



*The Cape and Islands Orchid Society*  
*Affiliated with the American Orchid Society & Orchid Digest Corp.*

April 2020 Newsletter

***Sunday April 19, 2020 – 12:30 p.m.***

***Meeting canceled due to Coronavirus***

**THE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING OF THE CAPE COD FAIRGROUNDS**  
1220 Nathan Ellis Hwy, (Rt. 151) East Falmouth MA 02536 (White fences on North side of Hwy.)

**Upcoming Meetings** – The CAIOS Board is considering options for an alternative means to connect with our membership during this time of social distancing. I will post any information on our website and Facebook, so please check for updates frequently. Our May meeting traditionally has been a Potting Workshop. If you send your potting/mounting questions to [webmaster@caios.org](mailto:webmaster@caios.org) or [OakH35@yahoo.com](mailto:OakH35@yahoo.com) no later than May 1st. I will include the questions and answers in the May newsletter.

Now is a good time to look over your plants and determine what potting/mounting or other orchid supplies you need. Kelley's Korner Orchid Supplies, [www.kkorchid.com/](http://www.kkorchid.com/) will still be offering members **10% discount** (use code **REPOT 2020**) for pre-order until May 8, 2020. However, shipping fees will apply.

Our website [www.caios.org](http://www.caios.org) has several articles posted regarding potting of orchids, the different media, types of pots, mounting material and more which you may find very useful.

**Thank you Bob Findlay for your informative presentation on Orchid Viruses at late month's meeting.**

The membership learned about orchid viruses and how to avoid transmission within an orchid collection. Bob also provided a demonstrated how to test your orchids for the two most common viruses. The meeting provided invaluable information for the membership on how to keep their orchids healthy when grooming and re-potting to minimize transferring a virus from one plant to another.

**April Meeting: Cancelled – Our April 19, 2020** since our normal meeting date is Easter this year. Our guest speaker would have been Carri Raven-Riemann from The orchidPhile. A list of plants she has for sale is posted on our website. I will also be updating her list of available plants as soon as she sends her newest listing so I encourage you to check our website periodically.

**February 2020** meeting recap as reported by Tom Gregg: The February CAIOS meeting featured Glen Decker and a talk about his orchid life and career including his "Hike from Hell" in Peru to see the famous red *Phragmipedium kovachii*. As he said "For me, it started in May 2003 when I was invited to go to Peru to see *Phrag. kovachii* in its habitat and endure a hike that Harold Koopowitz, PhD, editor of the "Orchid Digest and a good friend, referred to as the "hike from hell." It was a trip put together by a friend of ours, Isaías Rolando, MD, a well-known orchidist from Peru and, like me, an orchidaholic." Glen then went on as his guide said "Just 20 minutes more....X 10," for 4-5 hours of hot sweaty mountain travel. (line quote —GOOGLE - phrag kovachii glen decker hike from hell).

Glen has retired and George Crozer bought Glen's orchid business and is now established in New Hampshire, and still retains the name, Piping Rock Orchids.

**Member Virtual Show Table During Coronavirus** Members are encouraged to send pictures of any plant they wish to share with the membership; if you wish please add culture information; share what you are doing; have you supported our orchid vendors and added to your collection, send your photos. Send your contribution to [webmaster@caios.org](mailto:webmaster@caios.org) or [OakH35@yahoo.com](mailto:OakH35@yahoo.com). They will be posted in the newsletter and with your permission posted on our website and on Facebook.



## Member Virtual Show Table

### Den. Nano Chip (Micro Chip x aberans) by Nimtuk

So, what does an orchid junkie do when all the local orchid shows have been cancelled? Shop orchids online of course!

I binged a little with one of our local orchid vendors, orchidPhile. What a joy, opening that package on yet another overcast March day hiding out from Covid-19. Since I ordered orchids that were new to my growing experience, I spent some time online researching care.

One lovely bloomer is Den. Nano Chip (Micro Chip x aberans) A mini Dendrobium described everywhere as easy. Perfect! With compact evergreen canes which can sometimes appear peach in bright light. Canes will grow to about 6" and can produce multiple spikes. Spikes can reach about 5" with flowers lasting up to 4 months. Canes can also produce spikes twice a year. Is it a surprise I wanted to try this?

Now the tricky part.

Den. Nano Chip is best grown in bright indirect light. Apparently, this little guy does not like direct sun. An eastern exposure has been suggested, which is how I grow my windowsill Phals. (Medium light) Grown Intermediate to Warm. 65 - 80° (might be a challenge during the winter on the windowsill) perhaps under lights would be best.

Watering suggested as moist and let dry between waterings. (Generally every two weeks, weekly if your home is very dry) keep a little dryer while in bloom to prolong life of blooms and during the winter.

## Previous Show Table Plants



## Orchids Questions – Answers – Helpful Hints

Thank you for your e-mails with your questions. Several of the members have asked about fighting pests. Here is a portion of an article reprinted with permission from the JANUARY 2005 issue of *Orchids* -- The Bulletin of the American Orchid Society. Copyright American Orchid Society -- [www.aos.org](http://www.aos.org). The full article may be viewed on the CAIOS website [www.caios.org](http://www.caios.org).

### Fighting Pests:

**Hand Picking** The first line of defense, if a plant is not heavily affected by pests, is to pick bugs, slugs, and snails from the plant and squash them. Pests have yet to develop a resistance to this type of control.

**Water** Pests like mites are usually most severe on plants in heated homes during the winter, when the air is dry and there are no natural enemies to keep them under control. Raising the ambient humidity through humidity trays, saucers of damp pebbles placed under each plant, or even a room humidifier can help.

For mites, aphids, mealybugs and other insects, a gentle brush or jet of water can kill and dislodge them from plants. Regularly washing the foliage thoroughly with soapy water, wiping every leaf, and rinsing with a sink sprayer is one way to bring populations down.

Soaking is a third way water can be used to combat insects. Completely immerse the pot and potting medium of the affected plant in a bucket of water overnight to evict ants, roaches, sow bugs, and pill bugs from the medium.

**Rubbing Alcohol** Soak a cotton swab in 70 percent isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol and dab scale, mealybugs, mites and aphids off orchids. The alcohol dissolves the insect's waxy covering, and is a good tool to reach the pests hidden down in the sheaths and leaf crevices. Pay particular attention to the midrib, other veins, and leaf edges. Repeat the treatment at seven to 10 day intervals to remove successive generations.

Another method is to spray alcohol, mixed with a few drops of mild liquid soap, from a misting bottle or small pump sprayer. Avoid strong or excessive amounts of detergent, as this may damage your plants, particularly buds and flowers. Alcohol can be combined with insecticidal soaps, but not with oil, and should never be used near fire. One of the advantages to using alcohol is that insects do not develop resistance to the treatments.

### What's wrong with my plant leaves and pseudobulbs?

**Yellowing of Plants and Leaves:** Too much light causes a plant's chlorophyll to deteriorate, which can turn your orchid an anemic yellow-green, and eventually cause premature loss of leaves. Most healthy orchids receiving appropriate light levels will be a robust light green. Are they old leaves that are naturally turning yellow and dropping? Check your plant to determine if it is deciduous (Examples *Catasetum*, *Cynoches* and *Mormodes*). If so this is again a natural process for the plant to lose its leaves. However, if the leaves are yellowing and dropping off new growth then there is most likely a problem with the roots which may be caused by over or under watering, or the media is breaking down and you need to repot.

**Withered Leaves:** The culprit, especially in summer weather, can be overheating. If your plant's leaves feel warm to the touch, they could be getting too much light, and need increased air circulation and shading, or a move to a more protected area.

**Sunburn:** Initial signs of sunburn, as in humans, appear as a reddish-purple tint or freckles on leaves and pseudobulbs. In advanced stages, leaf tips and roots may brown, flowers drop, buds blast or flower spikes fail altogether.

**Shriveled Pseudobulbs:** Your orchid's pseudobulbs serve as its water-storage organs, so shriveled pseudobulbs indicate a dehydrated orchid – it is in a stressed state, having used up its moisture reserves. Check your plant roots. You may also see this with some deciduous plants and need to check for more specific information regarding your individual orchid.

**Leathery Leaves** This goes beyond mere wilting, and occurs in the advanced stages of heat stress, indicating severe desiccation and possible damage on the cellular level. Depending on how long the condition has persisted, the type of orchid and its overall health aside from the leaf damage, it may or may not recover once its leaves are parched.

**Heat Stress Recommended Treatment:** Once an orchid has suffered the effects of heat stress, it may take a long time to rebound. Apply fertilizers sparingly, using a weak solution, and flush the growing medium with clean water between applications of fertilizer, as the salts in fertilizers are difficult for dehydrated plants to assimilate, and a regular dose may further burn the plant. Be especially alert for pests on distressed orchids – insects and viruses are more likely to attack weakened plants.

### **What's the difference between a hybrid seedling and a meristem seedling?**

A **hybrid seedling** is an orchid plant that has been produced by seed through the hybridization process. Two parent plants were used to produce the seed and the individual seedlings all have their own unique characteristics, like brothers and sisters in a family.

A **meristem seedling** is a seedling that has been produced using the cloning process. Each "mericlone" plant has an identical genetic make-up and each meristem or mericlone plant will look exactly the same, like identical twins.

### **What is the difference between a terrestrial and an epiphytic orchid?**

**Terrestrial orchids** live on the ground, usually in rotting wood and leaves. These orchids need a constantly moist, never soggy, medium in which to grow. Paphiopedilums and cymbidiums are examples.

**Epiphytic orchids** live on the branches of other plants -- usually trees. They obtain no food from the trees on which they grow. Epiphytic orchids have "air-roots" which are accustomed to drying out in between periods of rain. The roots should be allowed to become moderately dry between watering. Cattleya, vanda, phalaenopsis, and dendrobiums are examples

**Fertilizing your Orchids:** If you grow a mixed variety of orchid species, the fertilizing needs of your plants may vary considerably. The general **rule of thumb** — applying a balanced fertilizer weekly, weakly — is a good starting point. Too much or too strong fertilizer can burn orchid leaves and roots. Many growers recommend that plants be pre-watered with plain water and left to sit a few minutes until the medium is completely damp. Then go back and use your fertilized water. This helps reduce salt buildup and the possibility of root burn. You will also find other growers water with fertilizer initially, as their opinion is the plant takes up more water at “pre-watering” than the second watering.

Fertilizer can be applied weekly to biweekly at half or even a quarter of the strength recommended by its manufacturer. When in doubt, use a more diluted solution and observe the results on your plants. If you believe the diluted solution to be insufficient, the amount of fertilizer may be adjusted upward with fewer repercussions than initially burning the plant through over-fertilization.

There are many high-quality fertilizers available. Fertilizer you use should include a balance of the three main elements: nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) (the percentage of each element usually appears on the label in numeric form, such as “7-7-7”; the remaining percentage is composed of inert ingredients), and ideally micronutrients as well.

Most Vandaceous orchids do best with copious amounts of fertilizer, and during growth may benefit from dilute applications of fertilizer as often as twice a week. Pleurothallids, on the other hand, do not require nearly the same quantity of nutrients, and may be better off with a biweekly schedule. In addition, any orchid will require more nutrients during periods of active growth, less during periods of slower grow and possibly none during dormancy

### **Fertilizer burn symptoms**

Lack of root growth may indicate an unhealthy concentration of mineral salts in the medium, on up to full fertilizer burn. If this is suspected, check the roots. Dead root tips, brown roots or salt crust on the potting medium surface are signs of trouble. In later stages, brown leaf tips may appear, indicating burned roots. Leaves, and eventually pseudobulbs on sympodial orchids, can become yellow. If allowed to continue, fertilizer burn will eventually kill the plant

Salt from added fertilizer may accumulate over a period of time. Salt buildup looks like whitish to brownish crusts on the medium and around the pot, and can be a sign of over-fertilizing. If allowed to remain, those salts will negatively

impact the health of your plant. Fertilizer salts, burn and kill orchids, especially in more sensitive species like Paphiopedilums, Phragmipediums, Pleurothallids and Bulbophyllums.

**Q: I am growing my Phalaenopsis orchid in the house but they never bloom. What can I do?**

**A:** Changes to your growing conditions may help to stimulate your plant to bloom. The most common reason for any orchid not to bloom is insufficient light. Generally it is recommended to move your Phalaenopsis to a window where it will receive strong, but indirect light (near a south-facing window) or you might also try a fluorescent light fixture placed about 1-2 feet above the foliage. Give up to 12 hours of supplemental light per day. Many Phalaenopsis will also develop flower spikes in response to a cool period of about four weeks with night temperatures of 55F. After the cool treatment, raise the night temperature back to the normal 60-65F minimum.

Please note that the above is just a general recommendation. It is important to determine the “parentage” of your plant. You may find that your orchid does not follow the “general” growing recommendations. A few examples of Phalaenopsis would be:

Subgenus – Polychilos – needs warm temperatures to induce spiking and needs bright/intermediate light year round  
Aphyllae is a cool to cold grower and;  
Phalaenopsis needs cool temps to induce spiking and brighter light in winter.

If your orchid isn't blooming or it just doesn't seem to be as healthy as you think it should, do some research to check more specific cultural information.



**Grammatophyllum:** These are easy to grow if given enough water and fertilizer. They increase in size rapidly if re-potted into larger containers. Be aware, that like all orchids they only have so much strength per year for growing and flowers. Re-potting rapidly will make larger plants faster but possibly will cause the plant to skip flowering for a year. They have a tendency to drop leaves if grown too cool over the winter, but recover rapidly when growing season starts. They like high sunlight to set flowers. Flower inflorescences will normally have 80-100 flowers from 3-4 inches each.

**Temperature:** will tolerate considerable summer heat as long as they get cool, mild night temperatures (between 50-65 degrees F.). Cold weather, even down to 28 degrees F. for a few hours each night, will not damage an acclimatized plant, but once the plant spikes or flowers, it should be protected from temperatures below 35 degrees F. Regardless, plants should always be kept free of frost.

**Light:** enjoys the morning and afternoon sun, yet should be protected from the hot mid-day sun. A light green leaf with just a hint of yellow indicates the maximum amount of sun the plant can take, and a dark green leaf indicates not enough sun.

**Water-Humidity:** Watering is a delicate balancing act as they should not be allowed to go dry, yet they don't care for a soggy environment either. Watering once every seven to ten days is about right. As with everything else, special consideration must be given for the drying effects of varying ambient air temperature and humidity.

**Fertilizer:** Recommended high nitrogen fertilizers (25-9-9) should be used from February until July, while low nitrogen fertilizers (6-25-25) should be used from August until January. Feed one teaspoon to a gallon of water once a month and less during the cooler months.

**Potting Mix:** Recommended to repot approximately every two to three years from February to June with a well-draining medium. It is suggested to use fine bark in mild summer climates, while a finer medium Orchid Mix is recommended in warmer summer areas.

**American Orchid Society Webinars:** (some require AOS membership)

**American Orchid Society Greenhouse Chats** – There is now a listing of topics discussed during each previous Greenhouse Chat. You should also be able to locate the specific Greenhouse Chat, with information you are looking for, if you do a general search on the AOS website. ALL GREENHOUSE CHAT webinars are recorded and indexed by topic for future reference



**April 23, 2020.** 8:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. **AOS Webinar Greenhouse Chat.** Presenter Ron McHatton, American Orchid Society Director of Education, and accredited AOS judge, presents a Q&A session on how to grow and care for your orchids. Advanced Registration (space is limited) required. The webinar is open to AOS members and non-members. You may submit your questions in advance to [greenhousechat@aos.org](mailto:greenhousechat@aos.org). Please see the website for additional information and registration. [www.aos.org](http://www.aos.org)

**Upcoming Events:**                    **Subject to change due to Coronavirus**

**May 10, 2020 CAIOS Meeting Potting Workshop**

**June 14, 2020 CAIOS Meeting 12:30 p.m.-Last meeting until September.** Our speaker will be Alan Koch from Gold Country Orchids

**Announcements:** Please check the [caios.org](http://caios.org) website for last minute CAIOS news. Unexpected meeting cancellation or location change will be posted if necessary. [www.caios.org](http://www.caios.org) , in addition to culture sheets; last minute orchid sales and helpful hints to assist your growing. We also post information on our Facebook page, stop by and “like” us and become our “friend”, then post pictures of your amazing plants! [#caiosbloomers](https://www.facebook.com/caiosbloomers)

Please e-mail [webmaster@caios.org](mailto:webmaster@caios.org) with your Virtual Show Table Orchids, any additions or corrections.

Last month paid members received a special indexed version of all 2019 newsletters. I would like your comments both pro and con. Thank you.

**CAIOS BOARD 2019-2020**                    [www.caios.org](http://www.caios.org)  
Prez. Tina Balog 508-540-5006  
CO-Vice Presidents+  
Marsha Frederick 508 694-6279 [busywomance@comcast.net](mailto:busywomance@comcast.net)  
Brian Leib [Brian.Leib@gmail.com](mailto:Brian.Leib@gmail.com)  
Secretary Lee Drescher 508-548-0155 [mrstreas@comcast.net](mailto:mrstreas@comcast.net)  
Publicity Are you interested?  
Director I Michele Wolf [michelemjw@comcast.net](mailto:michelemjw@comcast.net)  
Director II Tom Gregg 508-540-2054 [vandtgregg@comcast.net](mailto:vandtgregg@comcast.net)  
Show Chair Tina Balog 508 540-5006 [tina@plaid.who.edu](mailto:tina@plaid.who.edu)

Newsletter Lynn Schaeffer [OakH35@yahoo.com](mailto:OakH35@yahoo.com)  
Corresp & AOS Rep. Tom Gregg 508-540-2054  
[vandtgregg@comcast.net](mailto:vandtgregg@comcast.net)  
Treasurer Dayle Carroll-Teal [dayle54@aol.com](mailto:dayle54@aol.com)  
Webmaster Lynn Schaeffer [webmaster@caios.org](mailto:webmaster@caios.org)  
Membership Christine Hight  
[christine.hight01@gmail.com](mailto:christine.hight01@gmail.com)  
Monthly Program Chair Are you interested?

Motto: Orchids grow *Wild* where CAIOS reigns