

# NROS News

OCTOBER 2016

Wednesday, October 12<sup>th</sup>., 2016

Regular Meeting 7:30 p.m.

Holy Rosary Church Hall  
35 Queen Street  
Thorold

## PROGRAMS

“Orchid Tips & Tricks”  
by  
John Marcotte



## EXECUTIVE 2015-2016

President .....	Rick Rempel .....	905-734-1588
Past President .....	Colin Burns .....	905-684-9705
Secretary .....	Isabel Streeter .....	905-682-7792
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Show Table .....	Phil Hinman .....	905-899-3606
Hospitality .....	Barbara Berry .....	905-227-4307
Program Co-Ordinator .....	Rick Rempel .....	905-734-1588
AOS/COC Rep .....	Rick Rempel .....	905-734-1588

Visit us on our updated website link:

[www.cloudsorchids.com/nros](http://www.cloudsorchids.com/nros)

## SEPTEMBER SHOW TABLE

### Class 1 Cattleya Alliance

Blc. Mem. Helen Brown	Charlene Quevillon	1 <sup>st</sup> .
Bc. Angel Lace	Phil Hinman	2 <sup>nd</sup> .
B. cucullata	Phil Hinman	3 <sup>rd</sup> .
Lc. Azul Madoka	Phil Hinman	
Blc. Hawaiian Passion	Phil Hinman	

### Class 4 Oncidium Alliance

Lhta. lunifera 'Blanco'	Joanne Madsen	1 <sup>st</sup> .
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### Class 7 All Others

*****Coel. merrillii	Phil Hinman	1 <sup>st</sup> .
Coel. Mem. W. Micholitz	Susan Yee	2 <sup>nd</sup> .

## \*\*\*\*\*PLANT OF THE MONTH

### BULLETIN BOARD

#### Meeting

John Marcotte will be our guest speaker at our October meeting. His topic will be "Orchid Tips and Tricks".

John's website is

[www.orchidscanada.com](http://www.orchidscanada.com)

#### Open House

Cloud's Orchids next open house is October 8<sup>th</sup>. & 9<sup>th</sup>. 11 am. to 4 pm. //

Workshop (Saturday only) :

Bulbophyllums @ noon

#### Library

Just a reminder to our membership that we have an extensive library of wonderful orchid books. Please check out the library and see George Streeter if you wish to sign one out.

#### Goodies

A reminder to Nel Dekker and Jean Wackett that they are signed up to bring the goodies for coffee. Thanks, ladies!!

#### Membership

This is a reminder that membership dues of \$20.00 are payable by the end of December. Please see Joanne Madsen at the meeting or send your payment to her address:

Joanne Madsen

37 Grantham Avenue, South

St. Catharines, ON

L2P 3B3

If you pay by November 30, your name will go into a draw for a prize to be decided later.

### **Plants**

The Society is planning to set up a display at the Art to Heart Gallery in Thorold for Friday, October 14<sup>th</sup>. and Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup>. If you have any plants that will be in bloom for this weekend, please bring them to the meeting on Wednesday. The display will be set up on the Thursday for the weekend. Thank you.

### **Christmas Party**

It's that time of year again to let you know about our annual Christmas party. It's a pot luck supper. There will be a sign-up sheet at both the October and November meetings. The party will be held the night of our December meeting on Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. starting at 6:30 p.m. The turkey will be supplied by the Society. More details to come later.

The first article is courtesy of Orchid Societies Council of Victoria  
<http://www.oscov.asn.au>

and the second one was found on the Government of Canada Species at Risk website.

## **ORCHID ROOTS AND REST PERIODS by Brian Milligan**

What's most important to an orchid - its roots or its leaves? Actually, it all depends on the orchid. Some orchids never have leaves. One example is the Australian native terrestrial *Dipodium roseum*, commonly called the hyacinth orchid because its pink flowers resemble those of the hyacinth. It's often found flowering under trees in the mountains in summer. *Dipodium roseum* and many other saprophytic orchids rely on mycorrhizal fungi growing in association with tree roots to provide them with all the nutrients that they need. Other leafless orchids, such as the epiphytic *Polyplocyrrhiza lindenii* and *Chiloschista lunifera*, are not saprophytic and need to manufacture their own sugars and other components necessary for plant growth. They do so in the same manner as leafed orchids, that is, by photosynthesis from water and carbon dioxide, using the green pigment chlorophyll as catalyst. The only difference is that these leafless orchids carry chlorophyll in their roots, whereas it's present in the leaves of most orchids.

Many orchids have leaves for only part of the year. Common examples in our collections are *Bletilla striata*, *Pleione formosana* and many of our native terrestrial orchids. The first two lose their leaves in autumn, leaving only their tubers to survive the icy winters of their natural habitats. In contrast, greenhoods (*Pterostylis*) and donkey orchids (*Diuris*) lose their leaves in late spring, leaving their tubers underground to survive our hot, dry summers.

Some epiphytic orchids survive stressful times in their native habitats, usually cool dry times, by entering what orchid growers call a rest period. They indicate their intention of entering this phase by gradually extending the protective layer of velamen that normally covers most of the root until the green, actively growing tip is completely encompassed. At this stage the root tips absorb water and nutrients much less efficiently and the plant drastically slows its growth. Flower spikes may continue to grow and buds to open, but the energy for these processes is derived from nutrients already stored in the pseudobulbs. Because orchids absorb little water or nutrients through their roots during the rest period, frequent watering and fertilising at this time is unnecessary and may be harmful.

Common examples of orchids that enter a rest period during winter are *Laela anceps*, *Oncidium varicosum* and its hybrids, epidendrums and cattleyas. But not all orchids have a rest period during winter; these plants continue to grow, albeit at a reduced rate. *Cymbidiums* are a prime example. They benefit from continued watering and fertilising during winter, although at a much less frequent rate than in summer.

So, how do you tell which orchids need a rest period during winter from those that don't? It's simply a matter of examining the root tips. If they are green and shiny, the orchid is still growing actively. But if the root tips are no longer shiny and are completely sealed with velamen, then the orchid has entered its rest period and it should be watered much less frequently, perhaps once every two or three weeks. Occasional misting of the foliage of these plants, especially in bright weather, will help to keep them from excessive dehydration.

As spring arrives, these 'resting' orchids will show signs of re-awakening by developing fresh root tips. Sometimes the old roots also develop new branches with shiny green tips. These are signs that you should gradually resume normal watering and fertilising. Because of the importance of active root tips in absorbing water and nutrients, it is vital to the well-being of your orchids that these tips should not be damaged. Ensure that your plants are secure in their pots.

### **The Phantom Orchid**

The Phantom Orchid is an almost totally white plant that can grow up to 65 cm high. It consists of a leafless stem with white sheaths up to 10 cm long. At the top of the stem, the plant produces a cluster of up to 20 aromatic flowers that are white with a yellow throat. In some years, the flowering stalks within a single colony can vary from tall and robust to short and weak-looking. Thick fibrous roots branch from a short rhizome. Plants grow in colonies, scattered in humus (partially decomposed organic matter), and show a preference for areas with little groundcover and little competition.



#### **Distribution and Population**

Endemic to (found only in) the Pacific Northwest of North America, the Phantom Orchid occurs in California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho and British Columbia. In Canada, it is found only in the extreme southwest of British Columbia, with populations on the Saanich Peninsula of Vancouver Island, Saltspring Island, and the lower Fraser Valley on the mainland. While suitable habitat exists throughout the Fraser Valley and additional locations may turn up in the future, the overall range of the species is unlikely to change. This plant has a very restricted distribution in Canada. The Phantom Orchid is known to have occurred at twelve sites in Canada, but it now occurs at only eight of these. There are only a few individuals at each site, for a combined grand total of approximately 100 individuals.

### Habitat

Most often the Phantom Orchid grows in the humus litter in coniferous forests with little or sparse ground cover, but at one site, it grows on limestone tailings from a quarry. It is often found at the base of mature Birch trees. The species prefers low mountains or hills, where it usually occurs on south- or west-facing slopes.

### Biology

The Phantom Orchid lacks chlorophyll. It obtains its nourishment from decaying acid coniferous humus through an association with a group of fungi which in turn form associations with specific species of trees (often Birches) and shrubs. The orchid flowers sporadically. The conditions that trigger flowering are unknown, but grazing appears to have a beneficial effect, climatic conditions appear to be a factor, and the amount of light it receives is probably important. It can lie dormant for up to 17 years waiting for conditions to be right. Only three of the Canadian sites consistently have flowering plants. In favourable years, flowering stems emerge continuously throughout the flowering season which ranges from early May to late July. Even when a plant flowers, it does not always form seeds, further limiting reproductive capacity of the species.

### Threats

This Orchid is limited by climatic conditions at the northern edge of its range, and appears to require some degree of disturbance to reduce competition. Habitat destruction or modification resulting from the development of subdivisions or other uses of the land, and the increase in competition resulting from the elimination of grazing are important threats to the Phantom Orchid.

