

# Tucson Orchid Society

## August 2014 Newsletter

---

**August Meeting: Wednesday, August 20, 7:30 PM**

---

### **Ron Coleman: The Orchid and the Copper Mine**

The August meeting speaker is Ron Coleman. His talk, “The Orchid and the Copper Mine,” covers the saga between a newly described orchid and the planned Rosemont Copper Mine south of Tucson. The talk shows how research on the orchid impacted decisions regarding the mine by the Fish and Wildlife Service. It talks about the orchid and ongoing research projects.

Ron Coleman’s Biography: Ron has been a member of the Tucson Orchid Society since 1994 and has been growing orchids for over 40 years. His plants have earned multiple AOS awards including AM, HCC and CCM. His interest in native orchids dates from a chance discovery of *Corallorhiza mertensiana* in Washington in 1972. Since that time he has devoted weekends and vacations to seeking and studying native orchids. He enjoys searching for wild orchids wherever he may be and has found them in England; Puerto Rico; Canada, including Newfoundland; as well as most parts of the lower 48 states including Hawaii and Alaska. He just returned from an orchid photographing trip to Minnesota.

Ron is a frequently published author with over 30 orchid articles to his credit, most dealing with native orchids. They have appeared in the American Orchid Society Bulletin (now know as Orchids), The Orchid Digest, Fremontia, Selbyana, and Madrano. Two wild orchid species are named after him, and he has described two new taxa.

Ron is the author of *The Wild Orchids of California*, published in 1995 and *The Wild Orchids of Arizona and New Mexico*, published in 2002. He co-authored the orchid treatment in *Arizona Rare Plant Field Guide* prepared by the Arizona Rare Plant Committee, and was co-author of two orchid genus treatments in the *Flora of North America*, Vol. 2, published in 2002. Ron wrote major portions of the orchid treatment for the new Jepson Manual Flora of California published in 2012.

Ron's photographs have appeared in the following books:

Shennan, T. J. 2001. *Ultimate Orchid*. American Orchid Society

Bown, P. M. 2003. *The Wild Orchids of North America, North of Mexico*. University of Florida Press

Quinn, M. 2003. *Wildflowers of the Mountain Southwest*. Rio Nuevo Publishers

His orchid photographs were featured in the February 2004 *Arizona Highways*.

## President's Corner

Hi Everyone,

Here it is already August. I hope your plants are doing well in the heat.

Last month we had a wonderful potting demonstration. I really want to thank all the people who participated. Wes Addison, Jim Santino, Mark Dimmitt, and Jim Wilcoxon. It was very informative. People have told me that they really learned a lot. I can't remember when we had our last potting demo meeting. Thanks for all the help setting up and tearing down. I think we should have one meeting devoted to this important part of growing, every year.

*[Editor's note: See the Addendum at the end of this newsletter where Sheri Musil and Judy Forester provide detailed notes on July's repotting session]*

Don't forget that we are going to Doug Bultman's Greenhouse in September. I think it will be the third Sunday. These tours have been well attended. I am looking for more people to sign up to show their growing spaces next year. Don't hesitate. It can be a lot of fun and very rewarding.

Now is the time to begin to get ready and repot your excess and unwanted divisions for the Auction. It is coming up soon.

Mike Barretti

## Future Greenhouse Open Houses.

Sept. 21st	Doug Bultman	4920 La Callecita, Tucson 85718
October	Tony Knight	
December	As always	Wes Addison's home along with the Holiday Party

## Notices

Doug Bultman is looking for volunteers to help him with the re-potting of his orchids. If you would like more experience with re-potting, contact Doug at 219-8343.

If you are receiving this newsletter in paper form by regular mail, it is because we do not have a correct email address for you. If you have an email address where you could receive the newsletter, please send it with your name to the newsletter editor, Sue Philips, at [sphilips@email.arizona.edu](mailto:sphilips@email.arizona.edu)

## Cookie List

*This is the list of people who have signed up to bring cookies to the monthly meetings during 2014.*

January: Sue Philips  
February: Ed Busch  
March: Jim Santino  
April: Mary Ann Albano  
May: Sheri Musil  
June: Beth Woodin

July: Ron Norman  
August: Tony Knight  
September: Dawn Gall  
October: Angela Stith  
November: Mark Dimmitt

## Officers

President:	Mike Barretti	<a href="mailto:mbarretti@msn.com">mbarretti@msn.com</a>
Vice-President	Jim Santino	<a href="mailto:jimmys1321@gmail.com">jimmys1321@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer	Dave Ingram	<a href="mailto:dingram31@comcast.net">dingram31@comcast.net</a>
Membership	Angela Stith	<a href="mailto:angelastith@gmail.com">angelastith@gmail.com</a>
Newsletter	Susan Philips	<a href="mailto:sphilips@email.arizona.edu">sphilips@email.arizona.edu</a>
Program Chair	Wes Addison	<a href="mailto:wesadd@cpatucson.com">wesadd@cpatucson.com</a>
Show Chair	Wes Addison	<a href="mailto:wesadd@cpatucson.com">wesadd@cpatucson.com</a>
Auction Chair	Mike Barretti	<a href="mailto:mbarretti@msn.com">mbarretti@msn.com</a>

## General Meeting Information

The Tucson Orchid Society regularly meets on the third Wednesday of every month at the Adobe Bridge Club, 3727 E. Blacklidge Dr., Tucson, AZ 85716 at **7:30 PM**. From the intersection of E. Ft. Lowell and N. Dodge, go two blocks south on Dodge, turn left on Blacklidge and the building is on the north side of the street.

# Addendum: TOS July Meeting

## Notes on Repotting Demonstrations

By Sheri Musil and Judy Forester

There was some interest in sharing notes from this meeting, so here are some sketchy notes taken by Sheri and Judy. Errors are Sheri's. Don't get used to this, it's a onetime service!

### **Mike Barretti on repotting paphiopedilums and phragmipediums:**

Mike uses the following mix for his paphs, note that these are ratios. He uses a scoop made from a cut down 8 inch pot, with 1 scoop equaling 1 part in the ratio, so you'll have a sense of how much bone meal or dolomitic lime to add. It doesn't have to be exact, but Sheri guesses that his scoop is about 2-3 cups.

It's a 3-2-1-1 mixture of 3 parts medium bark, 2 parts small bark, 1 part charcoal, and 1 part perlite. He mixes in  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 c. dolomite lime pellets,  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. bone meal and  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. blood meal (to all those bucketfuls, it's not a large amount per handful of mix). He says that bone meal breaks down slowly over months. The blood meal works within weeks.

On Mike's paph mix, he mentioned that he combines the lime, bone and blood meal in a cup and mixes it up before incorporating it in the bark mixture. He said that he then adds "warm hose water" to the mixture which helps combine the lime mix with bark. He also recommended regular sifting of the mix before use. If using mix that has dried out, rewet it the night before repotting.

His phrag mix is also 3-2-1-1, but he adds 1 part pro mix (you could use peat moss) to the paph mix. He does not add the dolomitic lime to this mix, but does add the bone meal and blood meal. Mike says he likes to sieve his perlite to get rid of the fine dust/powder. Sheri's note – be careful to avoid breathing the dust.

He had a lot of roots to put into the pot, so he slowly screwed the plant into the pot with a twisting motion.

### **Mike Barretti on repotting cattleyas:**

Mikes's cattleya media is a 4-1-1 mix of 4 parts medium bark, 1 part large perlite, and 1 part chunky peat.

Bifoliate cattleyas are particularly important to repot only when see new roots forming. They only make roots once a year, so if you miss the potting window, the plants may die because they couldn't grow new roots. Mike was taught by Carl Withner to really pack in the media around the roots. He emphasized that orchids won't grow new roots or thrive if they are wobbly in the pot. So he really packs in the mix around the roots, plus he uses pot clips. Sometimes with cattleyas he'll add a stick to the pot and then tie the pseudobulbs to the stick (or to each other) using twist ties. This helps stabilize the plant, and also can be helpful encouraging good growth habits (upright). Mike also mention his "bionic" roots – twist a long tie around the base of the plant and then have the ties come out of the bottom of the pot. Put in the potting mix and tie off

the twist ties below the pot to help anchor the plant. He uses 14 or 16 gauge wire to make his own pot clips.

**Jim Wilcoxon on cattleya mixes:**

Jim started with an experiment where he had multiple pieces of a mini cattleya that he potted into a variety of media. The goal was to see what worked best for encouraging new roots. They all worked, but some were better than others. Note that Jim waters heavily.

Jim said that his mix was 50 - 50 coco chips and large perlite. However, he did say that he used Styrofoam peanuts, but didn't say how much in the mix. He pointed out that some of the peanuts will dissolve in water and therefore are obviously not suitable. Jim adds 100% Styrofoam to the bottom of deep pots.

Crushed (more like shredded) Styrofoam - not bad

Sphagnum moss – not as good

Chopped cooler pad cardboard – great

Oasis – small cubes of oasis, the stuff you do flower arrangements in. He commented that it will get soggy quickly if left growing in this medium. So not really recommended.

Small rocks from yard – Roots just lay on top of rocks, didn't go into mix.

Bark mix – ok roots

Jim handed out pieces of Den. Berry 'Oda', looks like a kingianum cross.

**Jim Santino demonstrated mounting bromeliads using fish line:**

He sometimes uses stainless steel wire, sometimes clothesline (wire covered with a green plastic coating) to hang the mounts.

He likes to drape green moss (*Tillandsia usenoides*, Spanish moss) over the roots, thinks they do better with a little moisture retention. Could also use sphagnum moss. He uses a little Spanish moss as a bed to help start the mount.

Position the leading growth in the direction you want it to grow. Maybe temporarily use a long twist tie to hold the plant while making the permanent tie down of the plant on the stick with fish line. He said to not tie the line tightly over a root or other growing point while anchoring the plant. To stabilize the mounting stick, he also used a cardboard box with an appropriate sized hole to more easily hold the mount while tying it. This helps in those situations where you need a third hand.

With some *Tillandsias*, he'll use a small pot with pumice in the bottom, with a little moss on top, and then nestle the *Tillandsia* into the pot.

**Mark Dimmitt on mounting plants – dry and wet mounts:**

For success, be sure to do these two things, otherwise the plant won't root well and will die. 1 - You must tie the plant securely so that it does not move. 2 – The rhizome must be in contact with the wood/cork mount.

Uses a variety of things for mounts, including cork (lasts forever), cedar fence boards, branches. Said that white thorn acacia is good. Mesquite wood lasts, but the bark peels off in a year or two.

Demonstrated a “wet” mount for plants that need some organic matter to grow into, mimics a plant growing into leaves and what have you on a branch.

Sphagnum moss calcifies in a year if using tap water, maybe will last 2 years if using RO water. So he uses bark or coco chip and then holds it down with plastic netting. The netting is available from home depot in 15-20 foot rolls, looks like plastic hardware cloth. It’s much sturdier than bird netting for keeping birds out of fruit trees.

Used a staple gun to attach the mesh to one side of the mount. Put a 1-2 inch layer of coco chip over the board, then a fine layer of sphagnum moss to hold the coco chip in place. Then put the plastic mesh across the media and fasten it down on the other side with more staples.

Put your plants on top of the mesh and tie down with monofilament (fishing line). Be careful to not damage the growing points of the plant with the monofilament.

Mark also uses green stretchy plant tie tape in place of the monofilament.

Mark mentions that he also uses Goop (he showed garden Goop, but says they are all the same) to glue plants to a mount. Keep the mount in a horizontal position while it is drying and anchor it with ties, etc., and allow it to dry overnight. He also mentioned the strong odor of the goop and recommended good ventilation while using it. It’s waterproof, but roots won’t grow through it so be thoughtful about not smearing it around. He does not recommend using hot glue, as the glue doesn’t hold.

### **Wes on potting phalaenopsis:**

Wes is switching over to growing a lot of his phals in sphagnum moss. He says it’s good to get moss out of the bale as soon as you can and fluff it up. Otherwise it’ll lose its ability to fluff out. Can do this when it’s dry – he implied that it’s moist enough when it comes that you can fluff it as is. Get good quality moss that has long fibers.

Use moss after it’s been soaked in water and then wring the water out by hand. Says you have to pack moss tight or it tends to dry out, and then it’s hard to rewet.

Commented that letting newly repotted plants sit dry for a bit (remember, the moss is damp) encourages new roots to grow.

He rips leaves away just above or below the new roots before repotting. He removes flower spikes when repotting (author’s note: That probably encourages growth to leaves and roots, rather than producing more flowers on an old spike. My experience is that the plant will give a few more flowers on an old spike. I’d rather have it grow strong and produce a new spike later with lots of flowers.). He also “screws” the plants into the pot to get those roots to fit in.

Recommends not using moss in pots that are 6” or greater, as the moss is too moisture retentive. The roots in the middle may rot.

end