

CLUB NEWS



Vern Bloch

May 7, 2019 Monthly SAOS Meeting
by Janis Croft

Welcome and Thanks. President Tom Sullivan opened the meeting at 7:00 pm with a 79 attendees. He asked Rae to announce our guests and new members, Jennifer, Sabria and Zevi Jacobson, Bill and Deb Bodei, Michaeleen Chalut, Barrie Nathanson, Lorene Raynor and Dwayne Wynne. Each received a free raffle

ticket for joining this month. Tom thanked Dorianna, Dottie, Celia and Dianne for bringing in desserts and Debbie from Watson Realty for covering for Jeanette while she recovers from knee replacement surgery. He then reminded all to drop a dollar in the basket while enjoying their refreshments. Tom next informed all that the Best of Show voting would occur after the Show Table discussion and the Silent Auction would end before the presentation. He encouraged all to vote for their favorite orchid on the Show Table.

Club Business. Shows in Florida this Month - Volusia County Orchid Society and the Redland Festival are this month. Check out the website under [Calendar of Events](#) for details.

- Ace Repotting Clinic will be on June 1, 2019 from 9 - noon at Ace Hardware, 3050 US 1 South.

- Catasetum Raffle – Sue held up her catasetum plug to show how the competition is growing, many said that their plants were much larger. We should begin watering once the new growth unfurls, and watch our plugs grow. She will continue to update us monthly on what to expect.

-Supplies–email info@staugorchidsociety.org if you need supplies.

- Keiki Club/Mentoring Program – Want to learn about potting mixes and repotting orchids? On May 26, the Keiki Club will meet at Sue and Terry Bottom's home. Bring a 4 and 6 inch pot, and we will have

divisions to pot up. Feel free to bring a plant that you'd like to learn how to repot. If you have more than one or two, plan to bring them to Ace. Bring \$5 to cover the cost of materials.

- Birthdays this Month - Our Sunshine Coordinator and Membership VP, Linda Stewart asked all of the May birthday people to raise their hand to receive their free raffle ticket. Then she announced that if you know of anyone in need of a cheering up or a get well card, let her know by emailing her at info@staugorchidsociety.org.

- Library – Librarian Bea Orendorff brought in two generic books with chapters on Laelias and one DVD on Laelias for people to borrow. The library collection is listed on our [SAOS website](#). If you would like a book, send a request to info@staugorchidsociety.org and Bea will bring the item(s) to the next meeting.

Show Table. Courtney Hackney started the Show Table by stating that he is ever more amazed at how well our club's members grow orchids. The Oncidium sphacelatum seemed huge but Courtney said it could grow much larger. He had seen one while judging that had over 100 spikes and three people had to count the flowers and it didn't even win a CCM.

The table had several Phragmipediums that were interesting to see all together. All phrags like good water like reverse osmosis or pure rainwater and they tend to grow in cooler climates than ours. If you can protect them from our intense summer heat, you will get good growth. The Phrag. Inca Ember likes constant moisture and can grow hydroponically. It will have continual buds as a mature plant.



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Upcoming Orchid Events

May

- 11 Florida North-Central AOS Judging, 1 pm
Clermont Judging Ctr, 849 West Ave.
- 11-12 Volusia County Orchid Society Show
Volusia County Fairgrounds
- 17-19 Redland International Orchid Festival
Fruit and Spice Park, Homestead
- 26 Keiki Club Get-Together, 1 pm
Growing Area Tour – Repotting
Sue and Terry Bottom's Home
6916 Cypress Lake Court, St. Aug 32086

June

- 1 Repotting at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine
- 1-2 Central Florida Orchid Society Show
Nat'l Guard Armory, Orlando
- 4 SAOS Meeting, 6:30 pm
Allen Black, Allen Black Orchids
Novelty Breeding – Stars & Stripes
- 8 Florida North-Central AOS Judging, 1 pm
Clermont Judging Ctr, 849 West Ave.
- 11 JOS Meeting, Dendrobiums, 7 pm
Mark Reinke, Marble Branch Orchids
- 22 Keiki Club, leave at 9 am for 11 am arrival
Field Trip to Krull Smith Orchids
2800 W. Ponkan Rd, Apopka, FL 32712
If you want to carpool or caravan:
email info@staugorchidsociety.org

July

- 6 Repotting at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine
- 9 JOS Meeting, Dozen Orchids, 7 pm
Tom Wise, AOS Judge
- 10 SAOS Meeting, 6:30 pm
Tom Wise, AOS Judge
Bewitching Doritis Species & Hybrids
- 13 Florida North-Central AOS Judging, 1 pm
Clermont Judging Ctr, 849 West Ave.

August

- 2-3 Ninth Annual Cattleya Symposium
Sponsored by Odom's Orchids
Indian River Research & Education Ctr
Fort Pierce
- 3 SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine
Repotting and Plant Clinic
- 6 SAOS Meeting, 7 pm
Jim Roberts, Florida SunCoast Orchids
Hybridizing Our Orchids
- 10 Florida North-Central AOS Judging, 1 pm
Clermont Judging Ctr, 849 West Ave.
- 13 JOS Meeting, Orchid Propagation, 7 pm
Steve Arthur, Steve Arthur Orchids

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There were several *Cattleya* varieties including the *C. maxima* with its numerous light purple flowers with dark purple veined lip. Keeping the purple theme, the *C. violacea* 'Icabarú' had striations on petals and its lip exterior was entirely purple with a white and yellow interior. The purple *C. Tiny Titan* 'Sure Thing' continues the theme with all petals being lavender and the lip having a yellow interior. We also had the lavender *Lc. Irene Finley* 'Spring's Best' and the *Ascf. Cherry Blossom* 'Carmela' showing off their purplish colors. *Asctm. miniatum* shared its compact orange flowers as a contrast to all the purple/lavender on the show table. Sue Bottom's *Catasetum Jumbo Pearl* had two outstanding inflorescences of deep almost black flowers and Courtney noted that Sue is an excellent grower of this genus. Check out the photos of our show table examples at the end of the newsletter and on the SAOS website.



SAOS Program. Sue Bottom introduced our evening's speaker, Vern Bloch from Malabar who discussed *Laelia purpurata* and its hybrids. He also brought several varieties to sell at the back table, one of which was the typical *Laelia purpurata* which he held up to show its gorgeous flowers. These grow in southern Brazil, a similar distance from the equator as mid-Florida. One difference in climate is the cooler south Atlantic seas have a strong influence on the growth of the species. Vern has researched *Laelia purpurata* and his primary resources are Mauro Rosen's excellent photos and documentation along with a book by Lou Menezes. Brazilians identify the *Laelia purpurata* as their national flower also and the government has passed regulations to make it illegal to harvest plants from the wild where they used to grow abundantly on rocks and trees. The few remaining wild plants are now growing on very tall trees in remote areas.

John Lindley developed orchid classifications in the 1830s. He classified the species *Laelia purpurata* in 1855 defining the flowers to have white petals and sepals with purple lip. As time progressed, there became identified a wide range of colors with 38 different varieties, 93 different forma (sometimes having little difference in color patterns) and 91



different synonyms (identical plants with different names). The plants classification has also changed multiple times. In 2000, it was reclassified into the *Sophronitis* genus but then in 2011, reclassified into the *Cattleya* genus. It is a unifoliate *cattleya* that grows erect so it takes up less bench space in the greenhouse. It typically grows in the high tree canopy loving the bright light and lots of air movement. It also likes warm, wet summers. Typically it has white to pink petals and sepals along with a tubular, trumpet shaped lip with a yellowish throat with crimson to purple veins. However, Vern warned, there are significant color variations in the species and proceeded to show us slides of all the varieties.

There are nine varieties with stabilized color forms, like the varieties *flammea*, *striata*, *venosa*, *carnea*, *alba*, *sauvissima*, *albescens*, *virginalis* and *russelliana*. Additional varieties include *var. mandayana* which has only been identified on one man made plant and *var. werkhauserii* which has slate blue striping and is nicknamed the "witch's flower." The original finder of the *werkhauserii* divided the plant into two and gave each half to his son and daughter. The daughter's plant eventually bloomed with the first real blue and she would never show it or divide it. After 50 years, she agreed to sell five bulb divisions to a group of five buyers. When the purchase time arrived (a late afternoon on Friday), they presented her with the check which she refused to accept. She would only take cash. Luckily one of the buyers owned a bank and quickly went to reopen the bank and withdraw the cash. He was back in time to make the purchase and sign the contract. As they left, they announced that they got the "witch's flower" and thus the nickname. Vern then proceeded to show us slides of the varieties listed above crossed with other plants to produce some wonderful, very colorful hybrids.

Meeting Conclusion. Sue Bottom announced the Member's Choice Award as Linda Stewart's Bulb. maximum. The evening concluded with the raffle table. Thanks to the few helpful hands that stayed to reset the tables and chairs and clean up the room.

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



CLUB NEWS

May 26 Keiki Club Repotting and Potting Mixes

Sue will talk about how to decide which mix is best for your orchids, considering your growing area and watering habits. There may be some orchid keikis and divisions for you to mount and or pot up (one to a customer), bring a clay pot, just in case. To cover the cost of supplies, there will be a \$5 charge.

If you have more than 1 or 2 of your own plants that need repotting, please bring them to the Ace repotting clinic. The repotting crew is available to give you hands-on tips on repotting at the monthly Ace clinics.

Mentees should consider attending to become more comfortable with repotting their orchids.

Moderator: Sue Bottom

Where: Sue and Terry Bottom's Home
[6916 Cypress Lake Court, St. Aug 32086](#)

When: Sunday May 26, 1 - 3 pm

June 4 Monthly SAOS Meeting

Novelty Brassavola/Cattleya Alliance Breeding
Allen Black, Allen Black Orchids

Our featured speaker, Allen Black, will give his 'Spiders and Stars' talk on novelty Brassavola/Cattleya alliance breeding. Allen is a hobbyist orchid grower and breeder who specializes in Brassavola-Cattleya alliance novelty hybrids. If you are growing weary of the meristem, more-of-the-same, big, round, cattleyas, if you want some that are "different, unique, or exciting," this presentation is for you!

With lots of beautiful pictures we'll talk about the Brassavola species like *B. cucullata*, some primary hybrids and other wild and wonderful brassavola and cattleya alliance hybrids. Allen will be selling orchids. He's bringing seedlings of some of his most recent crosses.

Bring your flowering orchids to exhibit on the Show Table. We will have our normal raffle at the end of the meeting. Friends and guests are always welcome!

American Orchid Society Corner

May 16, 8:30-9:30 pm, AOS Members Only
Asian Cymbidiums – Ken Jacobsen

Orchids Magazine this month:
Greenhouse Cooling, Norbert Dank
Orchid Garden, Tom Mirenda
Vegetative Propagation, Barbara Schmidt
James Bateman, David Rosenfeld

[Photos of Latest AOS Awards](#)

April Field Trip

Monthly AOS Judging in Clermont
by Susan Smith

Several members carpoled down to Clermont to observe the AOS judging process at the Florida North-Central Judging Center. I brought two orchids to be judged and the entry form was a breeze to complete.

Each of the three judging teams had computers with orchid software installed. We looked at one plant at a time and compared the blooms to the previous award descriptions and photos, or to the information on the parents if no prior award was listed. I learned to look more closely at a flower that I ever had before. They were taken outside to see in natural light where the color was much brighter. Four of the plants brought to the meeting were numerically judged. We were given judging forms to complete along with the team just for fun. If an award was given, the bloom was measured and a detailed description of the plant was written. A photographer was on hand to photograph it per the judges instructions.

I was very impressed by the knowledge of the judges as well as the welcoming atmosphere. It's a long ride but worth the trip. When you learn to see the orchids this way you can appreciate them so much more. The crowning glory was an HCC given to one of my orchids and since it had no clonal name, I named it Vera Simone after my granddaughter.

The judging is monthly so if anyone wants to take a road trip with or without an orchid, let me know. We'll pack a lunch and bring cookies for the judges.



*Rth. Jon Tumilson's Crush
It 'Vera Simone' HCC/AOS*

Catasetum Competition Grow

In January, we raffled off 20 plugs of this new hybrid, with the understanding that prizes will be awarded TO (1) the first to bloom, (2) the best bloom, and (3) the best grown plant. Each month we'll talk about what to do with your catasetum and show you how the plant is progressing. Let the contest begin!

In May: You are finally seeing some green, hallelujah! It will start to grow faster now, soon it will be 4 or 5 inches tall and the leaves unfurled, and it will be time to water. Then you will really notice an increase in the growth rate, it will seem an inch taller every day. Top dress the pot with some timed release fertilizer. Catasetums are heavy feeders, they have to do all their growing in 7 months while other orchids get a full 12 months.



INSPIRATION



CULTIVATION



Orchid Questions & Answers

by Sue Bottom, sbottom15@gmail.com

Q1. Is this a *Catasetum*? I'm concerned about this second yellow leaf.

A1. I think that is a *Grammatophyllum*, a close relative to *Catasetum*s, but these don't lose their leaves in winter. They tend to be mite magnets and your plant shows evidence of mite damage. You can spray a miticide like Avid (normal insecticides won't kill mites, which are in the arachnid family) or you can water blast the leaves with a nozzle set on flat and then spray the entire plant with alcohol or alcohol with dish soap, perhaps repeat weekly for a month or so.



Q2. Could these possibly be buds?

A2. It sure looks like it. They're called the bud primordia, the tissue from which the flowers will ultimately form.



Q3. I recently purchased some more orchids (a recurrent problem) and one was a blooming vanda that had questionable spots on the flowers. If it is *Botrytis*, what is the best course of action? Being in west Texas, the humidity is super low, but I have been running a humidifier so it's felt much more jungle like in my sunroom lately.



A3. I don't think it is *Botrytis*, a fungal infection causing small dark spots on the flowers. You may have two things going on, the black sunken spots may be some sort of bacterial infection and the raised, corky spots are probably edema. Edema is like a blister when the plant absorbs more water than can be shed through transpiration, happening more on leaves than flowers. It happens when you water late in the day and the nights turn cool or when you water on a gray rainy day. It doesn't really harm the plant. Look at the spots, if they are sunken, think bacterial infection, but if raised it is more likely edema.



CULTIVATION



Repotting Do's and Don'ts

by Dr. Courtney Hackney,
hackneau@comcast.net

If emails and casual conversations are any indication, repotting is traumatic for many orchid hobbyists. It is not surprising to most of us that have been doing this awhile, because it was traumatic to us in the beginning too. Given how different orchid roots look, the cost compared to a petunia, and the number of pages in orchid books devoted to the “dos and don'ts” of potting, fear is not surprising. So here is what everyone should remember.

You should never use the reason of dividing your plant into two or more orchids as the justification for repotting, although that is a frequent consequence. Repot when your orchid is at risk because the potting media is breaking down or there is some other problem, e.g., heavy scale infestation that cannot be solved without removing the plant from its pot. Remember that the bigger your orchid is, the more and larger flowers it will have.

Always sterilize any instrument that cuts an orchid. The best method is to hold your snips in the flame for a few seconds making sure you have exposed both sides of the entire cutting surface to the flame. A hot cutting tool effectively sterilizes the cut surface of the plant.

Do not worry about damaging roots, since most will ultimately die from the repotting anyway. Some expert growers remove almost all roots when they repot to avoid them rotting later and infecting the rest of the plant. If repotted at the correct time of the year, your orchid will quickly re-grow roots, but it may take a few years to acquire the root mass it had before repotting, hence the suggestion to avoid repotting unless absolutely necessary.

Many times I sit a cattleya with all of its roots removed in the bottom of a clay pot in a shaded portion of the greenhouse until I see tiny new roots starting. Only then do I add the medium and complete repotting. On occasion, I forget a plant and find it fully rooted to the pot the next spring. Again, the key point is that one should only repot during the growing season, i.e., now.

Most books recommend wetting the medium before using it, a recommendation that I do not endorse. This is an open invitation for bacteria and fungi to invade any open

wounds on the plant. It is best to use dry medium and wait at least several days before watering your newly repotted orchid. Some growers lay their divisions on newspaper in an unused bedroom until new roots appear. Why waste a pot and medium if the division is not going to grow well.

The key to all repotting is to remember that your orchid has been shocked and lost most of its ability to obtain water. Cattleyas, dendrobiums and other orchids with thickened leaves will be fine if the plant is shaded heavily after repotting until they get new roots. Then, gradually give them more light. Other orchids that are terrestrial-like and/or have fine roots or thin leaves, need more care and may require some misting until new roots appear.

The one exception to the need to keep roots dry is when a medium is used that is toxic to bacteria and fungi, e.g., sphagnum or osmunda. The pH is so low that almost no bacteria harmful to plants will grow. This seems to be the medium of choice for many phal growers.



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Laelia purpurata – A Cattleya by Any Other Name

by Art Chadwick, courtesy of the American Orchid Society
reprinted with permission

The large-flowered *Cattleya* species have suffered from a bad case of botanical heartburn for more than 150 years — and some of the mistakes of the past never seem to be corrected. For *Laelia purpurata*, which is really a *Cattleya*, things even seem to be going from bad to worse, as I see recent efforts to reclassify this wonderful large and showy species as a member of the genus *Sophranitis*, which is composed of miniatures.



Laelia purpurata

The problems of *L. purpurata* began in 1831 when John Lindley established the genus *Laelia*. In 1831, Lindley described a Mexican orchid he called *Laelia grandiflora* (*L. speciosa* today) in his book *Genera and Species of Orchidaceous Plants*. The plant had relatively short, oval-shaped pseudobulbs that were different from the tall club-shaped or spindle-shaped pseudobulbs of a typical large-flowered *Cattleya*. The flowers were smaller, had a cut lip and eight pollen sacs (pollinia) instead of the usual four in *Cattleya* species. At the time, the new genus *Laelia*, seemed to make sense. The plants were just different enough to appear botanically distinct.

Then, in 1852, Lindley described another new orchid he called *Laelia purpurata*. This orchid, however, came from Brazil, not Mexico, and it had tall pseudobulbs that were similar to the pseudobulbs of a large-flowered *Cattleya* species. It also had flowers that looked just like a large-flowered *Cattleya*. In fact, the only thing that made it different from a *Cattleya* was that its flowers had eight pollinia instead of four. Despite the plant's being a *Cattleya* in virtually all vegetative and floral characteristics, Lindley pushed it into the genus *Laelia* because it had eight pollinia, and it has been there ever since.

The large-flowered Brazilian *Laelias* are a distinct group within the present genus *Laelia*. They occur only in Brazil. There are none in Mexico or anywhere else in the Americas. They include primarily *Laelia purpurata*, *Laelia crispata*, *Laelia lobata*, *Laelia grandis* and *Laelia tenebrosa*

and are usually referred to as the “Cattleyode” or *Cattleya*-like *Laelias*. Recent DNA studies have confirmed what has been clear for more than 100 years, that these *Cattleyode* *Laelias* are quite different from the Mexican *Laelias* and they do not belong in the genus *Laelia*. It is now time to look at these large-flowered Brazilian *Laelias* for what they are - large-flowered *Cattleya* species. The only botanical change, of course, that is needed to accomplish this, is to define the *Cattleya* species as we have always done, but add that a *Cattleya* has from four to eight pollinia.

One of the most compelling arguments for including the large-flowered Brazilian *Laelias* in the genus *Cattleya* is the ease with which they breed with the large-flowered *Cattleya* species, and the normal character of the flowers of the resulting hybrids. In this respect, these large-flowered Brazilian *Laelias* are more closely related to the large-flowered labiata-type *Cattleyas* than *Cattleya labiata* is to the bifoliate cut-lip *Cattleya* species, where lip and other flower distortions do occur in their hybrids. Flower distortions also occur when *Sophranitis* species are crossed with these *Laelias*. The Grand Monarch of these large-flowered Brazilian species, of course, is *Laelia purpurata*, which has been a parent at one time or another in more than 90 percent of all so-called *Laeliocattleya* hybrids.

Laelia purpurata is without doubt one of the finest of all cultivated orchids. In addition to its large showy flowers, it has one of the widest ranges of color forms. There are probably more named clones of *L. purpurata* than any other *Laelia* or *Cattleya* species.

This says a lot when you realize that named clones of *Cattleya mossiae* and *Cattleya trianaei* number in the hundreds. *Laelia purpurata* has large flowers, 6 to 8 inches across, and there are usually four or five flowers on a spike. The lavender color in the lip can be a brilliant royal purple often mixed with tones of red. This color can even appear in the sepals and petals to produce a flame-colored flower in *flammea* types. Many lovely *semialba* forms exist that often have striking dark purple lips and present a gorgeous contrast in color. *Semialba* forms also include flowers with pink to reddish lips, and lips that are dark slate-blue.



Laelia Canhamiana 'Azure Skies' AM/AOS

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Laelia purpurata var. *striata*

Although there are a number of pale lavender albescens forms, there are also a few true albas that are quite beautiful.

Laelia purpurata does not have the wide petals of a *C. trianaei*, and tends to pass this characteristic on to its hybrids. It more than makes up for this, however, by imparting the brilliant, rich colors of its labellum to the lips of its hybrids, and it is the chief contributor to the richly colored lips of most of our purple *Laeliacattleya* hybrids. There are also good coerulea forms; some of the best coerulea *Laeliocattleyas* I have seen have *L. purpurata* as a parent. Because of its floriferousness and the beautiful coloring of its flowers, I feel no orchid collection should be without it.

Laelia purpurata is the parent of probably the most famous primary hybrid in orchid history, *Laeliocattleya Canhamiana* (*L. purpurata* × *C. mossiae*). This cross, which flowers in June in the United States, was the wedding orchid of the cut-flower days, and literally tens of thousands *Lc. Canhamiana* were grown during the 1940s at the peak of the cut-flower era. The semialba form was the wedding orchid itself, pictured in advertisements in magazines and newspapers, and even in full color on the cover of the *American Orchid Society Bulletin* for December 1946, followed by four full-color pages of *Lc. Canhamiana* in bridal bouquets, travel corsages, hair swirls and even on a graduation diploma. *Laeliocattleya Canhamiana* shows the dominance of *L. purpurata*'s magnificent lip color, which made the semialba form so appealing. There have been many named clones of *Lc. Canhamiana* over the years, but the best one I have seen is an old clone named 'King George', which has a particularly large and beautiful lip.

Laelia purpurata is native to Santa Caterina in southern Brazil where it is so admired that it is the state flower of Santa Caterina. It is extremely popular with local Brazilian orchid growers and rare clones garner handsome prices - in the thousands of dollars. Whole orchid shows are dedicated to *L. purpurata* and, with its many color forms, it is a collector's dream.

Laelia purpurata is known in the orchid world today only as *Laelia purpurata*. It was pictured in the famous orchid books *Lindenia* and *Reichenbachia*, under this name, and in modern works like L.C. Menezes' splendid book entitled *Laelia purpurata*, which shows a marvelous sampling of the many color forms of the species. In addition, when used as a parent in hybrids, the name *L. purpurata* is used by the Royal Horticultural Society's orchid registrar, and AOS awards granted to this species are recorded under this name, too.

It is unfortunate that, as Veitch observed in 1887, Bentham and Hooker continued John Lindley's separation of the genera, *Laelia* and *Cattleya*, but it is equally sad that Veitch did not correct the problem himself. Veitch's *Manual of Orchidaceous Plants* was the most widely read authoritative work on orchids of its day, and had Veitch called the plant *Cattleya purpurata* instead of *L. purpurata* in his manual, we would not be faced with the nomenclature difficulties we have now with the large-flowered Brazilian *Laelias*. In 1887, most orchid growers still used the names *Cattleya crispa* and *Cattleya lobata* and totally ignored John Lindley's attempt 30 years earlier to change these names to *Laelia crispa* and *Laelia lobata*. If Veitch had acted on his convictions instead of just wringing his hands and blaming Bentham and Hooker, there would be no problem with *C. purpurata* today.

Should we change the name *Laelia purpurata* to *Cattleya purpurata* now? The genus *Laelia* was established based on a Mexican orchid, so the Mexican *Laelias* will always retain the botanical priority in the use of the name *Laelia*. Since it is now clear that the Brazilian large-flowered *Laelias* do not belong in the same genus as the Mexican *Laelias*, the Brazilian *Laelias* are in a botanical wilderness and they need some informed help to place them in a happy home.

After growing these plants for 60 years, I have to agree with the horticulturists of the late 1800s who felt the Brazilian large-flowered *Laelias* were *Cattleya* species and should have always been classified that way. If we change the Brazilian large-flowered *Laelias* to *Cattleyas*, of course, we are still faced with the problem of who really described *C. purpurata* first. Both Lindley and Lemaire published their descriptions of this orchid in 1852. If Lindley failed to beat Lemaire to the pressroom, which is probable, we may really be talking about *Cattleya brysiana*, not *C. purpurata* as a name for this orchid. Whether we call it *Cattleya purpurata* or *Cattleya brysiana*, however, is not too important. What is important is that we finally call it *Cattleya*.

This abbreviated version was extracted from an article appearing in the American Orchid Society Orchids magazine, in June 2003 (Vol. 72:6, pp 440-446), reprinted with permission.



CULTIVATION

Repotting Throughout the Year

by Sue Bottom

Just like our garden plants, orchids struggle with transplant shock after repotting. Simply removing a plant from the pot disrupts the root system, then you cut away the older and tired part of the plant and give the roots a haircut, compounding the root damage. Sometimes the potting mix has broken down causing the entire root system to rot.

The best time to repot your orchid is when it is just beginning to grow new roots. Sometimes you can see a swelling on the stem or bulb and know the roots will emerge within days. This is the time to repot. The new roots will grow rapidly into the fresh mix and the plant will reestablish itself quickly with a minimum of transplant shock. If you do not follow this rule, the plant can become dehydrated, because the damaged root system cannot absorb water and nutrients very effectively.



Catasetums Repotted

The repotting marathon begins in January, when the winter dormant varieties begin to wake from their slumber. The *Catasetinae* having blooming seasons ranging from summer through winter, depending on the genus. The summer blooming varieties are the first to initiate new growth after dormancy, while the fall and winter blooming varieties can lag months behind. As you see the beginning of new growth, it is time to repot them, a chore to be undertaken every year or every other year depending on your potting medium. Repot before the new, tender roots form. The new growth will show you how to orient the bulb in the pot, and let the roots grow into the fresh media. You'll find yourself repotting different varieties into April, particularly the winter blooming *Clowesias* and their hybrids.

February is good time to repot your other winter dormant orchids, like *habenarias*. The top growth has all died and the tuber at the base of the pot is ready for some fresh media. Jim Heilig has some good suggestions: Pot them a little low in the pot at first. After the first whorl of leaves unfurl, top the pot off with some more media so the stem will be supported by another 1/4" or so of potting mix.



Habenarias Repotted

Consider inserting a bamboo skewer in the pot so you'll have something to stake the flower stem to later in the year (without puncturing the tuber).

February is also the time to repot your summer blooming *phalaenopsis*, if they need repotting. This will give them a chance to recover from transplant shock and be established by the time the summer blooming season rolls around.

March and April are prime repotting season for many genera, including many *cattleyas* that initiate root growth at the same time as they initiate new growths. The unifoliate are much more forgiving of repotting at the wrong time, while this can be fatal for bifoliate. Some *cattleyas* start growing new roots when the new pseudobulbs are growing, and others finish growing their pseudobulbs and then rest a bit before the new roots emerge. Bill Rogerson's excellent article on orchid species culture contains a [tabulation](#) of when each *cattleya* species starts rooting, a great resource for the *cattleya* grower.



Cattleyas Repotted

March and April are also a great time to rebasket or rehang *vandas* that have become unruly. They begin growing their new rootlets with the onset of the warm weather and will quickly adjust to their new homes.

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Dendrobiums, as a rule, resent repotting. The canes grow very close together, so they should be potted in a seemingly too small pot. Measure the distance between canes to estimate the annual growth rate, and select a pot that will accommodate the plant for 4 years or so. A low organic content potting mix should be used so you won't be forced to repot them because of a rotting mix. Often you will find you can just drop the pot in a larger pot or slip pot them into a slightly larger pot with a minimum of root disruption.

By the end of May, the bulk of your repotting should be complete. The main exception to this rule is your spring blooming phals that are still flowering and your bifoliate cattleyas that have not yet started growing roots. Many phal growers cut off the phal spikes after Memorial Day and use June to repot all their phals. This gives them a little time to get the roots reestablished before the extreme heat of summer occurs. In any case, the spring blooming phals should all be in their new pots once Independence Day rolls around.

July and August are dangerous months for repotting. The water molds thrive in the heat and humidity and easily gain entrance into your plants through the wounds incurred during the repotting process. Unfortunately, the bifoliate cattleyas often grow new roots in July and August, so you may have to repot them during this danger period. Extreme caution should be used. After you clean your plants, let them dry before cutting them. Dust wounds with a dry Banrot powder. Do not water after repotting, let the wounds seal over for a week or two before watering.



Phalaenopsis Blooming

In mid September, the heat and humidity moderate, and the orchids respond with a growth spurt. You will start seeing green root tips, so you know any last minute repotting can be done during this brief window. By the end of October, most of your orchids are responding to the cooler temperatures, shortening day length and lower sun angle by slowing their growth. Some simply rest during the winter months, while others go into full dormancy. Avoid repotting during the November and December months.

Spring is the main repotting season as this is when many genera are actively growing new leads and roots. Repotting during the hot summer months is problematic. The plants are struggling with the heat, pots dry more slowly with the high humidity, and this wetness increases disease pressure. If you must repot, be sure to keep the plant on the dry side for a week or two so the repotting wounds can seal off. Early fall is your last chance for repotting, when the temperature and humidity abates and you get a second growth spurt during which you'll see new green root tips. While some cooler growing genera relish the winter months, most of your orchids will be resting if not in a deep sleep so repotting should be delayed until spring.



Bifoliate Rooting



CULTIVATION



carnea

Laelia purpurata – Color Forms & Culture

by Art Chadwick

Laelia purpurata has the same cultural requirements as the other large-flowered Cattleya species. It usually begins sending up new growths in late summer and early autumn. These growths will be completed by mid-January or early February and buds will begin to form in the sheath after a short rest period. The plants will flower from late May into June, depending on the clone. Give *L. purpurata* a few weeks' rest after it flowers by minimizing the watering, but do not let the pseudobulbs shrivel too much. Once the plant begins to grow, it requires lots of water, particularly as the growth elongates beyond 6 inches. *Laelia purpurata* can develop some really large pseudobulbs, often exceeding 20 inches from the base of the pseudobulb to the tip of the leaf, if grown well.



striata



'Cindarosa'



werkhauseri



alba



schusteriana



cernua



SHOW TABLE



Grower Tom & Dottie Sullivan
Phal. KS Happy Eagle



Grower Harry & Celia McElroy
Cym. Mem. Geoff Laird



Grower John Van Brocklin
Enc. bractescens



Grower Scott & Michele Campbell
Onc. sphacelatum



Grower Janis Croft
Den. capituliflorum



Grower Sue Bottom
C. H. G. Selfridge



Grower Sue Bottom
Cyrtcs. Hendrik van der Hoven



SHOW TABLE



Grower Jerry Fowler
Den. Fire Wings



Grower Linda Stewart
Bulb. maximum



Grower Larry McNally
Lc. Irene Finney 'Spring's Best' AM/AOS



Grower Sue Bottom
C. maxima



Grower Inci Willard
Phragmipediums



Grower Walter Muller
Phal. G C Reyoung Panda
No RHS Registration

Link to all Pictures. <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmcdFC4t>

