



*Central Ohio Orchid Society*  
*Reporter*



Newsletter Editor: Katrina Heap

November 2015

**November Meeting – Annual Potluck and Awards Dinner**  
**Thursday, November 19, 2015**  
**Franklin Park Conservatory – 6pm**

And here we are again...it's time for our annual awards dinner and social gathering. Geez, where does the time go?!

As per our norm for November, we won't have a speaker this month folks...just lots of food, fun, good conversation, and we'll find out who gets the prizes this year. Bring along a covered dish or desert, your appetite and your blooming orchids so you can start racking up points toward the 2016 Growers Contest.

Oh, and we'll have a little surprise for everyone...something a bit different from what we've done in recent years. I think you will all be quite pleased. See you all on the 19<sup>th</sup>! ☺



*President's Message*

**The Orchid Doctor is IN**

Yes, orchids, too, can become sick, can ail, can die. But we their owners are not inclined to let them go gently. So what can we do?

There are many reasons an orchid's health may fail. I suppose the most common by far is simply poor culture and/or potting. Not watering enough can be a problem, but watering too much has killed more orchids in cultivation than everything else combined. Watering too much can cause the roots to die on most orchids, and thereby lead to an orchid's decline and eventual death.

When an orchid shows signs of ill health, if the cause is not immediately apparent (bugs, sunburn, cold damage, etc.), the best thing to do is pull it out of the pot and check the roots. While you may not have changed your watering schedule, the orchid's needs may have changed. If there has been damage to the roots, less water will be taken up, and that can result in the mix staying soggy, thereby multiplying the effect of too much water, killing more roots in a never-ending downward spiral. This can also be caused by too much salt or fertilizer in the water, or the mix itself deteriorating over time, which nearly all of them do. As an orchid's mix ages, it can hold more and more water, and also can begin disintegrating, resulting in a mud-like mess in the pot which does not allow enough air to the roots, and retains too much water, both of which will cause root damage. The best solution is to repot if there are healthy roots left, in a new mix and watch watering carefully until the plant has fully recovered and grown sufficient new roots. Of course whenever there are dead roots, those should be removed with a clean, sterile blade so they don't just sit in a new pot as a rotten mess spreading germs. Yes, dead orchid tissue can be host to all sorts of bacterial and fungal infections.

In the event there are no or insufficient roots, several things can be done. One is the use of an anti-transpirant agent, such as Wilt Pruf, which, when sprayed on all surfaces of the foliage, prevents a plant from losing water through the foliage, which can help it survive long enough to grow those new roots, placed in an area of less light.

Another option is the "sphag-and-bag" method when there are far too few to no roots. The dead roots are removed and the plant cleaned. A small amount of clean sphagnum moss is wet then wrung out til just damp (wet with a solution containing physan or other similar disinfectant if possible), then the plant is placed on the damp moss and sealed in a clear plastic bag blown up with air. Place this in an area which receives no direct sun to prevent overheating, and open and blow into the bag occasionally, resealing it. Sometimes this can take months, but often results in the growth of new healthy roots if the plant is not disturbed.

Other, more obvious sources of ill health are pests, which is to say, bugs. There are numerous bugs which may attack orchids including mealy bugs, scale of various kinds, mites, snails, slugs, and others as well. Each has its own remedy, but in a small collection often the non-mollusk types can be handled with a spray of rubbing alcohol and a q-tip or cotton balls, and a vigilant, sharp eye. In larger collections it may be necessary to spray with any of the various chemicals on the market targeting specific types of bugs, from oils and pyrethrin-based insecticides, to other, stronger chemicals. There is a wealth of information on the internet and in the heads of experienced growers as to which is best for which pest.

Bacterial infections, fungal infections, and even molds can also attack orchids. The best defense against these is a good offense; i.e., good cultural practices, plenty of air, clean growing area, etc., but in the event of these, there are numerous antifungal agents around, though often simply cutting away the infected tissue if possible, with a clean sharp instrument, and powdering the cut with cinnamon will suffice. Cinnamon is a good nontoxic anti-fungal agent which can be used topically to good effect much of the time, though in more severe cases stronger chemicals may be required. As for bacterial infections, minor ones can often be handled similarly to fungal infections. More serious

cases may require use of topical such as physan, and there are bacterial infections for which there is no cure.

Orchids can and do get viruses, as Ken Mettler has shown us. There are virus test strips, some still available through COOS/Ken, though not all viruses have a test, but the most common ones do. There is to date no cure for viruses in orchids, and they can be spread easily by insects, and non-sterile handling of plants by hand or cutting tools, water splashing from one to another, etc. Best option for a virused plant is, sadly, throwing it out before it spreads to others.

Tennis Maynard

## 2014/2015 COOS Board Members

Term of Officers – January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2015

President:	Tennis Maynard	
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President:	Bill Cavanaugh	Program Chair
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President:	Dave Markley	Home Show Chair
3 <sup>rd</sup> Vice President:	Ken Mettler	Away Show Chair
Secretary:	Justin Pepperney	Recorder
Assistant Secretary:	Katrina Heap	Newsletter Editor
Treasurer:	Edna Markley	Collect/Disburse Monies
Assistant Treasurer:	Tom Bell-Games	Membership Chair
Immediate Past Pres	Tom Franczak	

## COOS Trustees

Term of Office Expires December 31<sup>st</sup> of year shown

Lori Baldwin	2015
Eileen Ansley	2015
Screll Jones	2017
Elly Campbell	2017



## 2015 COOS Calendar

**General Meetings** – Third Thursday of the month...excluding July, August and December.

Nov 19<sup>th</sup> Potluck Dinner

Dec – No meeting

## Show Table Results

October Results – Tessie took Plant of the Month w/her Catasetum!

### **Cattleya – species & Hybrids**

Tessie Steelman	Blc Volcano Trick	1st
Tessie Steelman	Bl Star Ruby	2nd
Ken Mettler	C bowringiana	3rd

### **Oncidium**

Dave & Edna Markley	Odcdm Tiger Crow	1st
Gary & Deb Walker	Bllra Eurostar	2nd
Dave & Edna Markley	Alcra Pacific Nova 'Pacific Heights'	3rd

### **Phalaenopsis**

Tom Stinson	Phal pulcherrima	1st
Tom Stinson	Phal mini hybrid	2nd

### **Paphiopedilum**

Dave & Edna Markley	Paph McLaren Park 'San Mateo' x Hellyer 'Cutie'	1st
Dave & Edna Markley	Paph spicerianum	2nd
Tom & Pat Stinson	Paph Dollgaldi (rothschildianum 'C&E' FCC/AOS x armeniacum 'Mallingham Gold')	3rd

### **Habenaria**

Screll Jones	Hab. Regnieri	1st
Ken Mettler	Hab medusae	2nd
Screll Jones	Hab rhodocheila	3rd

## Others

Tessie Steelman

Dave & Edna Markley

Ken Mettler

Ctism osculatum - PLANT OF THE MONTH

Coelogyne speciosa

Cymbidium dayanum

POM/1st

2nd

3rd

## Culture Corner

*I know I included a piece on the importance of humidity earlier this year but with winter, and the inevitable heated and very dry air, fast approaching...I thought it worthwhile to revisit the topic. So, without further ado...below are a few items/articles/tutorials I thought many of you might find interesting. Even helpful, perhaps.*

This article is courtesy of the American Orchid Society website –Beginners Newsletter, by Greg Alikas, May 2010.

### Give Me Some Air!

During the 19th century "Orchidmania" craze that swept Europe, thousands of orchids would die in dry, heated "stoves", as the orchid greenhouses were called. It is surprising that any survived and it was only the sheer numbers being ripped from the jungles that allowed a hobby to be born. These early orchid hobbyists had little first-hand knowledge of where or how orchids actually grew and the plants often arrived in Europe unaccompanied by the



person who actually collected them. The notion was that epiphytic orchids grew in dank, steamy, tropical jungles. There certainly are orchids that come from sea level forests close to the equator, but even in those places there is open air movement and that is the next cultural element we will cover.

For this newsletter we will look at humidity and air movement, both qualities of the air that surround your orchids, and you! Although there are genera-specific requirements for more or less humidity, most tropical epiphytic orchids require between 50-70% humidity. Less than 40% humidity can cause plants to grow poorly or at best, less than optimum. Plants transpire moisture through stomata, tiny pores on the leaves. If the

humidity of the growing environment is too low, orchid plants will transpire water faster than they can take it up through the roots and become desiccated. Roots and potting media will also dry out quicker keeping a plant in a dehydrated state. Watering more frequently is not a solution for dehydration and leads to root problems because of rapid media decay.

If you grow orchids in a greenhouse it is most likely properly equipped to provide an acceptable range of humidity. Evaporative coolers are an excellent means of adding humidity and keeping temperatures cooler in summer. If you grow orchids in the home, you have more of a challenge to maintain proper humidity.

Winter heating and summer air conditioning both dry the air significantly. For just a few plants there is a classic solution that may be somewhat limited in its effectiveness, but is easy and provides some humidity. Fill a shallow tray, such as an aluminum oven liner, with pebbles, then add water to just below the tops of the pebbles. Set your orchid pots on the pebbles. Refill the tray every few days as needed (if algae builds up, empty the pebbles into a colander in the sink and rinse with diluted bleach, then plenty of clean water). This works well if you are



growing just a few orchids on a windowsill. Misting can also help, but the water evaporates so quickly the benefits do not last long. If you have a larger collection that you perhaps grow on a plant stand or cart, an inexpensive humidifier can be bought for slightly more than the cost of a couple of orchid plants. Look for one with a large reservoir that does not need frequent refilling. Specific orchid growing setups such as orchidariums, terrariums, Wardian Cases and many under-lights setups in basements all will provide ample humidity.



If you were to visit the habitat of an epiphytic orchid, let's say *Cattleya mossiae* shown above, you would discover a setting totally contrary to the Victorian perception mentioned in the first paragraph. You would be in the Venezuelan mountains at about 3000-4500 feet above sea

level and the cattleyas would be growing in the canopy of the trees above you. Air constantly flows up the mountains and the tops of the trees sway in the breeze. Many of our favorite orchids come from this kind of airy environment. Optimum conditions for cultivating orchids are often described with the words, "buoyant atmosphere". What that describes is air that feels light and is constantly moving. Primarily, a buoyant atmosphere provides a constantly fresh supply of carbon dioxide to the trees and the orchids in them. Green plants convert carbon dioxide and water into food compounds, such as glucose, and oxygen through the process called photosynthesis. Air that is constantly moving provides other benefits, such as eliminating pockets of extreme temperatures and moderating the temperature of both air and leaves. An adequately ventilated orchid growing space discourages fungal infections by hastening the evaporation of standing water. The surest way to discourage the flower damaging fungus, *Botrytis cinerea*, is to increase air movement.



Providing orchids with air movement is one of the simplest things to achieve. If you are growing a few orchids on a windowsill, merely open the window a few inches any time the outside temperature is above 50° F. If you have a grow cart of orchids, one or two six or eight inch muffin fans will do the trick. Turn them on low and aim them above or to the side of the orchids to draw air over the plants. Ceiling fans provide excellent air circulation for patios and sun rooms, while most

commercial greenhouses offer fan options. If yours doesn't, buy one or two 24 inch box fans depending on the size of your structure.

As you have probably gathered; if the setting feels comfortable to you, your orchids will like it too!

*And along the same vein...this next piece comes courtesy of John Broadhead, owner of The House of Hydro in Florida*

*My name is John Broadhead, and I'm the owner at The House of Hydro. A huge part of our customer base are Orchid growers, and as you know, this time of year starts to get hard for people growing Orchids. The humidity is falling, and so are their Orchids' health.*

*We supply commercial Foggers/ Ultrasonic Humidifiers to build your own humidifier for a quarter of the price of a commercial store brand humidifier. We have thousands of customers across the world that use our products to help humidify greenhouses.*

*With that said, I thought now would be a good time to release a short written tutorial on how to build your own. I already have a pretty popular Youtube video tutorial with over 80k hits. You can see it here*

[How to make a humidifier for your home with Ultrasonic Mist Makers](#)

Or here [TheHouseofHydro.com](http://TheHouseofHydro.com)

## **Make Your Own Humidifier**

The time is near. Dry season is on its way, and you're beginning to scramble. Trying desperately to figure out what you're going to do to keep your humidity levels where they need to be. Then you find out that you could end up spending over \$1000 dollars on a humidifier big enough to handle your entire home or greenhouse!

I know, its crazy expensive! Well, there IS a better way, a much better way. For under \$300 you can easily make your own unit that blows away the store bought models. The House of Hydro's commercial foggers can nebulize up to 32 gallons of water a day! They are the perfect tool for building your own humidifier. All you need is a container and a fan to get it done. It's that simple.

Check out The House of Hydro's video tutorial for a step by step demonstration at [TheHouseofHydro.com](http://TheHouseofHydro.com) to see how easy it really is.

### **Items needed:**

- \*12 disc Fogger from The House of Hydro  
(12 disc recommended for whole home or large greenhouse humidification)
- \*120mm Hydro-Flo Pro waterproof fan
- \*Storage Tote
- \*Hole Saw
- \*4 Small Stainless bolts, or wood screws
- \*Caulk (optional)
- \*Auto Humidistat (optional) Perfect for maintaining exact levels

Step 1: Drill (3) 3.5" holes in the lid of the storage tote. Two holes on one end, and one on the other.

Step 2: The hole that is by itself is your fans mounting hole. Mount the fan face down with the air blowing into the tote. Use the caulk to seal the fan to the lid, and use the bolts, or screws, to hold the fan securely in place.

Step 3: Drop your new fogger inside the storage tote after filling half way with clean water.

Step 4: Close the lid and plug in your new humidifier.

Step 5: Spend your \$700 savings on something that's worth your hard earned money!

So there you have it. It's that easy. So visit our website, [TheHouseofHydro.com](http://TheHouseofHydro.com) for everything seen here and more. And see why we are not only the largest, but also the most trusted manufacturer of commercial quality foggers in the world!

[YouTube video How to make a humidifier for your home with Ultrasonic Mist Makers](#)

*And, if the DIY seems like more than you need or more work than you want...this is what Tom Bell-Games (and yours truly!) just happens to be using to help combat the dreaded, dry air syndrome.*



Per Tom >>>>>

Now that it is November, I imagine that everyone that had plants outside has moved them indoors (at least I hope you have!). We are experiencing the short period in fall when home heating is minimal. As a result, we don't have plants exposed to especially dry conditions. Thanks to a suggestion from Katrina Heap, I am trying out a small residential evaporative cooler, the Vornado (available from Bed Bath and Beyond for something

like \$80) in anticipation of forthcoming dry days.

*For something very different -  
Let's take a little trip...*

*Shared with us by our Immediate Past President, Tom Franczak, who now resides in beautiful, sunny San Antonio. (Consider me jealous!)*

### **Our orchids have spines**

So I have this friend, Sabina, whom I know through one of the dance groups, but that's another story. Anyway Sabina has this large spread in Sattler which is near Canyon Lake (remember that, it'll be on the final), and at the height of the blooming season for them, she invited a couple of us over to see her five acre meadow of bluebonnets all in flower. That was in early April. It was pretty spectacular. I counted three alba clones among nearby bluebonnets but I didn't take a census of the whole meadow! Yes, albas ... I knew that would catch your attention.



**Texas Bluebonnets**

Meadow of Texas Bluebonnets  
(Lupinus Texensis)



Of course you can see bluebonnets all around here. The shoulders and median of US 281 are dripping with them along with Indian paint brushes which are also in bloom at the same time. Did you know that US 281 is the longest continuous three-digit U.S. Route? Yup, from Mexico to Canada. Look it up on Wikipedia. But a big meadow is worth seeing, regardless. Poor us. All we have are blue bluebonnets and red paintbrushes growing everywhere like weeds and none of those nice yellow dandelions you have. So sad. I hope you cherish your dandelions.



So there was time and Sabina offered to take us on a tour of her property and we climbed aboard some kind of vehicle that I can only describe as an off-road golf cart for four. Needed it because even walking down to the weir that created her duck pond is a rockier hike than I'd care for. And the rest of the tour is a whole lot longer than I'd care to hike also. So off we went with this vehicle put-putting and popping its heart out. Forget conversation.



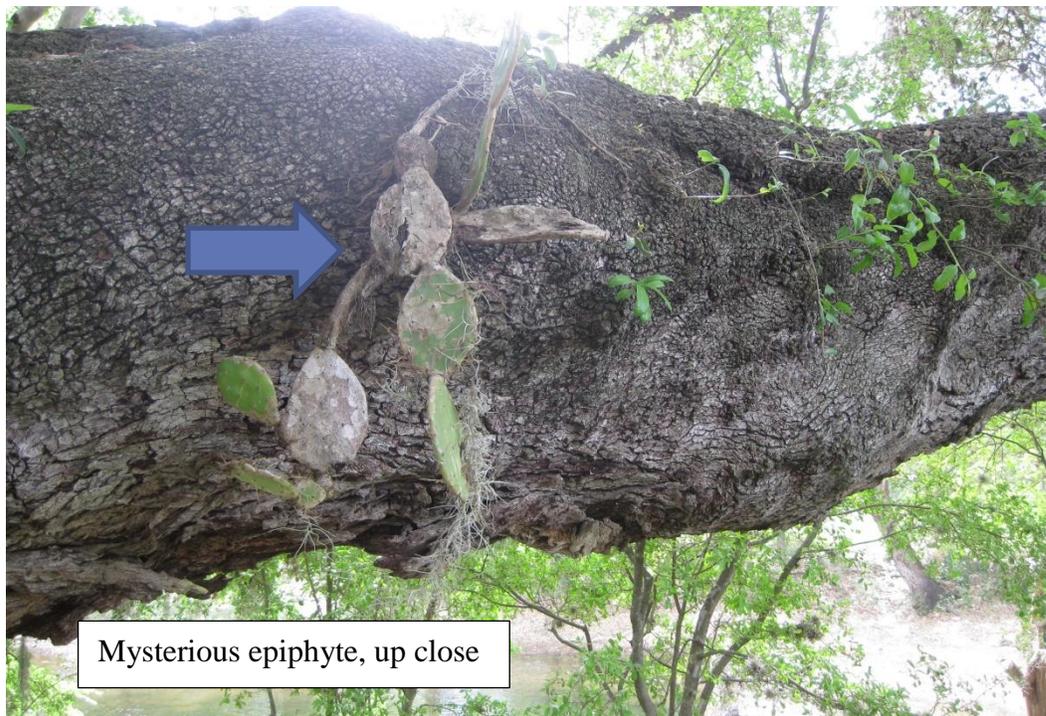
We encountered more flora than I could comfortably remember. I guess that is any number more than three because only two plants are really stuck in my memory. One was Mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*)[pic at end]. Sabina told me she harvests its leaves and brews a tea from them which she gives to an asthmatic friend who tells her it's beneficial.

Weir creating habitat for ducks



Stream bed when weir overflows

But here's the other. We know that both orchids and bromeliads are epiphytic. Even the newbies know that. So included with this article is a photo of the other memorable plant, among others. I have consulted all the bromeliad reference material I could lay my hands on. The plant is simply not there. So obviously it must be an orchid, right? But what is most interesting about this epiphyte are the spines that festoon it. Not finding it in any orchid references I've decided it must be a new species. I've taken the liberty of naming it. Behold, *Cactleya sabina*. (You can mail me the CBR, guys.)



There was also a Resurrection plant growing on one of the trees but as it hadn't rained recently, it just looked like a lot of dry scabs covering the limb. I don't know what species it is.

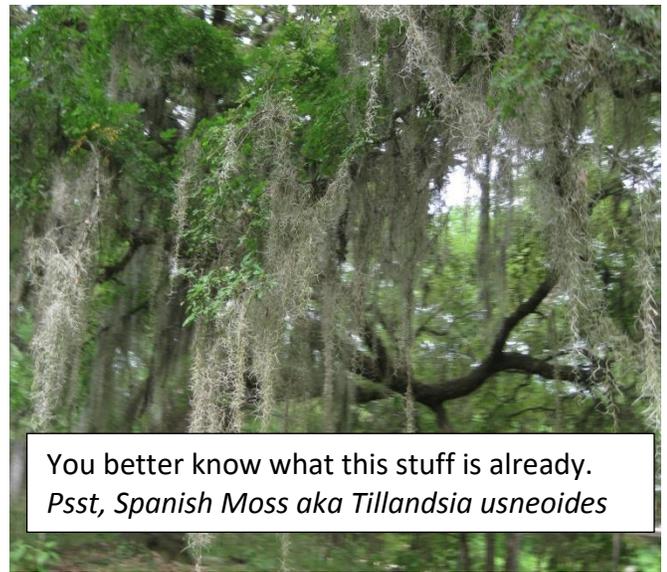
What else can I tell you? There are no basements here. Oh, there could be but they'd have to be blasted out of the rock with dynamite. So there aren't any. Plant a tree in your yard? Step one: rent a

jackhammer. So I can't really grow the way I used to. But I did bring one with me and I've got it under an LED and it's happy. *Ludisia discolor alba*. I think I bought it at the 2013 show as a

smidgen of a plant. It liked me. It made three growths. And then one of the cats ate down two of the growths and it wasn't happy at all and was going backwards fast. In desperation I emptied a heavy whiskey bottle (yummm) and filled it with water (what's an orchid going to do with whiskey anyway?) and added a pinch of fertilizer.



Resurrection plant, desiccated but alive and well.



You better know what this stuff is already.  
*Psst, Spanish Moss aka Tillandsia usneoides*

In went the remaining growth and guess what happened with it's last chance? It thrived. New leaves atop its scraggly growth, little hair-like roots appearing on the submerged part, and strongly photophilic behavior. I think I may just keep it going hydroponically. Easy peasy.

So instead of the nurseries, nowadays I hit the dance halls and wineries on the weekends. There are ten of the former and three dozen of the latter in my GPS. I have yet to find an orchid nursery around here. Tennis tells me I should be growing some heat tolerant genera on my deck here. And once I've got the rest of the yard the way I want it, I think I'll do just that. Just remember, it's not hot down here until the temperature exceeds 101 F. Until then, it's just warm. Kind of like "far" doesn't begin until 200 miles. Until then it's "near." This is Texas. Where the speed limit is 85 a sign says Slower Traffic Keep Right ... Don't Slow Texas Down.

Have I adapted? Faster than I imagined. I feel sorry for all of you who aren't Texans ... yet.

Tom Franczak  
Top Hand, Texas Chapter of COOS



Mullein, herbal medicine plant

## Cincy Fall Show Display -

A giant 'THANK YOU' to Tom Bell-Games for making the trek down to Cincy to do not only the set up but also the tear down of the COOS display. He did a fantastic job and as a result COOS placed 2<sup>nd</sup> for the Exhibit.



We had many awesome plants that helped to make up the beautiful display and the following came away w/ribbons.

Tennis Maynard –

Bulb. Elizabeth Ann 'Buckleberry' - 1<sup>st</sup> and Best in Class

Potinara Hawaiian Thrill 'Praise' - Third

C Chocolate Drop 'Kodama' – 2<sup>nd</sup>

Psychopsis Kalihi 'Yellow Bird' – 3<sup>rd</sup>

Paph dianthum 1<sup>st</sup>

Phrag longifolium v hinksianum – 1<sup>st</sup>

Phrag besseae – 2<sup>nd</sup>

Gary & Deb Walker –

Odontocidium Wildcat 'Bobcat' – 2<sup>nd</sup>

Justin Pepperney –

Paph spicerianum – 3<sup>rd</sup>

Tessie Steelman –

Eplc Volcano Trick 'Fireball' – 1<sup>st</sup> and Best in Class

Katrina Heap –

Den Hibiki – 1<sup>st</sup> and Best in Class

Prosthechea (Encyclia) vitellina – 2<sup>nd</sup>

Again, thank you to Tom for doing the work and thank you to everyone who contributed plants for the display.

## *Orchid Party and Auction!*

The Cincinnati Judging Center invites you and members of your local orchid society to enjoy food, drink and participate in a silent auction of plants and other orchid-related items on Sunday, December 13th at the Civic Garden Center, 2715 Reading Road, Cincinnati. Lunch will be served approximately 11 am and items for silent auction will be open for bidding.

If you want to come for just dessert and auction or auction only, that's perfectly fine. The auction will close at 1 pm. when AOS judging of plants begins.

Members of the judging center will be bringing in divisions of fine plants, well-raised plants looking for a new home and, this year, Jim and Annette Lurton, are also sending some of their plants for the auction. Jim and Annette's plants always added beauty to the GCOS exhibits and while I can't tell you what the auction plants will be, I can say without hesitation, they will be worth bidding on. Please share this information with members of your local society and any other orchid lovers who might be interested.

Any questions, email or call me at 513-475-9771.

Jan

**And last but not least...orchid  
gear for sale...**

Interested parties...contact Elaine at the below email address...

Several years ago, I started "collecting" orchids – strictly a windowsill project. My collection grew and I came up with the bright idea of moving some of them outside for the summer.

They loved it and of course needed to be divided, which meant MORE orchids. I no longer had enough windowsills! Bringing them inside for the winter required more and more “gear”.

I am retired. We now have a summer home out of state and it just got to be too much. I have thinned the herd to 3 and those travel with me. However I am left with gear that is still in decent shape. My husband built me some “orchid cages” to keep them safe from critters when they summered outside. Those are now pretty weathered. Everything else is in good shape. I also have several humidity trays (some are visible in the attached pictures).

My question for you is, do you know if anyone would be interested in any of these items? Before I try eBay or a garage sale, I thought maybe the Orchid society might have some members that might be interested.

Thanks for your time,

Elaine Kotary (I live in Westerville)

[ekotary@aol.com](mailto:ekotary@aol.com)

