

New Orleans Orchid Society's Newsletter



September 2024

<http://neworleansorchidsociety.org/>
https://www.facebook.com/groups/600143828277322/?ref=share_group_link

Officers:

President: Denise Emmer
Vice-President: Susan Goss
Secretary: Ann Ebert
Treasurer: Gayle Dellinger
Past President: Molly Prokop
Newsletter Editor: Larry Hennessey
Website Editor: Debbie Dinwiddie
Board of Trustees: Carol Stauder
Pat Herbert
Ann Roth

Meeting Notice:

Tuesday, September 17, 2024 6:30pm
Lakeview Presbyterian Church
5914 Canal Blvd, New Orleans, LA

Orchid Basics: 6:30pm

Program:

Habenarias – How to grow them
Larry Hennessey

President's Message

Happy Fall! Not that we have much of a change of seasons, but I know we are all looking forward to a little more comfortable weather. It's my favorite time of year....a hint of things to come. VP Susan Goss will man September's meeting while I'm out of town visiting family. We have some great meetings and events coming up—a VERY spooky and fun October meeting—start planning your costume! We are representing the NOOS at the Fall Garden Show October 5-6 at City Park. We need your expertise! The City Park Garden shows are always much fun and you get to meet a lot of folks! Please look at your calendars. We are always in need of volunteers as we cannot succeed as a society without YOU! Susan will give you more details on that and other upcoming events. We all know that this is the BEST and BUSIEST time of year here for tons of activities and festivals, so we appreciate you for your dedication to the orchid society!! Enjoy!!

Denise

Upcoming Events

Fall Garden Show

October 5 – 6, 2024
New Orleans Botanical Garden
5 Victory Avenue, City Park
New Orleans, LA 70124

Acadian Orchid Society Show

October 11 – 13, 2024
Fatima Knights of Columbus,
111 Goodnight Drive,
Lafayette, LA



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Habenaria - Easy to care for Terrestrial Orchids

by Larry Hennessey



The genus *Habenaria* is comprised of 898 terrestrial species distributed across all of the world's continents except Antarctica. Most are bog plants with bizarre white or green flowers.

The ones you find in cultivation are the brightly colored ones originating from Southeast Asia. If you are interested in a group of orchids that require no care during the trying time of the year for orchid growers (winter), have interesting foliage and colorful flowers then you should look into growing *Habenarias*.

For me the most important thing is they don't need any greenhouse space because they go completely dormant from November thru March. During the growing season which typically starts in March, they do require a lot of moisture and fertilizer to get optimal growth and flowering. I keep mine outside in a shady location but make sure they stay constantly moist during their growing season (they love our rainy days). There are many successful *Habenaria* growers who grow exclusively indoors under lights which keeps the colorful foliage in a more pristine condition.

Understanding the growth pattern of where

they originate in nature and duplicating it in cultivation is necessary to be a successful *Habenaria* grower. In nature they experience wet summers and dry winters. Rain starts in spring and slowly diminishes in fall. If you acquire plants in active growth be prepared for the dormancy indicators. Once the flowers have faded you can start to back off on the watering but don't let them go completely dry until the foliage has died back completely. After that just put them in a protected area that doesn't get too cold (I put mine in my attached garage).



I've learned a new way to handle them during dormancy from Sara Hurdel of Needmore Orchids. The foliage originates from an underground tuber. When the foliage dies back completely and the medium is dry, I take the whole thing out of the pot and knock off all of the potting soil to expose the new tubers that will grow into the next year's plants. If you grow them well enough you will be rewarded with larger tubers and more than one each year. A well grown plant can produce 3 to 4 new tubers. If you don't separate them the next year's growths will be crowded together and you won't get optimal results. The old tuber will be a dry shell that can be discarded. Once I have the tubers with all of the soil knocked off, I put them in a clear plastic baggy and put them in a box in a spare bedroom. Come March I start checking them for new growth poking out of the tuber indicating it's time to pot them up.



Since they are terrestrials, they grow well in potting soil. I now use Promix HP in a tall pot with a layer of large perlite in the bottom covered by a layer of fine perlite. If I can find some fine bark/charcoal I will be adding that to the Promix to add air pockets to reduce the chance of rot. I make sure the medium isn't totally dry and pot them about half an inch below the surface. Then I wait for the new growth to start peeking out of the soil. At that time I put them in a tray with half an inch of water for 5 minutes. I continue to do this to keep them slightly moist until the foliage unfurls on top as getting water in the growing tip risks rot. Once a couple of leaves have unfurled you can safely start watering from the top.

Most of the colorful hybrids today come from four species (erichmichelii, rhodocheila, roebelenii, xanthocheila) which are now considered by the taxonomists at RHS/Kew to be synonyms of one subspecies: *Habenaria rhodocheila* subsp. *rhodocheila*. The other two species used by the hybridizers are *Hab. carnea* for its full form and mottled foliage and *Hab. medusa* for its cat whiskers lip.

Of course hybridizers are never satisfied so they are now introducing some new lines using the uniquely shaped *Hab. crinifera* and intergeneric crosses with *Pectellis* species.

Unfortunately, it looks like the SE Asian vendors stopped producing *Habenarias* years ago so the only vendors I know of are the following three US based ones. These are small operations so their sales are only open a few times a year. If you're not on their mailing list and following their facebook pages you will miss their sales.

Needmore Orchids – Sarah Hurdel
 Rustyexotics – Nicholas Rust
 WindsweptOrchids – Leon Glicenstein

If you want to go the long way you can also look at Marni Turkel's mostlyspecies site for flasks. I myself have grown them from flask and they will flower in year 2 or 3 out of flask.

For more information about growing *Habenarias* you can go to Sarah Hurdel's culture webpage or Facebook blog here:

<https://needmore-orchids.myshopify.com/pages/habenaria-culture-sheets>

<https://www.facebook.com/askmeaboutmyplants>

Nicholas Rust's culture webpages can be found at:

<https://rustyexotics.com/pages/cultural-info>



Minutes of August 20, 2024 Meeting

President Denise Emmer called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Reports

- Vice-President Susan Goss announced the programs for upcoming meetings. She also asked for a volunteer to speak at the September 12 meeting of the Tangipahoa Master Gardeners.
- Secretary Ann Ebert reported that we currently have 80 members.
- Treasurer Gayle Dellinger gave a brief report.

Old Business:

- Denise mentioned that the NOOS Birthday Bash in July was a great success.
- Susan announced that we now have NOOS logo coffee mugs for sale. She also said that while name tags with the old logo can continue to be used, all new name tags ordered from now on will have the new logo. She also asked for ideas for other items to be produced with the new logo.

New Business:

- Denise reminded everyone that a new expense form was circulated to the membership recently. This form is to be submitted by members who have incurred expenses on behalf of NOOS and are requesting reimbursement.
- Denise announced that she recently received the 2024 SWOGA Directory and that Ann Ebert will be emailing it to the membership. She also asked for a volunteer to serve as NOOS's SWROGA rep. The rep will need to attend twice yearly meetings.
- Denise announced that she appointed Ann Ebert to chair the 2024 nominating committee. Ann Roth has also been named to the committee. We are looking for volunteers who would like to serve as officers or trustees for 2025.
- Susan is working on more activities for NOOS members to participate in: repotting clinics at Harold's Nursery in the Marigny and Jefferson Feed on Jefferson Highway. We are also looking at a possible joint social event with the Gulf Coast Orchid Society this spring. We will have a table at the City Park Fall Garden Show in October and will need volunteers to staff it.
- Several members brought orchid plants for sale this evening. Members were invited to take advantage of this opportunity.
- Ann Roth conducted a live auction of 5 plants donated by members Ann Roth, Carol Stauder and Larry Hennessey.

Program: Matt Myers of Foo Foo Orchids gave a presentation on mounting orchids.

Plant judging results were presented by Larry Hennessey.
Plant raffle, birthday raffle and door prize.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:20 p.m.