

Orchid Society of Western Pennsylvania

Jan. 2021

www.oswp.org

Upcoming Events

Looking Ahead

January 17, 2021 **Peter Lin of Sunset Orchids** speaking on mini vandas and related species.

Meetings will continue on Zoom for now February 21 Nile Dusdieker - The Dunes and the Mist; the

Sanctuary and the Ledges: Orchids of Southern Brazil March: 21 Mary Gerritsen - Orchids of New Guinea

" UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES "

OSWP meetings are held at the Phipps Garden Center on Shady Avenue and are open to members, their guests and the general public. Program Calendar is also available at www.oswp.org

HOWEVER, we are on Zoom for meetings, and those interested non members could use the 'contact us' section of the website to get a Zoom invitation

OSWP Officers

Co-President: Sheila Nathanson and Mike Lyse **Secretary: Lance Cheuvront** Co-First Vice President: Kathleen Arria and David Springer **Treasurer: Janet Greenberg**

Second Vice President: Timothy Choltco

Directors: Brooke Decker, Peg Kalupanov, Jinghua Ou, Aaron Vitron, Tamara Wurst.

What's Blooming Now

Blc. Hausermann's Holiday 'Christmas' AM/AOS

A beautiful cattleya with a wonderful fragrance! As you can see it is a good lavender with 2 to 4 flowers per stem 8.5" wide. It is an easy grower and if grown well can become a specimen plant with many flowers. It is a standard size plant so one needs a large pot and adequate space to accommodate the potentially large plant. As the name suggests it usually blooms around the Christmas season. Because the cattleyas being native to south of the equator the season is spring/summer, which is great for us having beautiful flowers in the middle of winter. Inasmuch as that we do not have much natural light in winter supplemental lighting is necessary. These plants benefit from being summered outside and fertilized weekly, weekly. Let them dry out between waterings. I water first one day then the next day I water with weak fertilizer solution. In the summer I can use rain water but I have not melted snow to have this water in the winter. They are epiphytes so I grow them in bark in clay pots. That way the mediad will dry out easily.



Photo by Jim Yamber

Co-President's Letter January 2021

Happy Holidays and especially a Happy New Year! We survived 2020! This historically difficult year is finally behind us and we are seeing light at the end of the Covid-19 tunnel! People are getting vaccinated against a coronavirus for the first time ever. We are extremely fortunate to be living at this time of scientific innovation, even though some of us would prefer a night out with friends. Soon enough- don't get rid of your masks and 6 foot sticks quite yet, but this is a start towards normalcy.

Since this is the 'season of giving, if you are so inclined, Jonathan Jones, who most of us know as the Marlows Orchids property and inventory. He has been a vendor at our spring show for several years, taking over that role from Jim Marlow, who has retired from traveling to shows. He has worked hard to market the business with a strong online presence, and is offering incentives for contributions. More information may be found at their website, marlowsorchids.com.

Our next meeting will be on Sunday, January 17 via Zoom. As usual, the official meeting time is 2pm until 4pm, but Brooke opens the Zoom room a little earlier to help anyone who may have technical

difficulties, and to socialize. Our main speaker will be Peter Lin, with a program on 'Miniature Vandaceous Species and Related Genera'.

The mini class will feature Demetria Marsh, the topic is 'Growing Paphiopedilum. The mini class begins at 1:30 pm. Demetria is a wonderful orchid grower, and is specially skilled with paphs.

We will also have Show and Tell, thank you to our wonderful growers and photographers who have been sharing pictures of their blooming plants. Keep them coming!



We look forward to seeing you in the new year- if you haven't tried a Zoom meeting yet, let it be one of your New Year's resolutions. One that is easy to keep!

Stay safe, be well and think orchids!

Orchid Gems

Happy New Year to all our members! May 2021 be better than 2020!

However, as we look ahead, we don't want to forget those who have brightened our days in the past and who continue to inspire us with their presence. So, as an introduction for our new members and a reintroduction for our old, we include the following updates from some of our members who have so kindly let us feature them as "Orchid Gems" in the past. We appreciate all our members. So, if you would like to be featured in a future "Orchid Gems," or if you would like to write "Orchid Gems" articles, please let us know. Your input is always welcome!

Pam Horter-Moore and Norma Raiff

DAVE MILLER

An OSWP member since 2012, many of us know Dave as someone who has truly embraced the world of orchid growing. He is now an AOS judge, a great guest speaker, and by the way, belongs to four Orchid Societies (just count them; Greater Cleveland, West Shore, Greater Akron, and OSWP). And even if you grow in a greenhouse, Dave will manage to convert you to think about growing certain orchids in the protected confines of an aquarium. "My orchids never looked better as we never go anywhere due to caution and COVID guidelines in Ohio. But that is not the whole story. It has always been difficult for me to stick to a schedule, but now, with less to do I am being more conscientious about my orchid care schedule. It is not that I'm spending more time caring for my orchids, but that I am spending better time. "One reason for spending better time is I have finally admitted that I



cannot grow all orchids in my limited space so little by little I have weaned myself off certain kinds of orchids even though they are quite beautiful. I am focusing on those that grow well in my house and I stick with those alliances. These include slipper orchids, Catasetinae, Bulbophyllums, Tolumnias (equitants) and Phals. With the exception of Phals (obviously requiring lower light), the rest of these basically have the same culture with only slight variations in potting requirements. I grow them right in my small growing space and grow them successfully by modifying the intensity of light, distance from the light and potting media. Alas, I must admire the work of others for the great orchids that do not fit my environment. Rich Sipko, a long-time OSWP member, once told me I was stupid for trying to grow so many different orchids in my small space. He was right but it is extremely difficult to admit such a thing and then stick to it, requiring quite a bit of discipline when facing the orchid sales table. One of the big problems with the COVID pandemic is that most of our preferred vendors and speakers are not available in person and we have not had any orchid shows in almost a year. Instead, I am putting forth every effort in supporting our speakers by purchasing from them as they speak remotely or have their online sales. I also grow my collection by trading with other members as well. Please make every attempt to support our cherished vendors by visiting their open houses or making an online order. Right now, I am also working with eight other AOS judges on a task force that is focused on making improvements to the AOS Judging program. We are focusing on standardizing judging education across all AOS judging centers and also expanding our outreach program to educate the public on how to become a judge and how to get their plants judged. Many of you may have already seen the new "AOS Judges" ads I am placing in society newsletters as well as the "Judges Viewpoint" articles. Words of advice: "I would tell everyone that it's important to find experienced people in their society who are willing to teach them about orchids. Talk to them by phone, send them texts or emails and build an interactive relationship. I am working with a new member right now that I have never met, but we talk frequently, sometimes daily. Be sure to ask questions, no matter what that are." Happy Orchiding to All of You.

Jim Yamber

Jim Yamber, our long-term Newsletter Editor, has continued to connect us to each other by emailing photos of members' blooming plants. Its "Show and Tell" time on-line, spreading the grace and beauty of our favorite orchids. Cheering us up during these dark days. When asked for an update, Jim talked about his growing environment. "Because of cold temperature issues, one of the main things I did was move my plants to the basement to grow under lights. I still use my greenhouse for a variety of cold tolerant plants, and I am especially interested in seeing what happens to a Cypripedium that I recently got from Yugoslavia. I'm hoping that the colder green house will help it to break dormancy." As for my roles in the OSWP, we now have the virtual Show and Tell, where people are sending in pictures to share. The newest thing that is going to start is that OSWP members will now also be encouraged to



send in 'problem pictures' – photos of orchids which aren't doing so well and where they are seeking advice. Nancy Kline has volunteered to do this and there may be others who are also willing to help. With the e blasting that I do, I am sort of like a clearinghouse for all these things, whether it be Show and Tell, special announcements, newsletters, or whatever. I think it has really helped to keep the Society together. And it's not just here in Pittsburgh, because we have members in Florida, Philadelphia, Indiana and Ohio." Words of advice: "New members need to enjoy this time and, if you have new plants, remember that they are living creatures and you have to take care of them." Don't forget to send me the pictures of your orchid beauties so I can resend them to all of our members.

Orchid Gems

RAJ POPAT

An OSWP member since 2005, Raj Popat is an enthusiastic orchid grower who has purchased specimens nationally and internationally, and has won many ribbons. Asked for an update on his orchid environment, Raj has good news to report. After struggling with fungal infection, he has solved the problem with the addition of oscillating fans standing at plant-level in his greenhouse. The 180-degree rotation of these fans moves the air gently through the leaves of the orchids, as a mild breeze would in their natural environment. The only downside, if it can be considered a downside, is that he must water more frequently as the orchid medium dries out more quickly. "I have to water every four or five days instead of weekly. It's more work, but there is no fungus, so my time is rewarded. The Cymbidiums are

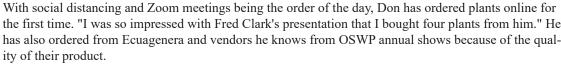


thriving and loving the extra aeration, as are the Oncidiums and Cattleyas." Raj's environment includes an exhaust fan high above ground level at one end of the greenhouse which pushes air out, as vents at floor level open to bring fresh air in. As heat rises in the greenhouse, fans high in the eaves drive heat down to the orchids below. In the summer, ridge vents open to release heat, while they close in winter to retain heat. These are controlled by a thermostat that opens and closes the ridge vents as temperatures dictate. Even in the winter, temperatures may rise to 95 degrees Fahrenheit in the greenhouse, necessitating the opening of the ridge vents. Light is not an issue for Raj, because the clear glass in the greenhouses allow 2- to 3,000 candlepower on dark days, and up to 4- to 5,000 candlepower on sunny days. "I don't fertilize after Halloween, and I stop fertilizing Dendrobriums as early as the end of August," Raj says. Words of advice: "Orchids can't tell you what they need. You must be attentive to the condition of your plants and respond accordingly."

Don Ammon

An avid orchid collector and a gifted writer and teacher, Don Ammon has many friends in OSWP who know him as a warm and obliging personality who is always willing to work to support the success of our Society, shows, and projects.

Covid-19 has not changed Don's growing habits but caused him to change his buying habits. "I was advised by Barbara Tisherman to only buy plants I've actually seen from vendors or other growers. When you buy online, you don't know what you are going to get."





Don has developed an enthusiasm for Catasetum orchids. Through purchases made from OSWP members Vicki Stroud and Carol Panza, Don developed an interest in these orchids and has expanded his collection from five to nine specimens. "I now grow Clowesia, Monnierara, Fredclarkeara, Mormodes, Mormodia, Catasetum, and Cycnoches."

"These orchids require little care in the winter when they are dormant, which was one of their attractions," Don says. "They started blooming in November after dropping their leaves. They are warm growers, so once the temperature hits 70 degrees, I put them outside and I water and feed them heavily in summer."

Word of advice: "Buy what you have room for," Don says. "The Catasetum I got from Sunset Valley Orchids are in 3-inch pots, which fit well between my larger plants."

Brooke Decker

An epidemiologist and the Director of Infection Prevention at VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System, Brooke Decker has been especially busy since the Covid-19 pandemic began in March of this year trying to keep employees and veterans safe. Nonetheless, she is a member of the OSWP Board of Directors and has been very helpful in preparing PowerPoint slides and overseeing Zoom meetings as we continue to meet online to avoid the virus. She is also a wife and the mother of four-year old Willow who loves orchids. When asked for an orchid update, Brooke reports that she is very happy with her Dendrobiums, which are now showing some improvement after the October mini-class. She is especially happy that we finally have a Covid-19 vaccine. "I was in tears when I was scheduled. Finally, we



are seeing the light at the end of the tunnel," she says. This time of pandemic has been especially hard for Willow, who misses the weekend trips to Phipps conservatory and hikes with Mr. Tim. "She's mad. She says she hates Corona. She misses hugs and visits to her Nan-Nan."

Photograph caption: Brooke is one of the first wave of Americans to get the Covid-19 vaccine.

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Demetria Marsh

Demetria Marsh has played a leading role in the OSWP in many capacities for many years. She's been past President. She was a 2nd Vice President once, and 1st Vice President three times (and one of those as co-1st Vice President). She has been Show Chairperson and co-Chairperson several times, as well as co-Chair of the "Watch Us Grow Mini-Orchid Show Fall Festival.

She also started the Cultural Study Group in the 1980s. "Once a month we would meet at an OSWP member's home to see how they were growing their orchids, and we would have an OSWP member as the speaker. Those meetings could be on a night or weekend afternoon, depending on the host/hostess.



Luckily others picked up and helped as Chair of the Cultural Study Group. It has faded away as people have less free time to get together."

Demetria helped organize our OSWP work at Phipps, starting in 1990, and then re-invigorated our help and Phipps partnership in 2007, which was formalized in 2011.

"Nancy Kline and I are the co-Chairs of P-OSI (the joint initiative between Phipps Conservatory and the OSWP), and so we are grateful for the many years of help our members have given us. Of course, right now, we cannot help at Phipps, and Katie Schuller, Phipps Orchid Manager and OSWP member, has been doing everything on her own."

The big news of 2020 was the Covid-19 epidemic. Like many other organizations, the OSWP had to modify its activities in order to remain a viable, active organization, while keeping its members safe.

"We were lucky to get the OSWP show in just before the first shut down, so I was able to purchase all the orchid supplies I needed from Roberts Orchid Supply of Columbia Station, Ohio," says Demetria. "With our virtual Zoom meetings, I have been able to diversify our orchid collection a little from the knowledge I've gained from our speakers. I then use those speaker's websites to buy new and different orchids. It's not nearly the same as seeing their plants in person and talking with them, but I am still able to learn virtually. The orchids I have ordered have all been very nice and make me happy!

I miss seeing our OSWP members in person. This summer, when the virus had taken a bit of vacation, several of the OSWP members took part in the outdoor Sales and Swap OSWP Event held at South Park. It was so special to see those members who were comfortable attending, and to enjoy a lot of lovely orchids. It was just wonderful and a respite from all this. I can't wait until we are able to get back to our regular meetings. Although I miss seeing everyone, we need to stay safe.

Brien and I are in the midst of moving from our downtown condo to an apartment at the Cork Factory, and so we have lots of change in our lives, and that includes changes in our orchid environment. Our windows face three directions. The ones I will be using face east and south, so the light will be wonderful. And, of course, our terrarium fits in beautifully with a simple lamp to provide the proper light. I have to thank OSWPers Dave Miller and Carolyn Bolton once again for so generously sharing all their terrarium knowledge with us.

Speaking of terrariums, my Dendrobium Hibiki has become so big and tall that I had to take it out of the terrarium. I wasn't sure how it would respond to the change, but it seems to be doing just fine on the window sill."

Word of advice: "Aside from wonderful orchid people and the beauty and complexity of orchid flowers, my favorite thing is that there is always something new to learn, new to try.

Orchid growing provides lots of room for all kinds of growth. So, think Orchids!"

Mini-class 2021 – January 17 1:15pm prior to the O.S.W.P. business meeting.

Slipper Orchids - Demetria Marsh

Please join myself and the O.S.W.P. for the mini-class for the January 2021 meeting. The speaker, Demetria Marsh, will cover the culture of lady slipper orchids (Paphiopedilum and Phragmipedium).

Paphiopedilum are native to southern Asia, Southeast Asia, and the larger islands of Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. Paphiopedilum is rather diverse and has several groups within the genus that require slightly different cultural conditions, so far as temperature and light requirements. Paphiopedilum do not produce extensive root systems. As a result they prefer to stay evenly moist but need very good drainage so as not to rot the roots.

Phragmipedium are native to Central and South America. Phragmipedium are found in moist to wet seepage areas along cliffs, waterfall splash zones, as well as growing in and along freshwater streams. They tend to prefer brighter light than their Asian cousins. They also prefer a moist to even wet medium. Again with very good drainage.

Demetria Marsh who I've known for all 38 years on my OSWP tenure will expertly discuss these wonderful plants. Demetria was instrumental in bringing many of these plants to the OSWP and instilling interest in slipper orchids to an entire generation of orchid geeks like me. Demetria also oversees the National Lady Slipper Orchid Collection currently located at our beloved Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Garden.

Please join Demetria, myself, and the rest of the OSWP for this presentation prior to the regular O.S.W.P. meeting. Timothy Choltco

2nd Vice President and all around decent sentient being.









January speaker Peter Lin

We are very pleased to have Peter Lin join us for our January meeting to discuss minature vandas and related species. Peter is an avid orchid hobbyist, hybridizer, AOS judge, and proprietor of Diamond Orchids. Peter is a well-known and engaging speaker, a great way to start off the year.

Peter started growing orchids over 35 years ago, but then stopped due to school and starting a career. It wasn't until about 15 years ago that the orchid "bug" came back and he is now heavily involved once again! Due to limited growing space, Peter likes to specialize in miniature orchids, both species and hybrids, and has received numerous AOS awards. His interests in orchids include Dendrobiums, Angraecoids, and Neofinetias. He is also known as "Mr Sophronitis" as he has a passion for growing and collecting them. He maintains a collection of a thousand or more orchids at his home in Southern California in 3 small greenhouses, outdoors, as well as an offsite greenhouse.

<u>Judges Viewpoint by Dave Miller, Judges Viewpoint by Dave Miller, Great Lakes Judging Center</u>

Presenting Your Orchid

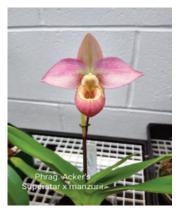
Last month we talked about the qualities that make for good orchid flowers but there is a hidden side to making a good plant look even better. That hidden element is "Presentation".

Dress Me Up

When I speak to orchid groups about what judges like to see in a displayed orchid, I always stress presentation. Whether on the show table, show exhibit or in the AOS judging room, presentation can improve or distract the quality of any plant.

Here are a few tips on how to take your favorite plant and make them even more desirable.

Face the Viewer



Stand in front of your plant, eyes on the flower. What do you see? Make sure your flower or flowers are oriented to meet the viewer's gaze straight on. It may take some work to do that, but in the end the resulting plant will "show" even better. Sometimes that will require some work to get the flower oriented in the best way. Other times it is impossible because the presentation work should have started months ago when the flower spikes were just starting.

This is especially true for Phalaenopsis and slipper orchids. Many orchid spikes resist rearrangement as the spike matures. Also, if not arranged before the buds mature, the flowers will not be oriented relative to the final staking.

Staking

Other than buying plants with high quality flowers this step is the single most important thing to do prior to displaying your plant. Note in the attached photo that there is already a stake in the pot for every single emerging inflorescence even if only ¼" tall. It accomplishes two things. First, it alerts me to be more careful around the plant so not to break it. Second, as the spike grows, the staking process begins and continues as it lengthens which may take as much as four to six months on some orchids. It can be staked straight or with a curved wire which becomes a personal choice.





Housekeeping

Staking has been separated out due to its importance. Next comes making the best possible plant presentation. There are a couple easy steps to grooming that make a huge difference. Clean the dust and dirt off the leaves. DO NOT USE LEAF WAX. Leaf waxes and orchids tend not to co-exist. Instead, use diluted milk or lemon juice solution and a soft cotton to wipe down the leaves. Personally, I frequently use insecticidal soap for insect maintenance and find it better than either of these other products. Next, clean any loose debris out of the leaf mass and the media surface. Now, look at all the leaves for bad spots or injury and prune those away using a sterile razor blade. Only part of the leave need be taken off. But, if the plant only has three leaves, cutting one leaf off should not be done. Be

sure to cut the tip of the leaf in the same shape as the original leaf as there is nothing worse than looking at

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a plant with blunt cut leaves. The photo on the left (page 5) shows staking early and it also has bad leaves from frostbite. These leaves will fall anyway so cut them off before showing the plant.

A last note on this topic.

Particularly in Phalaenopsis, a leaf will roll over or be twisted. It surely can be fixed but requires a little creativity. In the photo a wire attached to a stake was used to keep the leaf from rolling back to where we do not want it to be. Carefully roll it to normal position and use the wire to hold it there. After two weeks it will be normal orientation and the apparatus can be removed. The front stake remains as it is guarding the emerging spike.

Coming Next: Picking Good Orchids

Contact Dave at dcmjpasmil@aol.com or call or text to 330-307-7189.



American Orchid Society Webinar

Our next webinar...

Thursday, January 7th, 2021 8:30pm EST

Greenhouse Chat January 2021

The Greenhouse Chats are available to AOS members and non-members. Register at aos.org.

For more information contact Nancy Kline at nancyk412@gmail.com 412-367-1556

Cultural Questions / Answered Here

Question: Can you transplant an orchid plant when it is blooming. My orchid plant is about 7 years old and tipped over and we would like to put in a larger container.

Thank you Marlene W Strabel cmstrab@yahoo.com

Pfun at Phipps Still Watching and Waiting

I thought we would be back by now but Phipps is opening slowly for volunteers. Things should open up soon and I will let everyone know when we can return to our favorite place. Stay well and in touch.

Nancy Kline

nancyk412@gmail.com 412-367-1556



Current Committees Chairs,

AOS	Nancy Kline	Orchid Gems	Norma Raiff, Pam Horter-Moore,
Culture Corner Nancy Kline			Cristina Eyler
Facebook	Lance Cheuvront	Pfun	Nancy Kline
Garden Club/Library Liaison Karen Gibson		P-OSI	Demetria Marsh
Hospitality	Carolyn Bolton	Raffle	Natalie Turicik
Library	Rosa Graudins	Show	Sheila Nathanson, Tammy Wurst,
Membership	Kathy Collins		Norma Raiff and Janet Greenberg
Mini-class	Tim Cholte	Speaker	Kathleen Arria and David Springer
Newsletter	Jim Yamber	Website	Jinghua Ou



_P-051

A joint initiative between Phipps Conservatory and the Orchid Society of Western Pennsylvania to create and cultivate an orchid collection of note for enjoyment, education and research.

January 2021

Since 2011, Phipps and the OSWP have formally worked together on the ongoing project we call P-OSI, the Phipps-Orchid Society Initiative. (See above for mission statement. Thanks to Nancy Kline for the acronym and Vicki Strod for the logo.)

Our main goal:

To work together to develop an orchid collection of national significance with special focus on Slipper Orchids or Cypripedioideae. Toward this goal, the parties agree to accessioning and de-accessioning orchids to develop the collection economically, updating to continually improve the orchid culture.

In the past several years, through amazing teamwork by the OSWP and Phipps, besides the amazing monthly repotting work of Pfun at Phipps, we have taken an inventory and updated it (huge efforts), continuously improved orchid culture, helped with accessioning and de-accessioning orchids in the collection improving the quality and importance of the collection, and, established the Barbara Tisherman Slipper Orchid Collection of Phipps Conservatory, a "Living Museum of Slipper Orchids" at Phipps, which has attracted international note.

Currently two articles on the Barbara Tisherman Slipper Orchid Collection are in the winter issues of Slipper Orchids and The Orchid Digest. The results of the cypripedium survey are published there as well. The survey results are also on the OSWP website.

While we have been on hiatus since last March, we hope we will be back to work perhaps this summer. In the meantime, Katie Schuller, Phipps Orchid Manager, has been taking care of everything with the help of the Phipps staff . . . Quite a challenge!!

Be sure not to miss Phipps Orchid Show opening January 9th, 2021.

Building and maintaining the BTSOC is an ongoing project, as it is for the entire Phipps orchid collection. It's a great opportunity for us to help as well as learn, and, an opportunity for Phipps to develop an orchid collection of "note."

If you'd like to be a part of this phenomenal team effort, contact us! We'd love to have you for Pfun and P-OSI! It's a wonderful learning experience for all of us, a great way to give back to the community and to help make Pittsburgh someplace even more special.

P-OSI Team Leaders:

Minis **Cymbidiums**

Jim Yamber Tim Choltco, Lori McDermott, Slippers Lance Cheuvront,

Michelle Panasiuk, Demetria Marsh

Kim McClellan Cattleyas/Epidendrums

Mike Lysy

Vandas/Oncidiums **Dendrobiums** Vidki Strod, Jim Yamber Raj Popat

Let us know if you would like to help out when we are able to return to volunteering at Phipps! We'd love to have you join us!

Demetria Marsh Nancy Kline

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First Class Mail

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The Orchid Society of Western Pennsylvania Inc. is a non-profit corporation organized to advance the propagation, horticulture and preservation of orchid species and hybrids through research, education and scientific endeavors

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Upcoming 2021 speaker

FUTURE PROGRAMS

January 19, 2021

Peter Lin of Sunset Orchids

speaking on mini vandas and related species.

More to come for the future programs for 2021



WANTED

The American Orchid Society Judging Program is seeking highly motivated orchid enthusiasts to join the judging ranks.

Work with other such people and help maintain our awards programs and educational efforts.

For more information contact Dave Miller at 330-307-7189 or demjpasmil@aol