few dissolved solutes, so we can get away with tap water just fine. But in areas with harder water, one must use something like distilled water or collected rainwater.

Fertilizing Nepenthes the traditional way is not necessary and does require care. As they are adapted to gain nutrients through their pitchers, their roots are poorly equipped to absorb nutrients and can be damaged. Luckily, if grown somewhere that naturally has insect life around, then there is a good chance that the Nepenthes will get all the nutrients it needs from the prey it catches. But otherwise, supplementary food can be added to pitchers, such as dehydrated meal worms, or insect-based fish food. ¼ strength Maxsea can be used as a foliar or substrate fertilizer and even added (in moderation) to pitchers biweekly, but all synthetic fertilizers should be avoided.

Finally, temperature is an important factor that must be taken into consideration. Nepenthes can generally be classified as lowland, intermediate, and highland, with lowland plants wanting warmer daytime temperatures in the ~28-35°C range, highland plants wanting cooler daytime temperatures in the ~19-28°C range, and intermediate plants liking somewhere in the middle. Nighttime temperature drops are also paramount for Nepenthes, with most of the year having ~6-10°C drop at night. If you plan to grow with your orchids, be sure to choose plants which grow at similar temperatures. Also, it's worth mentioning that most hybrids will be easier to care for than pure species with a bit more condition tolerance. Lastly, keep in mind that almost all Nepenthes are vines and will eventually get very long, so plan space accordingly.

In Canada, I would argue the best place to purchase Nepenthes also happens to be only around an hour away from Victoria: BradsGreenhouse.com (online ordering only). For cooler growing Nepenthes, you could reach out to Bryan who often has some cuttings available.



Hope this has been a useful first discussion of a companion plant for your tropical orchids!

Jack

Summer Barbecue

Some pictures from the Summer barbecue at Cat's house celebrating the 50th anniversary of The Victoria Orchid Society, which had formed in February 1971



Poul Hansen, who was the 13th member to join VicOS, cutting the first slice of the cake. (Above Photos by Paul Paludet)





AOS Western Canada Judging Center—May Judging Results

Chiloschista parishii 'Monika Yvonne'

CCM/AOS 86pts (20237162)

AM/AOS 82pts (20237163)

Exhibitor: Eugene Banziger

At the AOS Western Canada Judging Center's monthly judging on May 13, 2023, the following AOS awards were granted:

Photographer: Alexey Tretyako



Phragmipedium Zapatilla de la Virgen 'Vivienne'

CCE/AOS 90pts (20237164)

AM/AOS 83pts (20237165)

Exhibitor: Eugene Banziger



Phragmipedium wallisii 'Trevor Michael'

AM/AOS 83pts (20237166)

Exhibitor: Eugene Banziger



Phragmipedium Ashley Wilkes 'Gordon Rowles Skipper'

HCC/AOS 78pts (20237167)

Exhibitor: Diana Rowles



Phragmipedium Senanus 'Konglin'

AM/AOS 80pts (20237168)

Exhibitor: Joe Chow



AOS Western Canada Judging Center - Foothills Orchid Society Show

AOS Show Trophy 'What We Do For Fun'

ST/AOS 81pts (20237169)

Exhibitor: Orchid Society of Alberta

At the AOS Western Canada Judging Center's Foothills Orchid Society Show judging on June 3, 2023, the following AOS awards were granted

Photographer: Doug Savage



Phragmipedium Diana Salazar 'Audrey II' (Phrag. klotzschianum x Phrag. caudatum)

AM/AOS 81pts (20237170)

Exhibitor: Dustin Miller



Cypripedium Emil 'Bright Eyes' (*Cyp. parviflorum* x *Cyp. calceolus*)

CCM/AOS 81pts (20237171)

HCC/AOS 78pts (20237172)

Exhibitor: Gay Graham



AOS Western Canada Judging Center—July Judging Results

Cymbidium lancifolium 'Rabbit Ears'

HCC/AOS 77pts (20237173)
Exhibitor: Daniel Kwok

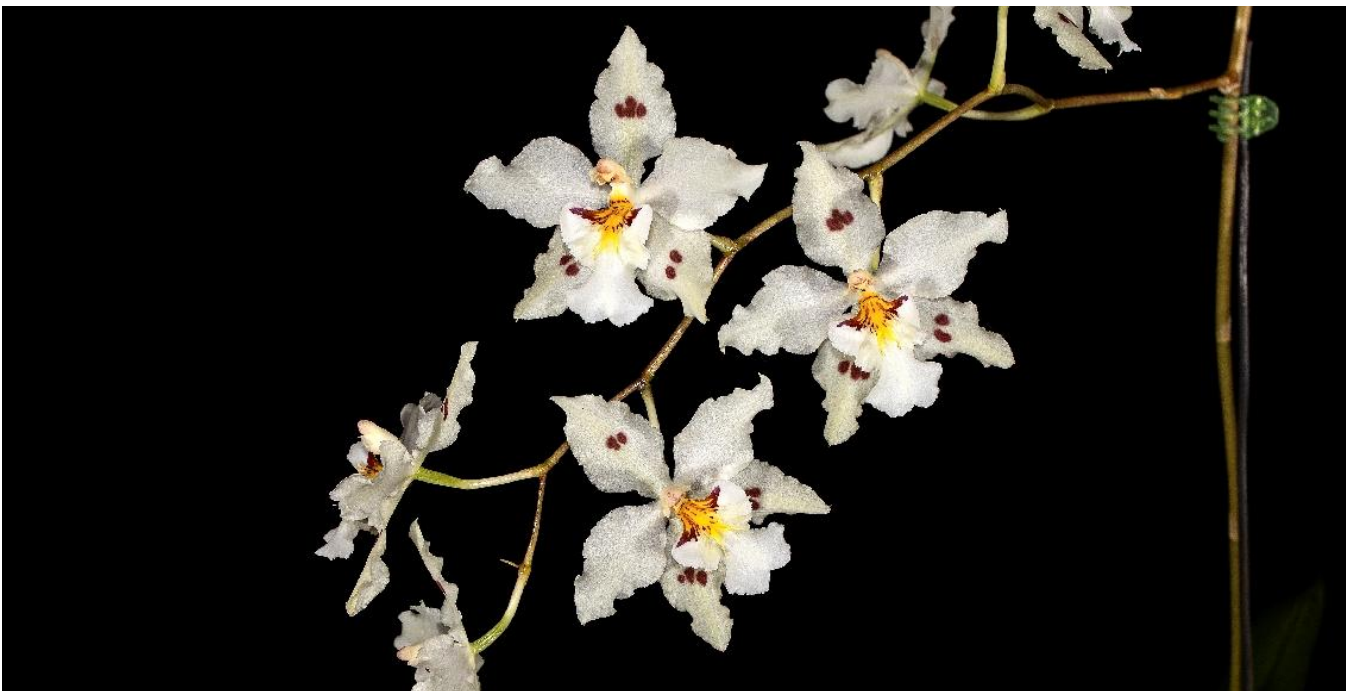
At the AOS Western Canada Judging Center's monthly judging on July 8, 2023, the following AOS awards were granted:

Photographer: Alexey Tretyako



Oncidium Tribbles 'White Cloud ENCF' (*Oncidium trilobum* x *Oncidium nobile*)

AM/AOS 80pts (20237174)
Exhibitor: Catherine Frutiger



Catasetum Maria Mercado 'Pacific Breeze' (Ctsm. John C. Burchett 'Ursa Major' FCC/AOS x
Ctsm. Dagny 'Fantastica')

AM/AOS 85pts (20237175)

Exhibitor: Paul Paludet

