

St. Augustine NEWSLETTER Orchid Society March 2015

Volume 10 Issue #3

CLUB NEWS



March 3 **Monthly Meeting** by Janis Croft, croftie1984@gmail.com

Welcome and Thanks. President Bob Schimmel opened the meeting at 7:15 pm with 51 attendees. Bob welcomed seven visitors, including Rae Coletti and Linda Schenholm who rejoined the club. Bob also thanked Jeanette Smith, Shirley

Browning, Dania Borreo and Ricardo Torres for their wonderful refreshments and reminded all to enjoy while dropping a dollar in the jar. Linda Stewart recognized our four birthday people with free raffle tickets and Bob reminded all to vote for their favorite orchid on the show table.

Club Business. Annual dues are now being collected. \$15 individual and \$25 for a family. Bill Gourley, Treasurer, is collecting payments. All memberships are due by the end of March.

SAOS Librarian Penny Halyburton brought in a Repotting CD to get all ready for the repotting season. She advises members to email her with your book selection (see our website) and she will bring your requested book(s) to the next meeting.

The next Keiki Club will be meeting March 22 at the Bottom's Home, 6916 Cypress Lake Court. The topic will be repotting. Bring a 4 and 6 inch clay pot with you along with a folding chair.

Orchid supplies are again available for sale. The Ace Repotting Clinic is on March 7 at Ace Hardware on U.S. 1 from 9 am to 1 pm.



Start grooming your orchids now to participate in the Jacksonville Orchid Society Show on March 28 and 29. Christie Peppard asked for volunteers to assist with raffle table and other duties. Mike Heinz passed around a sign-up sheet for clerks to help the judges during



Saturday morning before the show opens. Contact either if you can volunteer. Our show chairman, Harry McElroy, is also in need of volunteers to help transport and setup our club display. If you have a plant to submit, remember to email Sue Bottom the name of each plant for labels to be prepared in time.

Orchid Events. There are four big shows in Florida this month in Tampa Bay, Fairchild, Port St. Lucie and Jacksonville. Check out our website for more details.

Show Table Review. Courtney Hackney reviewed the Show Table and talked about the varieties of plants present on the table. It is quite informative to hear Courtney share his knowledge about the plants that other members are growing in our area.



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CLUB NEWS



Upcoming Orchid Events

March

6-8 Englewood Area Orchid Society Show Englewood Methodist Church

6-8 Martin County Orchid Society Show Martin County Fairgrounds

SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm
 3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine
 Repotting and Plant Clinic

7-8 Tampa Bay Orchid Society Show Egypt Shrine Center

10 JOS Meeting, 7 pm
Eric Cavin, JOS
Show Preparations

13-15 Fairchild's International Orchid Festival
Fairchild Botanic Garden, Coral Gables

20-22 Port St. Lucie Orchid Society Show Port St. Lucie Community Center

Keiki Club for Orchid Beginners
 Spring Repotting
 Sue and Terry Bottom's Home
 6916 Cypress Lake Ct. St. Aug 32086

28-29 Jacksonville Orchid Society Show
The Garden Club of Jacksonville

April

4 SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm 3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine Repotting and Plant Clinic

7 SAOS Meeting, 7 pm Keith Davis, Keith Davis Ochids Demystifying the Bifoliate Cattleyas

14 JOS Meeting, 7 pm, Topic TBA Speaker TBA

11-12 EPIC Celebration of Spring
Annual Flower and Garden Expo
Ag Center, St. Augustine

11-12 Tallahassee Orchid Society Show Doyle Conner Building

19 Keiki Club for Orchid Beginners, 1 pm Orchids Outside the Pot Sue and Terry Bottom's Home 6916 Cypress Lake Ct. St. Aug 32086

25-26 Vero Beach Orchid Society Show Riverside Park

May

SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm 3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine Repotting and Plant Clinic

2-3 Platinum Coast Orchid Society Show Kiwanis Island Park Gym & Annex

?? JOS Picnic

3611 Richmond St., Jax 32205

5 SAOS Meeting, 7 pm Tom Kuligowski, The Angraecum Blog Angraecums

9-10 Volusia County Society Show Volusia County Fairgrounds

15-17 Redlands International Orchid Festival Fruit and Spice Park, Homestead

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SAOS Program. Sue Bottom introduced our guest speaker, Peter Lin from Diamond Orchids in Southern California. Peter is an avid orchid hobbyist, hybridizer and AOS judge. He grows primarily mini-catts, Sophronitis, Dendrobiums and miniature species orchids in 3 small greenhouses. His talk this evening was on Neofinetia falcata and its hybrids. These miniatures are native to Japan, Okinawa and parts of China and Korea. They have been highly prized in Japan throughout history. The first written records describing them date back to the early 1600's. The Fukiran species were prized by the noble class and they valued the entire plant - not just the flowers. They would grow them in moss mounds so the root tips were exposed. The appearance and color of the roots were and are the most valued part of the orchid plant. They would be planted in hand made, three-legged exquisite pots. These plants were not cloned so one could only buy a division of a plant they admired



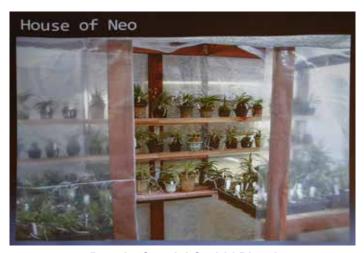
A typical Japanese Neofinetia falcata display

Peter traveled to Japan to see the Neofinetias growing in their native habitat. He shared a beautiful photo of a Ginkgo biloba tree that had its limbs covered with hundreds of plants in bloom. While in Japan, he was able to view an orchid show with displays of Neofinetia falcata. Japanese usually judge without flowers as the leafs, roots and presentation are more important than the flowers.

Peter next described the three forms that are used to evaluate a plant. The *color forms* describe the location of color(s) on the flower as well as the overall colors. The *flower forms* or shapes are multi-segmented, bean, forward spur, peloric and triple spur. Flowers normally last three weeks. The leaf forms describe mostly the type of variegation of leaf color (marginal, tri-color, tiger and inner variegation) and shape (pine needle, bean leaf and miniature been leaf).



Peter and others in the U.S. are hybridizing Neofinetia with almost all Vandaceous varieties, e.g., Ascofinetia, Neostylis and Renanetia. The Neofinetia is referred to as the wind orchid. They love growing in baskets hanging in trees and require frequent watering. Further information can be found at www.fukiransoa.com, on the Neofinetia facebook page or by contacting lin.peterT@yahoo.com.



Peter's 'Special Orchid Place'

Meeting Conclusion. Harry McElroy announced the Member's Choice Award went to Sue Bottom with her Dendrobium Justin Lau. Members also brought in five plants for the Silent Auction. The raffle table was the final event of the evening with Christie Peppard and Dianne Batcheldor presiding. Thanks to all of those that stayed and cleaned up the room.

Thanks to Watson Realty and Jeanette Smith for the use of their meeting space at 3505 US 1 South



CLUB NEWS



February 15 Keiki Club

Spring into Action

More than a dozen folks came to the Keiki Club get together at Yvonne and Bob Schimmel's home. Bob gave an overview of his growing practices during the cool resting and warm growing seasons. He talked about spring preparations, staking your orchids for their best presentation and getting ready for the spring repotting marathon. There were some discussions about various aspects of orchid growing and then we toured Bob and Yvonne's outside growing areas, winter greenhouse setup and porch display area for blooming orchids. It's always fun to see the growing environments of other local orchid growers.



Have You Renewed Your Membership?

Membership dues for 2015 are collected during the first three months of the year. If you haven't renewed your membership yet, you can mail your membership check to SAOS c/o Bill Gourley, 807 Kalli Creek Lane, St. Augustine, FL 32080. Soon we'll be updating our 2015 SAOS roster and email distribution list. You don't want to miss any newsletters!

April 7 Monthly SAOS Meeting

Demystifying the Bifoliates

Keith Davis of Reidsville, NC will tell us some of his secrets for growing the bifoliate cattleyas at the April 7 meeting of the St. Augustine Orchid Society. The bifoliate cattleya species are an odd sort and have a



reputation for being difficult and finicky to grow and maintain. This talk will help the grower take some of the mystery out of this group of cattleyas so that you can enjoy their fabulous blooms. He is a witty and homespun speaker. We will be both enlightened and entertained by what he has to say. Keith lives on his family farm just outside Reidsville, NC where he maintains a large greenhouse with an impressive collection of approximately 10,000 orchids, mostly choice cattleya hybrids.

March 22 Keiki Club

Spring Repotting
Sue and Terry Bottom's Home

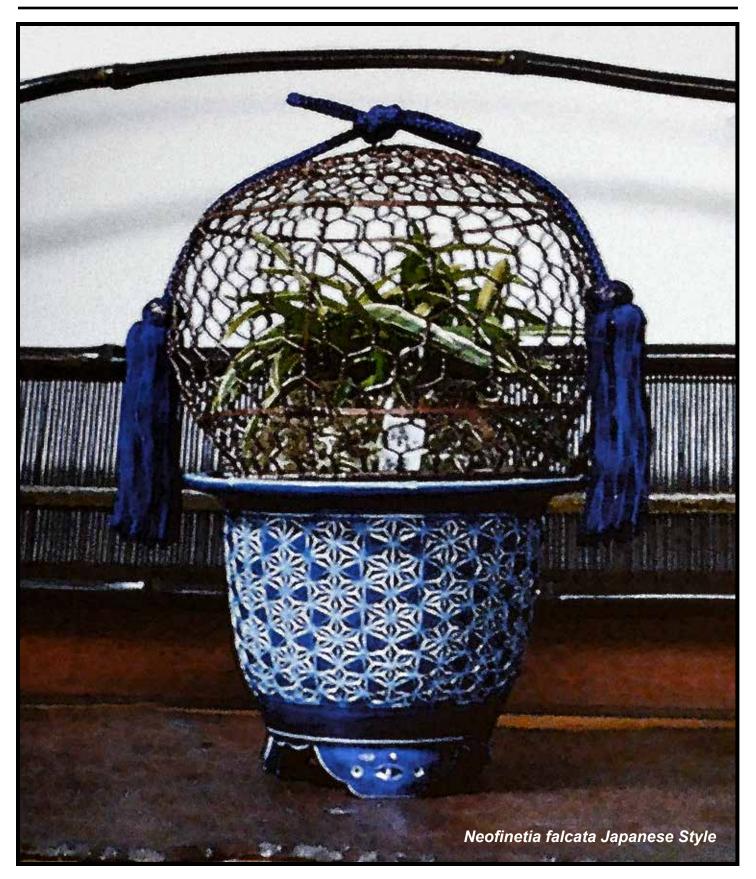
Many of your orchids are sending out new roots. If they need to be repotted, this is the time to do it. We'll talk about the various potting mixes you might use and show you how to repot your orchids. We've got some overgrown cattleyas so there may be some orchid divisions for you to pot up and bring home. Bring a 4 and 6 in clay pot, just in case. We'll meet at 6916 Cypress Lake Court in St. Aug from 1 to 3 pm. Bring a folding chair and any plants you have questions about. Guests and visitors are always welcome. Call Sue at 797-4360 if you have any questions.

Where: Sue and Terry Bottom's Home 6916 Cypress Lake Court, St. Aug 32086

When: March 22, 1 to 3 pm



INSPIRATION





Your Orchids in March

based on Robert Scully articles, courtesy of the AOS



General Growing Tips. Signs of spring abound with an abundance of emerging flower spikes and buds. The flush of spring growth will follow soon so plan your repotting program which should begin in earnest this month. The best time to repot is right before the new roots start growing so the plants will reestablish quickly. Watch for signs of mites, particularly on thin leaved orchids like the catasetinae and grammatophyllums, and treat any problems promptly.

Cattleyas. Several species flowering now are C. amethystoglossa with its large heads of crimson and white blooms, C. aurantiaca that delights with clusters of small yellow to orange star-like flowers, C. skinneri carrying many clusters of



lavender or white blooms or the natural hybrid of these last two C. guatemalensis. Soon sheaths will emerge on C. mossiae hybrids. Monitor their development so that moisture does not accumulate in the sheath causing bud blast.

Cymbidiums. Flower spikes are starting to develop and should be trained for their best display, although they are tender and easily broken. Arching or upright spikes display better if trained upward at first growth; some growers place



a name tag in front of the developing spike to guide it.

Pendulous cymbidiums should be allowed to grow naturally and downward without any type of training.

Oncidiums. Onc. papilio, the butterfly orchid, may be putting out the first in a series of many buds that will bloom through spring and early summer. Do not cut the inflorescence because it will continue to produce flowers year after year.



Even though Onc. papilio has hard leaves suggesting it will tolerate a lot of light (like cattleyas), it is better grown under bright phalaenopsis conditions.

Phalaenopsis. The hybrid moth orchids seem to last in perfection for months. Certain species are starting to bloom like the pink Phal. schilleriana and spotted Phal. stuartiana that are both fundamental to many modern hybrids. If grown in New Zealand sphagnum moss, make sure the moss does not deteriorate before the flowering season because a healthy root system is important to sustain the many flowers.







Orchid Questions & Answers

by Sue Bottom, sbottom15@bellsouth.net

Q1. Can you help me identify what kind of disease is on underside of these Encyclia tampensis leaves? The spots are not sunken. Otherwise the plant looks very happy and is



A1. That looks like a big happy clump, growing well and throwing off new shoots. It may just be purple pigmentation from the sun caused by the changing sun angle resulting in the



plant getting more direct light than earlier in the year. No problems as long as the spots are more purplish than black.

Q2. I am new to orchids, but my cousins got me to buy a spider orchid. The flowers fell off, the spike turned brown and one of the pseudobulbs is partially brown. Now what?



A2. The spider orchid looks like it's been kept too wet. That brown line working its way up the pseudobulb suggests the beginning of rot. Keep it dryish until you see the new roots forming. Also, they don't like to be in too

large of pots, and you select your pot size based on your root mass, not the top growth, so you may want to consider potting down a size.

- **Q3.** My butterfly orchid spike turned brown and then developed a white mildew on the soil (not on the plant). Someone said the roots were too wet, so I repotted in Better Gro's special orchid mix but it is not doing well.
- **A3.** The butterfly orchid, a Psychopsis, hates to be repotted and often sulks when its roots are disturbed. They do best in a lava rock or largely inorganic mix in which it can grow



for many years without disruption. You will have to flush salts from the pot but you won't have to worry about a degraded potting mix rotting the roots. The plant won't like it in the short term, but perhaps you should put it in a smallish pot with mostly inorganic materials and let it recover.



Q4. I just purchased a beautiful brassavola orchid, and realized after

I returned home that the surface of three of its leaves is covered with deep black pits. I assumed this was from fungal damage and sprayed with thiomyl. I thought perhaps these are old lesions because the orchid seller is quite reputable and I've always bought very healthy plants from him previously. However, I don't know if one can tell the difference between a previously treated problem and an active infection. Would you advise a follow up treatment? Is it better to remove the damaged leaves or keep them on the plant after treatment? Should I keep it isolated from other plants?



A4. That looks like bacterial brown spot. The thiomyl is great for fungal infections but won't kill bacteria. I'm guessing that it's old damage, but to be sure, you could spray some hydrogen peroxide on all the leaves (Walgreen's sells peroxide in a handy little spray bottle). As long as the spots don't enlarge or spread to other leaves, the infection is not active. I treat all orchids with a pesticide and fungicide as a precaution before adding plants to the greenhouse rather than practicing isolation where you would wait and watch for a problem to crop up.



Neofinetia falcata

by James and Lauris Rose, <u>Cal-Orchid</u>, <u>Inc.</u> Reprinted with Permission



Neofinetia falcata, while a rather new celebrity on the recent orchid circuit, is one of the oldest known orchids in cultivation. It is a native to Japan, Korea, and China and there are societies of growers who grow this orchid exclusively, and membership is by invitation only.

These plants have been cultivated in Japan for centuries and are known as the 'Orchid of the Shoguns', who maintained private collections, some of them added to by the Samurai soldiers who were perhaps attempting to gain favor with their Shogun.

Selected varieties of the species have long been admired and held closely by the most enthusiastic collectors in Japan for centuries and of course all cultivars have a wonderful citrus-coconut fragrance. Some can cost into the thousands of dollars even today. Many of these cultivars are what amounts to mutants by today's standards, as they have small stunted growth, or unusual, often random, variegated foliage. Though accepted as high priced commodities in Japan, they are just now becoming somewhat popular here in America. Perhaps more widely sought after are the colored flower varieties that have pink or green flowers and are lower in price.

At Cal-Orchid, we have spent years breeding with the robust form of Neofinetia native to Amami Island. This strain generally has larger flowers, longer sprays and much more robust plants. Flowers are typically white although occasionally will have some pink tint. We have been fortunate to bloom many select forms and created many

siblings for our customers to enjoy. It is now the only form we offer. The foliage is often tinted with black pigment.

Of course, as no stone is left untouched by our taxonomists of today, so the genus Neofinetia has now been reclassified as Vanda. We remain ever the mavericks of the orchid world, and so prefer to retain the older name as we personally feel there are just so many horticultural differences between these genera. Be all that as it may, Neofinetia falcata is just a fantastic plant for all growers from beginner to advanced and it does well under so many cultural conditions making it a candidate for inside the house, the greenhouse, and even on trees in So Cal coastal gardens.

Neofinetia hybrids are really great plants for people who enjoy the novelty of the more miniature plants or perhaps the city dwellers who just don't have much growing space. They do great on the windowsill. Through years of breeding one can now purchase plants of many different types of flowers and colors.

An added bonus is that some of the crosses are extremely fragrant, most notably the blue Neostylis Lou Sneary. The hybrids also express hybrid vigor making them, in many cases, easier to grow than the species. Another nice thing about these hybrids is that they all have quite different foliage types; whether the robust Neost. Pinky or style of the very petite Neost. Baby Angel or Chrisnetia Green Light. We are constantly sourcing new hybrids, so please check back often to see what new ones we have to offer.



Temperature. In nature, the temperature for the species ranges from nearly freezing well into the mid 90s. Some cultivars have been photographed with a dusting of snow.

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Optimal conditions would be day temperatures in the mid 80-85 degrees with night temperatures in the 55-60 degree range. This what is generally found in an intermediate greenhouse or in the home and under these conditions you will see very strong lush plants.

Light. Bright filtered light seems to be what is best, maybe even a little brighter due to its Vandaceous nature. This is similar to what is preferred for cattleyas. Leaves should be a nice green color maybe even with a tint of red. Though the plant will grow well under shady conditions, it will be reluctant to flower well.



Humidity and Air Movement. As with other monopodial orchids, Neofinetia and its hybrids grow best when not exposed to very dry conditions. Keep the humidity fairly high, in the 60-70 percent range. Good air movement will ensure that the growing conditions are fresh and remember, keeping the leaf temperature down assists in preventing disease.

Water and Fertilizer. The summer is monsoon season where Neofinetia and its various hybrid parents exist. This means that you should provide ample watering in the hot summer months, perhaps two to three times a week. The plants become fairly dormant in the fall and winter months which means that water should be cut back. In Japan, they often let the plants go almost completely dormant. The root tips are good indicators of when water practices have been appropriate. Fertilize quite often in the growing season with any balanced formula, giving less in the winter season.



Potting. There are many ways Neofinetia and its hybrids can be grown. Our preferred way is in a mixture of fir bark often with some charcoal. They are also great candidates for teak baskets or on mounts. We even found them mounted on large black lava rock. Gorgeous! The traditional Japanese way is in pots with the plant perched up on a mound of New Zealand sphagnum moss. This technique requires high quality, pure water. In pots, many of the roots will spill outside the pot; don't worry, this is normal. If the mix is old or if you water too much during the wintertime, you will surely rot the roots and so this should be avoided.

Link to article and pictures

http://www.calorchid.com/product-test-neofinetia/



Orchid Myths - Foliar Feeding

An Evening with Alan Koch by Sue Bottom, sbottom15@bellsouth.net



I never had so much fun learning how little I knew about something I thought I understood than I did at the kitchen counter with Alan Koch après our Orchid Club meeting. Take foliar feeding, I have heard people laughingly say that the way foliar feeding works is the next time you water after foliar feeding, the nutrients are washed from the leaves into the root zone where they can be absorbed by the roots. But foliar feeding is an accepted agricultural practice used to quickly correct nutrient deficiencies in many crops.

First, some basics. Plant leaves are specialized organs for capturing light and carbon dioxide. Leaf surfaces are covered by a cuticle, a hydrophobic skin with low permeability for water, gases and dissolved substances. The purpose of the cuticle is to minimize both the leaching of substances out of the leaf and the uncontrolled entry of substances into the leaf. Leaves also have stomata, adjustable pores on the leaf surface that facilitate the entry of carbon dioxide gas for photosynthesis into the leaf and the exit of water vapor for the transpiration process out of the leaf. The stomata are formed by pairs of guard cells that regulate the opening and closing of the pores. The stomata of some orchids are open during the day and others are only open at night, depending on their metabolism.

- C3 Pathway. Thin leaved orchids like many of the oncidiniiae tend to photosynthesize using the C3 pathway. The stomata, located only on leaf undersides, are open during the day so carbon dioxide can be absorbed during daylight hours while photosynthesis is underway. C3 orchids tend to have a thinner cuticle and higher density of stomata than CAM orchids.

- CAM Pathway. Thick leaved orchids like many in the cattleya alliance convert light energy to chemical energy using the CAM (an acronym for cressulacean acid metabolism if you really want to know) pathway. These epiphytes have adapted to a dry xeric environment by keeping their stomata, only present on the leaf undersides, closed during the day to prevent water loss. Carbon dioxide can only be absorbed at night when the stomata are open so it must be stored chemically in the thick leaf for subsequent use during the day light hours when photosynthesis occurs. This adaptation is also used by succulents. CAM orchids tend to have a thicker cuticle and lower density of stomata than C3 orchids.

There are many postulated pathways by which foliar applied nutrients enter the leaf surface via both the cuticle and stomata/guard cells. In general, the macronutrients (nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium) are best absorbed through the roots and the micronutrients that are generally immobile in the phloem are best absorbed through the macropores under the leaves. The secondary macronutrients (calcium, magnesium and sulfur) can be absorbed though the roots as well as through foliar applications.



There is an abundance of literature for foliar fertilization of crops and grasses but very little has been written about foliar feeding of orchids. Notwithstanding those who believe the very thick waxy cuticle and low stomata density of many orchids make foliar fertilization a "Spray and Pray" proposition, Alan has incorporated foliar fertilization into his overall plant nutrition program. Alan uses a 5 week rotation cycle, as described in his article "My Addiction to Miniature" published in the June 2007 Orchids magazine. In the first week, a balanced macronutrient fertilizer is applied as a drench to the root zone. In week two, a micronutrient package is sprayed onto leaf undersides, with calcium if the plants are in active growth. In the third week, the



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balanced macronutrient fertilizer application is repeated. In week four, the foliar micronutrients plus calcium application is repeated with the addition of seaweed or kelp. In the fifth week of the rotation, the pots are thoroughly leached with water to flush accumulated salts from the root zone.

The real trick in foliar feeding is the equipment used to effectively supply the micronutrients and plant supplements to the undersides of the orchid leaves. Alan uses a fogger to atomize the spray when foliar feeding so aerosol size droplets will reach the plant undersides. He uses an adjuvant like <u>orange oil</u> to break the surface tension of the droplet on the leaf. He suits up in protective clothing protecting exposed skin surfaces and wears a respirator to prevent inhalation of these small aerosol sized droplets. Though less effective, a sprayer can be used particularly if the nozzle can produce a very fine spray. The smaller the droplet, the more effective the foliar application will be.



Foliar application rates are generally lower than the rates you would apply for root uptake. Products should be labeled for foliar applications and all label instructions should be followed to prevent leaf burn and phytotoxicity. Spraying should be scheduled during the very early morning hours when stomata are open, adjuvants should be added to the mix and care should be taken to direct the spray to the leaf undersides. Some nutrients and supplements, generally available at hydroponic stores, that are effective when used as foliar applications include:

- Calcium. Calcium can be absorbed through the roots and carried in the xylem to the growing part of the plant where it is used in building cell walls. It is mostly immobile in the phloem so calcium cannot be translocated from older to newer growths. Foliar applications of calcium during periods of rapid growth are a great way of supplying the calcium your orchid needs directly to the expanding tissue. Cal Mag solutions containing both calcium and magnesium are available for foliar feeding.



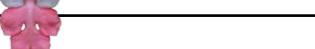
- Seaweed and Kelp. Seaweed extract and kelp assist in the absorption of nutrients and contain beneficial vitamins and hormones. Seaweed extract is a generally available organic product derived from harvested brown seaweed that contains major and minor nutrients, amino acids and growth promoting substances like auxins, cytokinins and gibberellins. The product KelPak is a specialty kelp product that can be ordered as KelpMax from First Rays.
- Micronutrients. The micronutrients zinc, manganese, iron, copper boron and molybdenum are required in small concentrations for plant growth. Alan recommends the Flora Micro and Flora Micro formulations available from General Hydroponics for the hobbyist. Spray-N-Grow Liquid Micronutrient Complex contains the trace elements.
- Urea. Urea is the most suitable nitrogen source for foliar applications because it is a nonpolar compound that is readily absorbed through the underleaf. Perhaps this explains why some orchid growers are so enamored of MegaThrive, a specially formulated foliar fertilizer containing urea, potassium, boron and molybdenum that is supposed to stimulate the plant's natural production of hormones.

The majority of your orchids' nutritional needs should be satisfied by your regular fertilization program in which the nutrients are delivered to the root zone for uptake. Foliar feeding is an enhancement to rather than a replacement of your regular fertilization program. Once you have mastered all the other aspects of orchid growing, providing the best light, air, water, nutrition, etc., foliar applications of specialty products may be the way you can make the leap from being a great grower to being an exceptional grower.



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SHOW TABLE



Grower Courtney Hackney Epc. Hanging Chad



Grower Linda Stewart Neo. falcata x Vanda teres var alba



Grower Sue Bottom L. harpophylla



Grower Sue Bottom

Den. (Gillieston Jazz x Victorian Flare) x Den. Tie-Dye



Grower Sue Bottom Blc. Ann Kietzy x Blc. Orange Nuggett



Grower Bob & Yvonne Schimmel
Blc. Fender's Love Song 'Red Velvet' AM/AOS



Grower Yvonne & Bob Schimmel Blc. Yellow Buttons 'Kiss of Red'



SHOW TABLE



Grower Harry & Celia McElroy Cym. Barcelona 'Magic Wand' AM/AOS



Grower Sue Bottom Den. Justin Lau



Grower Harry & Celia McElroy Cym. pumilum x Cym. Hotline



Grower Sue Bottom
Ddc. glumaceum? cobbianum?



Grower Courtney Hackney C. schroderae 'Hackneau'



Grower Sue Bottom Lyonara [Lyon.] Memoria Doug Lace 'Rosminah' HCC/AOS