



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

March 2015 Newsletter

“Lady of the Night”-

Brassavola nodosa and its hybrids

Speaker - Joanna Eckstrom

March 8 at 12:30

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.)

❄️ **Last Month’s Meeting:** ❄️ All the snow this winter unfortunately required us to cancel last month’s meeting and Jean Stefanik’s presentation on native New Zealand orchids. We are hoping to reschedule this program again in the near future! Check our website www.caios.org or our Facebook page frequently for last minute news and events.

March Meeting Speaker *Joanna Eckstrom* will discuss Brassavola nodosa known for lovely perfume coming from the flowers in the evening, Lady of the Night orchid is aptly named. This relatively small epiphytic orchid from Central and South America adapts readily to being grown as a houseplant. You will learn about Brassavola nodosa and it’s hybrids and how to grow them. You don’t want to miss this meeting, especially if you recently purchased one of these plants. Joanna is a perpetual friend and AOS Judge and ran the judging for our show very ably.



April Meeting: Dr Kristen Ulthes from *New World Orchids* will speak on Japanese orchids Neofinetia falcata, Dendrobium moniliforme and Sedirea japonica.. Kristen has a PhD in plant ecology, a passion for orchids and hopes to make more people aware of the beauty of Japanese orchids and the ease with which they are grown. In addition to the plant listings on newworldorchids.com, she will have additional plants after from the Tokyo Grand Prix.

New World Orchids is offering a **Pre-Order discount of 10% and the deadline is April 3, 2015**. Also please indicate that your ordering is for CAIOS so they will be delivered to the meeting. Please watch our website or Facebook page for any additional plant listings I received after the newsletter is published.

You can place your preorder with Kristen at <https://newworldorchids.com>

Refreshments: Goodies provided by **MEMBERS J-Z PLEASE!** Coffee and tea provided

Raffle and Member Show Table: Members should bring any plants they wish to show and have the best available expert discuss them with audience participation, all questions kindly answered. As an incentive, each plant shown will receive a Raffle ticket for orchid plants. Another raffle will be for purchased tickets only. The Society appreciates donated plants for raffles.

Orchids Questions – Answers – Helpful Hints

Members had several questions this month. Some of your questions may require additional space or time to adequately respond to so watch upcoming newsletters, our website, or upcoming programs covering your topics.

“How to Grow Orchids Using Semi-Hydroponics”:

Not all orchids are suited for hydroponics. Epiphytic orchids grow in sub-tropical jungles and adhere to tree branches, living off of rain, air and decaying vegetable matter and are not suited for hydroponic growing. Terrestrial orchids are well-suited for hydroponic growing, as they grow in moist, loose soil and require constant food and moisture to thrive, which is supplied with a semi-hydroponic growing method.

Semi-hydroponics for growing orchids uses containers designed with a reservoir which maintains the water level, with a medium consisting of only clay pebbles. These pebbles have an excellent capillary absorption ability which allows them to draw the water from the reservoir and distribute it evenly to the entire root structure. Fill the reservoir (simply pour in from the top) with 1/4 strength fertilized water, approximately once per week. This gives the plant all the water and nutrients it needs at consistent levels. Watering is no longer a mystery, and is simple and time-efficient

Converting your existing orchids to a semi-hydroponic growing system is a simple process. Your plant will go through a short phase (up to 4 months) where the old roots will rot away while it grows new roots adapting to the clay media. The best time for conversion is after your plant has finished flowering, as it may abort the blooms as it adapts to its new environment.

Supplies : You will need three basic things to get started – a pot suited for semi-hydroponics, growing media, and fertilizer.. If you are using your own custom pot, make sure it has drainage holes approximately one inch from the bottom to allow for a water reservoir. Free draining containers can be used with the clay pebbles as well, but without a reservoir, watering would need to be increased to several times per week.

Fertilizer: Any standard orchid fertilizer is sufficient in providing extra nutrients for your plants using 1/4 strength of the suggested dosage during each and every watering. Several sites suggested the MSU formula, available in Rain/RO water, or Well/Tap water.

Prepare the Media: The media should be thoroughly rinsed to remove any dust. For best results, soak in fertilized water for a day, or overnight, to allow it to absorb as much water as possible before potting.

Remove the Old Potting Media: Soak the roots of your plant for several hours to allow them to loosen. Carefully remove it from the pot and pull away the old mixture until only the plant and roots remain.

Potting: Choose a pot that is slightly larger than the root system. Position the plant in the pot so that the existing roots reach the water reservoir at the bottom, without causing stress to the roots or the plant. Holding the plant in place, begin filling with the new media until it is level with, or just above, the bottom of the leaves. Gently shake and work the pot to distribute the rocks throughout the root system, adding more if necessary after settling. Once it is potted, water until the reservoir is filled with your fertilized mixture. Over time, your plant will shed its old roots and grow new ones suited for this growing system. During this phase, don't be alarmed if you notice some setbacks.

Continued Care of your Plant: Most orchids prefer a bright shady spot in your home, with standard room temperatures. Translucent pots allow you to easily see when the water reservoir is depleted, and simply add more water until it is filled. Under typical conditions, this should be once every 5-8 days. Once your plant has fully adapted to this system, maintenance is only necessary when the plant simply becomes too large for the pot. The media will not rot or break down over time, and repotting will not cause stress to the plant. Gently loosen the plant from the old container and place into a larger one. The roots hold the rock in place, and simply fill around the edges with additional media

Note: Our friends at Kelley's Korner carry hydroponic supplies <http://www.kkorchid.com/hydroponic-products>

Phragmipediums grow well using semi-hydroponics. They do not like to dry out and water reservoir should be filled when empty. Several resources did mention that Phragmipedium crosses take longer to acclimate to semi-hydroponics.

Note: It would be greatly appreciated if any member(s) with first-hand experience with hydroponic or semi-hydroponic orchid growing express their comment(s) and experience for additional information for the membership.

Cattleya coccinea f/k/a Sophronitis Coccinea: is native to mountainous forests near the coast in Brazil. The plants are found growing between 2000 to 5500 feet in elevation. It grows on moss-covered trees and rocks in protected