



October 2020 Newsletter

***Please feel free to forward this newsletter to friends who might be interested in knowing about Five Cities Orchid Society and encourage them to subscribe at [www.fcoss.org](http://www.fcoss.org).***



**A message from the President's potting bench.**

**I hope that all of you are keeping healthy and in good spirits. Last month certainly kept me busy. I have created a few more orchid grow areas in my backyard,**

repotted my Sobralias into ceramic pots and made a few areas for my cymbidiums and hanging orchids. The backyard is looking sharp; the orchids are blending in with the landscape. Our little backyard has been a fun project for my wife and I to work on together, here in Los Osos.

In the greenhouse there are spikes, buds and blooms in various places, and many of my reliable favorites are in bloom such as *Angraecum didieri* (pictured above) and *Podangis dactyloceras* (picture below). In the backyard, a *Cattleya* and a *Cymbidium* seem to be coordinating their developing blooms. Orchids are swaying in the wind, mounted in baskets hanging by the window and in the tree, with stalks pushing blooms through the dappled light.

This month's meeting is a timely one. It should be helpful as we decide which orchids to segregate as we prepare for the change in weather. Our focus will be on the Genus *Dendrobium* in particular. It's a good time to reread Ed Lysek's article on Vacation Time For Orchids: A Dry Winter Rest.

After reading Ed's article last year, I looked through my orchids and identified those he mentioned in the article that I owned. I set these up on the top shelf of the greenhouse and didn't water them from Halloween to Valentine's Day. I had better growth and some blooms as a result. Best of all, I didn't kill any plants by over watering them. Encouraged by this, I have collected a few more dendrobiums (*D. anosum*, *D. aggregatum*, *D. delictarum*, *D. linawianaiam*, *D. thysifolium*). Our meeting this month should help me settle on a plan to overwinter them.

This month's meeting will be on October 8 at 7 pm. We will have a video followed by a short discussion and examples from our local members. To start and prepare for the meeting, you might want to print out this AOS culture sheet on Dendrobiums and keep it handy. Please be sure to email me pictures of any orchids you would like to share for Show and Tell. It's also ok to just show your plant during the Zoom meeting.

This month we will also have time to ask the question "What's Wrong with my Orchid?" To participate in this event, please send me a close-up picture of your plant, describing the problem and growing condition in as much detail as possible. We will try and analyze the plant's condition and come up with a remedy for you.

It will be a fairly active meeting this month, and it would benefit all members to attend. We will vote on a change to the bylaws. We will also talk about upcoming elections and our Holiday Party. Hope to see you soon. Don't forget to send me pictures of your Show and Tell orchids or your questionable orchids for the "What's Wrong with my Orchid?" discussion.

Happy growing!

Jeff

Email: [jsp1440@aol.com](mailto:jsp1440@aol.com)



*Podangis dactyloceras*





**Our October FCOS Zoom meeting features a conversation with Dr. Martin Motes on Dendrobium orchids. This is a diverse group of orchids, many of which can be grown outdoors on the Central Coast. Lean how to grow and flower these orchids and how to tell which groups will grow best under your growing conditions.**  
**[www.MotesOrchids.com](http://www.MotesOrchids.com)**

**FCOS is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.**

**Topic: FCOS October Zoom Meeting**

**Time: Oct 8, 2020 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)**

**Join Zoom Meeting**

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83053150932?pwd=V0E3ZmJwUVg0R2xhS0cveUtPbEo1QT09>**

**Meeting ID: 830 5315 0932**

**Passcode: 041388**

**One tap mobile**

**+16699006833,,83053150932#,,,,,0#,,041388# US (San Jose)**

**+12532158782,,83053150932#,,,,,0#,,041388# US (Tacoma)**

**Dial by your location**

**+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)**

**+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)**

**+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)**

**+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)**

**+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)**

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)  
Meeting ID: 830 5315 0932  
Passcode: 041388

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83053150932>

#### How to Join a ZOOM meeting

All you need to do is have a computer, laptop or other internet connected device like a tablet or smartphone. You'll be sent an email invitation close to the meeting date containing the meeting URL. (For this October's meeting, the link is already in the invitation above). Click on that URL since it contains the Meeting ID and password (coded). Some of you may need to download the Zoom app if it does not install automatically. You do not have to turn on your camera and you can remain anonymous. If you don't have a camera equipped device, that's o.k. You'll be able to see the meeting, but we'll miss seeing you.

Shortly before the meeting time, follow the directions in that confirmation email. You will enter a "waiting room" and will be let into the meeting when it starts. Be aware that this meeting may be recorded.

We know that not everyone is in the same place technologically. So here are some links to helpful videos about how to get started and how to navigate ZOOM.

Creative Life Center - Joining a Zoom Call for the First Time; Fun and Easy Online Connection <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9isp3qPeQ0E>

#### Geeks on Tour:

1. How Do I Join a Zoom Meeting? Tutorial Video

614 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kh50kValdAY>

2. Basic Zoom meeting controls Tutorial Video 615

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=78fn4r6fhns>

3. How Do I Join a Zoom Meeting with a Smartphone? Tutorial Video 616

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iVb9nBu1Sug>

Smart Simple Digital - How to Join A Zoom Meeting for the First Time (Zoom: The Basics) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mbbYqjurgeo>

#### Speaker notes from the September 2020 FCOS meeting

At the September FCOS Zoom meeting Eric Holanda gave a presentation entitled "Dancing Ladies: the seduction and culture of the *Oncidiums*". Eric mentioned that as with all orchids it's all about the roots. Healthy roots will generally mean a healthy orchid but if your orchid has a lack of healthy roots the orchid will generally not grow well or produce flowers. *Oncidiums* has small diameter roots which can lead quickly to problems if you do not take good care of them and the potting media. During his presentation Eric showed a number of his *Oncidium* Alliance orchids, most growing well but at least one with a lack of roots. Eric

stated that the timing of repotting is critical, and should be undertaken when the new growth(s) are about 1/3 to 1/2 grown, as it is at that point when new roots will begin to emerge. He showed a *Brassia* that he is growing in a net pot which allows the media to dry out quickly and lets the roots get lots of air. He showed an *Oncidium* Sherry Baby growing in an eight inch diameter pot. Generally this hybrid is not seen in such a large pot but he is growing it in a large bark with packing peanuts at the bottom of the pot and he makes sure the media is dry before he waters it again. Based on his growing area he generally has a wet to dry cycle for his orchids of about 3-5 days. He adds #3 or larger perlite or lava rock to his small fir bark media. He also will top dress his pots with lava rock to keep the upper media stable. After transplanting he likes to keep the media slightly dryer to help stimulate roots to become established. Eric uses Peter's CalMag fertilizer and adds a small amount of vinegar to the fertilizer to increase the solution's acidity.

## What's Blooming Now?

Here are a range of great submissions from our members. Remember to send your photos for next month's newsletter to Ed Lysek at [EdLysek@me.com](mailto:EdLysek@me.com). We had really great participation by members for this newsletter - keep them coming for July!



***Dendrobium speciosum*** as shown at SBIOE in the FCOS display. Native to New South Wales and the east coast of Australia. They bloom in spring and have fragrant flowers generally on pendant inflorescences. This plant was from an opportunity table supplied by Down Under Orchids many years ago. Plant is grown in plastic pot with an Orchiata and lava rock mixture. The total length of the cane and leaves is 24 inches. Grown outside by Chris Ehrler. The total length of other *D. speciosum* in Chris' collection that have bloomed vary from 14 to 36 inches. Needs frequent fertilizer and watering during the spring to fall period and a dry winter rest for best blooming.





***Dendrobium loddigesii*** - if given a dry winter rest you will be rewarded with a blanketed of flowers on this mat forming plant.  
Grown by Ed Lysek





***Dendrobium densiflorum*** - another monsoon area grower from India which likes wet, hot summers and cool, dry winters. Grown by Ed Lysek



**Dendrobium fimbriatum - will reward you with spring blooms if given a dry winter rest. Grown by Ed Lysek**



***Dendrobium kingianum* 'Betsy' HCC/AOS:□ grown by Chris Ehrler in his backyard. This plant received an HCC/AOS award several years ago. Needs frequent fertilizer and watering during the spring to fall period and a dry winter rest for best blooming. A close up of the flowers on the right side. *D. kingianum* is a very hardy orchid with a great many color forms. It can take both heat and cold and is a native of Australia.**



***Dendrobium nobile*** - a soft cane Dendrobium referred to by Dr. Motes. If given bright light in summer and a cool dry winter you will be rewarded with canes crowded with flowers in spring. If they are overwatered in the winter keikis (small plants) will appear instead of flowers.





Dan Asbell shows what a mature *Dendrobium* can look like when properly grown.



***Dendrobium aggregatum*** - the pendulous flowers make this an ideal orchid for a hanging basket. Grown by Ed Lysek





***Dendrobium cuthbertsonii*** is a cooler growing orchid with a range of color forms ranging from soft pastels to bold reds and purples. Flowers can last several months and if you have the proper conditions this is an orchid you definitely need to add to your collection. This plant is grown by Dan Newman of Hanging Gardens in Pacifica, CA.



**Love this *Dendrobium*. Got it off the Dec 2019 auction table. No special name given. Flowers would make beautiful leis but I am going to keep it in my living room window. Grown by Judy Scheithauer. This one looks a lot like the plant Dr. Motes is holding in the photo above.**





Although the tag states this is *Dendrobium reflexipetalum* this species name has a different flower in OrchidSpecies.com so the name tag is possibly wrong. Grown mounted on a piece of cork bark in my small cool greenhouse. Growths are flat with the flowers generally at the end of the newest leaves. Grown by Chris Ehrler

Closeup of *Dendrobium reflexipetalum* flower seen at the end of one of the growths in the image above. You will need to look closely as the flower is small.





**One of the newer Australian hybrid *Dendrobiums* growing at Santa Barbara Orchid Estate. These types of *Dendrobiums* are suitable for outdoor growing on the Central Coast.**



***Dendrobium Aussie Parade***  
**'Carrot Splash' x D. Allyn Star**  
**'Crikey' AM/AOS. An Australian**  
***Dendrobium*** supplied by Sunset  
Valley Orchids for a FCOS  
opportunity table a few years  
ago. Grown outside year round  
in a plastic pot with a  
combination of Kiwi Bark and  
lava rock. Grown by Chris Ehrler

***Dendrobium*** (Tosca x  
Rutherford Starburst) 'Red  
Wine x Hilda Poxon 'SVO  
Spectacular'. Another  
Australian *Dendrobium*  
supplied by Sunset Valley  
Orchids for a FCOS opportunity  
table a few years ago. Grown  
outside year round in a plastic  
pot with a combination of Kiwi  
Bark and lava rock. Grown by  
Chris Ehrler



## Growing Aussie Dendrobiums

Australian Dendrobiums are becoming a popular plant for orchid hobbyists. Their tolerance to a wide range of temperatures makes them ideal for our weather conditions here in the USA. Aussie Dendrobium flowers are fragrant and come in many sizes and colors. In recent years the Australian breeders have made some significant improvements and their efforts have captured the eye of almost every orchid grower in Australia.

Watering and Fertilizing are related as water carries fertilizer into the root zone. Important for good Aussie Dendrobium growth is to have their roots dry down between watering. In the summer fertilize with every watering using a fertilizer solution of 100 PPM nitrogen; this equates to a ½ tsp. in a gallon of water. In the summer when days are long and warm, the plants are in active growth and photosynthesis is at a high rate. As a result, you water and thus fertilize more, usually 2 times a week, however during the hottest period watering may be 3 times a week. During the cooler months, December-February, allow the plants to be totally dry before watering, generally every 10-12 days. In nature most Aussie Dens grow as lithophytes (on rocks) or epiphytes (in trees) which are well drained. The key to good Aussie Den culture is always check that the potting media has dried out sufficiently before watering.

Light levels, Temperature, and Air Movement. These are closely related, as light raises temperature and air movement cools it. Aussie Dendrobiums like light levels of about 2500-3500 foot candles (fc). For optimal growth I suggest growing under 55-65 % shade in winter and 65-75 % shade in summer. This is accomplished by adding a second layer of 30% shade cloth in late spring thru late summer. Also a Southern exposure or a location where the plants will receive plenty of bright, filtered light will work. The plants prefer summer day temperatures of 75-90 F and for winter nights of 45-55 F. Aussie Dens. are quite adaptable and short periods of higher or lower temperature usual don't damage the plants. In nature Aussie Dens. receive abundant air movement. Your growing area needs to have good air movement for best culture.

Potting mix and Pots: I prefer the Kiwi Orchid Bark™ brand of New Zealand Pine bark for growing Aussie Dendrobiums; it is hard and lasts 3-5 years. Douglas fir bark is also satisfactory. Use 3 parts bark with 1 part perlite. Strive for consistency in the potting media and adjust the particle size based on pot size. For 2- 3 in pots use fine grade bark and #2 perlite, for 4 in pots medium bark and #3 perlite and for 5 in plus pots large bark and #4 perlite. Plastic pots work well; they are inexpensive, light weight and readily available. However clay pots may work better



in hot humid climates. Aussie Dens. don't like to be overpotted. Select a pot size that will allow for a maximum of 2 years of growth. Oversized pots take too long to dry out, causing root problems; remember, an important key to good Aussie Dendrobium culture is allowing the root zone to dry between watering.

**Re-potting and Dividing:** Aussie Dendrobiums start their growth cycle in the spring and new growths indicate new roots but always wait until you see new root tips before re-potting. Please don't underestimate the importance of re-potting when new roots are starting to show, the stress on a newly potted plant is greatly reduced as the new roots will quickly reestablish it. Divisions should be made by cutting with a sterile tool or by pulling the bulbs apart. Try to keep the size of divisions between 3 and 4 bulbs. Remove most of the old media from the root system. Often the newest roots are so tightly intertwined with the old media and removing it is too damaging to them. As a result I may leave 5-10% of the old media in place in an effort to not damage these tightly intertwined newer roots. They are the most effective roots and minimizing damage will lead to a quicker re-establishment. Australian Dendrobiums are new to the American orchid grower, the Aussies have been growing them for years, and they are one of the most rewarding orchid alliances. Their adaptability to a wide range of growing conditions, fragrance, and variety of flower color, shape and size makes these an excellent hobby plant. Everyone should have some in their collection. So why not grow and flower an Australian Dendrobium, or two or three, to perfection?

Fred Clarke of Sunset Valley Orchids generously allowed us to reprint these recommendations. Visit his website [www.sunsetvalleyorchids.com](http://www.sunsetvalleyorchids.com) for more information.

## **FCOS By-Laws**

The FCOS Board of Directors (BOD) is proposing an addition to the By-Laws to prepare for future orchid shows. Once finalized by the BOD and Show Committee the FCOS general membership will vote for approval at our Oct. or Nov. monthly Zoom meeting. Here's what's planned:

The Show Chairperson shall be appointed by a majority vote of the FCOS Board of Directors (BOD) to oversee the Show Committee, a Standing Committee. The Show Chairperson may be replaced by a majority vote of the FCOS BOD. The duly appointed Show Chairperson shall be a voting member of the

**FCOS BOD. The Show Chairperson shall present to the FCOS BOD, in a timely manner prior to each scheduled show, a proposed budget developed by the Show Committee of anticipated expenses and income. The FCOS Board of Directors shall review such budget, and in a timely manner give either their approval or request for modification(s). Upon approval of the submitted budget by the FCOS BOD, the Show Committee will then be duly authorized to make the proposed expenditures.**

**Karen has been actively supporting FCOS with her ideas, time and committee leadership. Here's your chance to support Karen and work with other FCOS members to get into the Holiday Spirit!**



**Notice of elections for Board of Directors, FCOS  
At our December 10, 2020 ZOOM meeting, we will hold elections**

**for the position of President, and one At Large Board member.**

**The election committee consists of Denise Florez, Phyllis Rosenberg, and Karen Kolba (current BOD member.) If you have time to spare and would like to contribute to FCOS with time and talent, please let one of us know. Additional details will be in the November newsletter.**

### **Holiday Party**

**The annual FCOS Holiday Party will be held on Thursday, December 10, 2020 via ZOOM.**

**While we can't be together at our usual meeting place, complete with tables groaning with great platters of tasty food shared by all, we'd like to do something a little special for our members. We are thinking of other ways of sharing for the festivities.**

**If you'd like to be in on the secret and help make it happen, please contact me, Karen Kolba to discuss. For those of you who will be missing the traditional hustle and bustle of seasonal décor and treats and edibles to share, let's get our ideas together. Email [kskolba@aol.com](mailto:kskolba@aol.com).**



**Orchids are really great and so are the people who grow and share them!**  
*Stay safe and healthy and looking forward to getting back together as a society in the not too distant future.*

**Five Cities Orchid Society, P.O. Box 1066, Grover Beach, CA 93483-1066, USA**

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