

require less, less frequently. Above 200 ppm and you will have to leach with larger amounts of water over a longer period of time during each watering and never allow the media to totally dry out. If it dries out too much, burning of the roots will occur due to the increase in concentration of salts. Regardless of the concentration of salts in the water, you should always water until it runs through the media and out of the bottom of the pot. Allow the pot to dry out between watering, unless you seek hydroponic roots. This will create problems for the plant if removed from the continuously wet conditions. The amount of time between watering will be determined by the pot size in relation to the plant size; the type of media used; the relative humidity in your greenhouse and the temperature. In Middle America, excess water may be an issue in the summer if you put your plants outside. Solution: spray preventative fungicides a lot or move them inside!



C. aurantiaca

Your observation is the best guide as to how often you water. Let the orchids be your indicator. Giving them the same treatment you should observe each new growth bigger than the previous one. To the contrary, you will have to analyze your situation and adjust to make it better.

Water requirements are placed into the following groups for purposes of the species charts found on the web site: A. Water plentiful year round. B. Water heavy spring, summer and fall, with lighter watering every ten days during the winter. C. Water heavy during spring, summer and maintain a high humidity, at least at night, during the winter (but not water.)

Go to www.abundaflora.com, click on "orchid photos" + MEXICAN, then click on "printable genus and species list" + repeat on the right side to obtain the chart legend.

be that we look at orchids in the same way evolution has taught us to look at potential mates? If this preference explains our obsession with orchids, as Alcock suggests, it occurs to me that it might also shed light on some people's seemingly insatiable drive to hybridize them.

This is a thoroughly enjoyable book, written at a level that both the scientist and the non-scientist can appreciate. I recommend it to anyone interested in evolution, natural history or human behavior, as well as orchids.

Can you spare an hour or so on Saturday, Feb. 10?

by Mike Wheeler

Family Tree Nursery has invited OSGKC to participate at the nursery's Open House and orchid sale.

This is a great membership-raising opportunity for our Society. It is also a great chance to buy good plants at a reasonable price.

Here is what is needed... Volunteers to serve one hour between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. at the OSGKC table. I'm hoping to have one or more Society members at the table for each of the five hours. Volunteers to teach an hour-long, basic class on growing orchids. The class would be about an hour long.

Volunteers to teach an hour-long class on repotting orchids. [Family Tree will provide the supplies.]

We will offer as many sessions of the classes as we can staff. I know we are all busy during the weekends, but this is such a wonderful chance to spread the word about our excellent group. I hope you'll volunteer to come on Feb. 10th.

Please call [913/764-4313] or write Mike Wheeler [senor_miguel@webtv.net] if you can help out.

- Support OSGKC Sponsors:**
- Bergman Orchid Farm
 - Bird's Botanicals
 - Orchids by ViCli
 - Oak Hill Gardens
 - r.f. Orchids
 - Windy Hill Gardens
 - Whippoorwill Orchids




OSGKC News

ORCHID SOCIETY OF GREATER KANSAS CITY www.osgkc.org February 2007

The following was part of a handout from a lecture in August 2006 at the Mid America Orchid Congress Conference in Lexington, Ky.

Showy Mexican Orchid Species for Middle America: Where they come from and how they grow.

By Weyman Bussey of Abunda Flora
[www.abundaflora.com]

Part I

Understanding where orchids come from helps us understand how they grow. Every orchid has particular WANTS.
WATER – quality, frequency and quantity
AIR – quality and movement, for gas exchange
NUTRITION – fertilizer, vitamins and alcohol
TEMPERATURE – they do not use clothing
SUNLIGHT – The *energy* that makes food

Learn that acronym and how each factor interplays and affects each other. Whether you grow indoors, outdoors or in a greenhouse, you will need to learn how to adjust the five basic factors influencing the growth of your plants. They are all interrelated and by altering one of these factors, you will be required to adjust the other four. They must be BALANCED

A Look Forward:



January's meeting was cancelled due to severe weather conditions. Doug Martin, who was scheduled to give the program, will present his "The Birds, the Bees and the Orchids: Pollination Biology" at the February 11th meeting.

and the key to successful orchid growing is *moderation* in all aspects.

WATER

Quantity: One inch is a good watering, but not applied in 30 seconds! Applied over 30 minutes or more is great, like rainfall. Remember: you can apply your fertilizers with each watering, but you cannot apply your fertilizer with each refreshing.

Frequency: Good watering every 4 – 14 days, depending on A, T and S. Refreshing may be as often as 3 times per day, just wet the leave and let dry. Keep humidity above 50%, if possible. If not, water more!

Quality: Be aware of salts, measure in PPM, parts per million, or Electrical Conductivity available. Always get at least one

Inside...

- Officers' Reports & Messages: pg. 2
- Special Feature: Member Profile pg. 5
- Did you ever wonder...? pg. 5
- MAOC in Chicago pg. 5
- OSGKC Sponsors pg. 4

Remember OSGKC's new Monthly Meeting location:

OSGKC begins the new year at Broadway United Methodist Church, 74th and Wornall, Kansas City, MO.

Beginners' Group: 1:00 p.m.
Regular Program: 2:00 p.m.

complete analysis. Be aware of pH, acidity/alkalinity (Calcium – basic; Sulfur – acidic). 6-8 is okay. Orchids grown in a pH of 7-8 have less disease problems because many diseases will not grow in Alkaline conditions. Some possible contaminants include chlorine, calcium, sodium from water softeners (a definite no! no!), and distilled. Never use pure distilled water. You need at least 80 ppm good salts in your water. Remix regular water with distilled, at least 20%. Rain has 80 ppm of good salts.

Water is a very important factor, which will determine your success with Mexican orchids. Quantities we can split into how much and when. Your water quality will affect greatly the amount of water, you give with each watering. If your soluble salts are below 200 ppm them you will

Letter from OSGKC President:
Dan Schlozman

Well, I've been back a couple of days and see from my emails that the meeting never got off the ground. For me that was a bonus because I will now get to hear Doug's talk.

It was fun looking at the virtual display of orchids. Thank you everybody who submitted the plants. It always amazes me to see the diversity of plants submitted. We are very fortunate to have so much talent.

So, hopefully most of those plants will still be in good shape for the Feb. meeting; and hopefully it will be sunny and warm.

Until then, happy growing.

Dan

Book Review

An Enthusiasm for Orchids: Sex and Deception in Plant Evolution, by John Alcock

Reviewed by Doug Martin

Have you ever wondered why people are so attracted to orchids? John Alcock, an evolutionary biologist at Arizona State University, offers a possible explanation for this a many other questions about orchids. About twenty years ago he went to Perth, Australia, on sabbatical. While there he discovered the strange and wonderful orchids of the region. Since then he has returned several times and spent countless hours combing the area's nature preserves for orchids. In this book, Alcock recounts many of these trips and uses his experiences to lead into discussions of a wide range of topics. With a very readable style and a wry sense of humor, Alcock describes the excitement of finding orchids in the wild and discusses many aspects of how orchids relate to their environment, pollinators and the humans who obsess about them. He explores such mysteries as how evolution

OSGKC EXHIBITS IN UPCOMING SHOWS

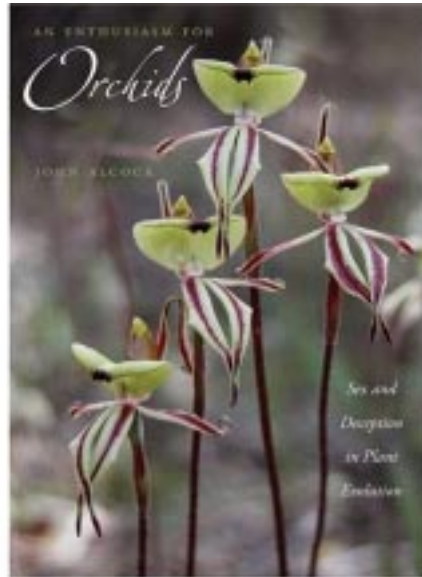
by Beth Martin, Show Chairperson

OSGKC will enter exhibits in three orchid shows this spring. The first is the Missouri Orchid Society Show in St. Louis, February 16-18. Details about this show will be provided at the

February meeting. The other two shows are the Springfield Orchid Society Show, March 23-25, and the Omaha Orchid Society Show, March 30-April 1. Please consider providing your plants and your time to help with these exhibits!

We'll need 25-30 flowering orchids for our tabletop exhibit in the St. Louis show. The Springfield and Omaha exhibits will be larger floor exhibits, requiring more orchids and more help to set up, as well as to transport everything to and from the shows. Please contact Beth Martin, Cindy Hobbs or Joy Prout if you're interested in working on any of these exhibits.

Of special note – several OSGKC members plan to enter a separate exhibit of MINIATURE ORCHIDS in these shows. Tony King will provide more information on the miniatures exhibit at the February meeting. Miniature orchids include Cattleya alliance plants with total height of 10 inches or less, excluding inflorescences; and other orchids not exceeding 6 inches in growth, excluding inflorescences. Please contact Tony if you have miniatures for this exhibit or want to help.



could have produced something as strange as the aptly named Warty Hammer Orchids, and why an intelligent and otherwise well-adjusted human could get so excited by finding one.

Alcock wonders if people get so obsessed with orchids because the flowers have the same kind of symmetry as human faces. Most

Beginners' Group

The February beginners' group meeting will feature Tony King discussing his method of growing Dendrobiums.

Fred Bergman.

Membership Drive

Remember to bring the results of the responses you had from calls you made to inactive OSGKC members. The names of these people were provided at the December Banquet by Ron Daly to everyone who was interested in participating in this membership-drive effort.

flowers are radially symmetrical, which means that there are many ways to cut them into halves that are mirror images. But orchid flowers, like human faces, are bilaterally symmetrical, meaning that there is only one way to divide them into mirror-image halves. Further, we seem to instinctively equate bilateral symmetry with attractiveness. Alcock explains that this preference for bilaterally symmetrical faces must have developed in our early ancestors, and he speculates that it may have operated in mate selection. Could it

con't on pg. 4

Member Profile:
Jason Ward
-- Q and A

Q. How many years have you been growing orchids?:

A. Nine years

Q. How many orchids are in your collection?:

A. Around 100 give or take a trip to Hausermann's.

Q. Give a brief description of their growing environment:

A. I have a 8ft x 12 grow room in my basement. I have two light tracks with HPS and MH lights.

Q. What's the predominant type of orchid(s) you raise?

A. Phalaenopsis

Q. Name one to three in your collection which is a/are particular favorite(s) and why:

A. I love Phal. *Violacea* although I have a hard time blooming them. My favorite orchid in the collection is Phal *New Cinderella* x *Dtps Firebird*. It has the most amazing harlequin blooms.

Q. Name one to three in your collection that, despite your best efforts, has/have proven particularly difficult to grow:

A. I've killed every *Zygopetulum* I've ever owned. Love the flowers and fragrance but can't make them work in my growing conditions.

Q. Share with readers your best orchid culture tip(s):

A. Buy orchids that best suit your growing conditions. As a beginner, I bought many plants that have found their way to the compost bin.

Lois Cinert, from the Illinois Orchid Society, sent the following message to the OSGKC website.

MAOC in Chicago

We have added an additional speaker to the group who will be featured at our Mid-America Orchid Congress, April 27 – 29, in Chicago.

Our list includes Patricia Harding, co-author with Carl Withner of one of his *Cattleya* series, *The Debatable Epidendrums*. Patricia will speak about *Huntleya*, and related genera. Hadley Cash, from Marriott

Orchids, who recently published an overview of his *Paph* breeding program in *Orchid Digest*, will speak on that topic. And Dr. Eric Christenson, noted author and taxonomist, will have two lectures, one on *Maxillaria*, and the other on his work in Peru with David Bennett, on a modern inventory of orchids in Peru.

Joining them now will be Alfredo Manrique, of *Centro de Jardineria Manrique*, one of two nurseries in Peru authorized to grow and sell *Phrag kovachii*. This is quite a timely addition to our list of speakers.

Seedlings of *Phrag kovachii* are now becoming available for sale in the United States, and we will have an opportunity to hear the saga of this new, wonderful flower from one who is deeply involved in its distribution and conservation.

I hope all of you will want to attend this event, and spread the word to all of your orchid-growing friends. Information on registering for the conference is on the IOS web page, www.iosoc.com.

If you have questions contact maoc2007chi@earthlink.net.

Q. What do/did (if retired) you do in life to support your orchid addiction?:

A. Attorney.

Did you ever wonder...?

By Susie Hanna

The purpose of a ballast is to control or stabilize the electricity to the light fixture. In a florescent light, it is built into the fixture. It is the thing that makes the buzzing sound, and the thing that can make a really loud, maddening buzz when the ballast is "going out." In a high-powered light, the ballast becomes much larger. Ours is about the size of a loaf of bread, and amazingly heavy. We put it under the plant bench, and it does get warm which is good for this time of year.



Deb Pate and Doug and Beth Martin will provide refreshments for February's meeting.