



# CENTRAL ILLINOIS ORCHID SOCIETY

## Summer 2025

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American Orchid Society  
Education. Conservation. Research.  
Affiliated Society

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### CIOS ONLINE:

- [www.ciorchidsociety.org](http://www.ciorchidsociety.org)
- Facebook Group—[click here](#).
- ??s: [info@ciorchidsociety.org](mailto:info@ciorchidsociety.org)

Central Illinois Orchid Society's Newsletter is published each quarter and delivered by email. Subscription is included with membership in the Society. Send submissions to Lori Garrett at [Lorikgarrett@gmail.com](mailto:Lorikgarrett@gmail.com).

### 2024 CIOS Executive Board:

- Joanne Miller, President
- Mark Williams, Treasurer
- Lori Garrett, Editor/web; AOS Rep
- Vanessa DeShambo, Secretary
- Linda Bailey, Show Chair
- John Foran, Sale Chair

### From the President . . .

Hello CIOS Members,

I want to give you a report of our March Show and Sale and thank each one of you who had a part in the Show.

We couldn't have done this without everyone's help and the Board is very appreciative of all we accomplished! I thought you'd like to know how our sales went that day. We started out with about 180 Orchids purchased from Kalapana Tropicals (Hawaii), Natt's Orchids (Naperville IL), and Hausermann's Orchids (Villa Park IL). We had boxes and boxes of orchids to unwrap and put sale stickers on! Several of us took home a box or two and some went to the McClean County Master Garden Lawn and Garden Day event on Saturday, February 29 in Bloomington. The rest were destined for our Show and Sale in Champaign on March 8. There were a lot of orchids!



Our income from sales in Bloomington was approximately \$1055 and our income from our Champaign show was approximately \$4076. Of that total, \$918 was paid through a new Venmo account overseen by Amy, and the plants we didn't sell were sold online after the show by Vanessa, bringing in an additional bit totaling approximately \$1000.00. So all in all we made a profit of over \$2100.00 and think it was well worth all of our time and effort.

Many thanks to Lori for speaking about orchids at the Bloomington Master Garden Sale, Linda for Chairing the Orchid Show and Sale and selling orchids at the booth in Bloomington, John and Connie for acquiring all the orchids we sold, Linda, Joanne & Niela for pricing all the plants, Amy for all her work on figuring out the Venmo sales, Vanessa for selling our leftover orchids, Paul for showing how to repot orchids at our Show and Sale, Mark for collecting all the money and doing the banking, and everyone else for helping at the Show and Sale and bringing food for us to snack on. Many hands make light work!

Happy Growing!  
Joanne Miller, CIOS President





**Scenes from CIOS' 2025 Orchid Show and Sale**



**Scenes from CIOS,  
2025 Orchid Show and Sale**



**MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:**

**Mac Johnson**

*How did you become interested in growing orchids?*

I started my plant journey with succulents, but I slowly became more interested in other houseplants (aroids, orchids, carnivorous plants, etc.). The diversity of orchids has made them one of my favorite plants to grow.

*How long have you been involved with orchids and what level of knowledge would you say you have?*

My first orchid was a "regular" phalaenopsis orchid that I managed to rebloom after it had lost its original flowers. I'm still fairly new to orchids as a whole but look forward to learning more about these interesting plants.

*Are there any special orchid memories you care to share?*

I have found two terrestrial orchids native to the US before: crane-fly orchid (*Tipularia discolor*) in North Carolina and puttyroot orchid (*Aplectrum hyemale*) in Illinois. The crane-fly orchid was in bloom with no foliage (photo on the right), but the puttyroot orchid only had a single leaf without any flowers.

*How many orchids do you have and how old is your longest-kept plant(s)?*

I have an extensive plant collection, with around 6 or 7 orchids, the oldest being a couple of years old.

*Any favorites among your collection? And why do you like them?*

My favorite plants in my collection right now are my sundews and butterworts, both carnivorous plants. For orchids, my favorites are a *Jumellea* sp. and an *Aerides* sp.; I received them as discounted "rehab" plants a few years ago and have cared for them since.

*Do you have any orchid-related experiences you would like to share with us?*

No travel/show/society experiences with orchids... yet.

*What orchid do you want to grow in the future?*

I really want to grow a grasspink orchid (*Calopogon tuberosus*) because it co-occurs with many carnivorous plants in boggy areas and is native to the US. I also want to grow more jewel orchids like *Ludisia* or *Macodes*.

*When and why did you join CIOS, and if you have been a member for some time, what do you enjoy the most?*

I joined the CIOS a few weeks ago because I really enjoy meeting fellow plant enthusiasts. I love the idea of sharing blooming or interesting orchids at each meeting.





[MAC, CONTINUED . . .]

*Tell us a bit about yourself.*

I was born and grew up in North Carolina, but I did my undergrad at the University of Virginia where I double majored in Latin and Biochemistry. I'm currently working on my master's degree here at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign—I'm studying an invasive plant in the context of its soil microbial community. I enjoy running, reading, and spending time with my cat Willow.

*Please share an interesting or unusual fact or interest of yours.*

An unusual fact about me is that I much prefer the foliage of houseplants to their flowers. Orchids have really cool and unique flowers, but I think their leaves and even roots are equally impressive if not more so.

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## Looking Ahead: Upcoming September Orchid Events

### KENTUCKY ORCHID SOCIETY ANNUAL SHOW: SEPTEMBER 6 AND 7

Kentucky Orchid Society's annual show will be held at the St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, 330 N Hubbards Ln, Louisville, KY., on Saturday and Sunday, September 6 & 7. They pride themselves in having some of the best hospitality and food around and they will have a great line-up of vendors, including Natt's, Ecuagenera, Anything Orchids, Mei Ling, and Dancing Dog Orchids! Don't forget to explore the area while you are there. It is the home of the Bourbon Trail, with many tours and tastings in Louisville and surrounding areas. Louisville also has steamboats offering lunch and dinner cruises. Antique hunters, there are many areas of Louisville and close by in both Bardstown and Glendale. For just a lazy day enjoying flowers other than orchids, try Yew Dell or Waterfront Botanical gardens. If you are into baseball, they have the ultimate museum of wooden bats and associated stories at the Louisville Slugger Museum. If you have any questions, please contact Stephen Benjamin (who invited us to be exhibitors): [stephenb@oakknob.com](mailto:stephenb@oakknob.com).

### 32ND ANNUAL CHICAGOLAND ORCHID FEST IN 2025

September 19 - 21, 2025— 8:00 A.M. - 5:00P.M. Friday & Saturday; 10:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. Sunday

HOSTED BY Orchids by Hausermann of Villa Park, IL and Natt's Orchids of Naperville, IL Visit two different, interesting and unique orchid nurseries located within a 40-minute drive. Free Admission and Free Parking. Special sale items and refreshments available at both locations. Guest Growers at each location will be offering plants for sale from all over the world.

GRAND PRIZE DRAWING: Nursery Gift Certificates valued at \$600 will be awarded at the festival's conclusion. A total of five (5) winners will be drawn from participants who have visited both locations during the festival week-end. Winners will be able to choose from which nursery they wish to have their certificate issued. See festival website or contact participating grower for an application form. Look for festival special offers at both locations by visiting the festival website at [www.chicagolandorchidfest.com](http://www.chicagolandorchidfest.com) (note—this is not updated yet).

ORCHIDS BY HAUSERMANN: 2N134 Addison Road Villa Park IL 60181; phone 630-543-6855; email [info@orchidsbyhausermann.com](mailto:info@orchidsbyhausermann.com); website [www.orchidsbyhausermann.com](http://www.orchidsbyhausermann.com).

NATT'S ORCHIDS: 24645 103rd St Naperville IL 60564; phone 630-904-0947; [nattsorchids@nattsorchids.com](mailto:nattsorchids@nattsorchids.com); website [www.nattsorchids.com](http://www.nattsorchids.com).

## Chimeric Orchids: Nature's Genetic Mosaic

By Elena Romanava

It all started on a casual visit to Prairie Gardens. As I wandered through rows of vibrant *Phalaenopsis* orchids, my eyes landed on one that stood out from the rest. Its light pink petals displayed an unrestricted broad section of white—a mesmerizing contrast that was subtle and striking at the same time. The color separation seemed too perfect to be natural. Intrigued, I knew I had to take the plant home and find out what caused this striking coloration. Could it be a rare genetic mutation, or was it something else entirely? This curiosity led me down the fascinating path of researching **chimeric orchids** and their distinction from viral-induced discoloration of blooms.



What are chimeric orchids? In a biological sense, a **chimera** is an organism composed of two or more genetically distinct cell lines. In orchids, this often manifests as flowers with sectors of differing colors or spot patterns that are not inherited through normal genetic transmission. Chimeric orchids can occur naturally or through human intervention, such as somatic mutations in tissue culture propagation.

Chimerism in orchids typically arises through:

- **Somatic Mutations** – Mutations occurring in the non-reproductive (somatic) cells of an orchid can lead to color variation in petals and sepals. Since these mutations do not affect all cells equally, different tissue layers may display distinct colors (Bory et al., 2008).
- **Graft Chimerism** – When two genetically distinct orchid tissues are grafted together, a plant with mixed genetic expression can emerge, though this is less common in orchids than in other plants like cacti.
- **Transposable Elements (Jumping Genes)** – Mobile DNA sequences can alter pigment gene expression, leading to variegation in flowers (Chandler & Stam, 2004). Some *Phalaenopsis* varieties exhibit instability in their pigmentation due to these elements.
- **Tissue Culture-Induced Mutations** – In laboratory settings, orchids propagated through meristem culture sometimes develop genetic variations, producing chimeric patterns in offspring.

A key question when encountering an unusual orchid pattern is whether the coloration stems from a genetic phenomenon or a viral infection. I even posted this question on the Facebook page of American Orchid Society and Reddit! Here are some distinguishing features I have learned:

**Chimeric Coloration:** The color variation caused by mutations tends to be symmetrical and/or uniform across the flower, without the patchy or streaky effects seen with viruses. Patterns are well-defined, and often follow natural petal structures, just like on my pink mystery Phal. They remain stable unless a mutation occurs; I will be on a look out for that in the future.

**Viral-Induced Coloration:** Viral infections cause irregular and unpredictable color changes, often in the form of mosaic or streaky patterns. These include blotches, stripes, or irregular discolorations that do not follow natural petal structures. Unlike chimeric orchids, which display a consistent and stable pattern, viral infections produce



patchy discoloration, where some parts of the petal appear faded or unevenly pigmented. Symptoms can vary across flowers on the same plant, making the infection highly unpredictable.

**Growth and Health:** Chimeric orchids usually grow healthily with no adverse effects, while viral infections may cause stunted growth over time, weakened plants, or leaf mottling. Unlike genetic chimerism, viral infections often extend beyond the flowers. Check the leaves and stems for signs such as mosaic patterns, rings, or streaks, which are common indicators of viruses like Cymbidium mosaic virus (CymMV) or Odontoglossum ringspot virus (ORSV). These symptoms can affect overall plant health, leading to stunted growth or reduced vigor over time.

**Transmission:** Chimerism is a genetic anomaly that cannot be transmitted between plants, whereas viral infections can spread through sap, insects, or contaminated tools.



If a viral infection is suspected, commercial **viral testing kits** are available for home use. These kits can quickly detect common orchid viruses, helping confirm infections and take appropriate action. More information and testing kits can be found at [agdia.com](http://agdia.com).

Several well-known orchid cultivars exhibit chimeric traits. [Phalaenopsis 'Magic Art'](#) features petals streaked with pink and purple, an effect caused by unstable pigment gene expression. [Harlequin Phalaenopsis](#) is characterized by blotchy, irregular dark patterns over a lighter background, often due to transposable element activity. Some Cattleya hybrids develop petal chimerism where one petal exhibits a different hue or intensity compared to others.

Chimeric orchids showcase the complexities of plant genetics in a visually stunning way. The unpredictable nature of chimerism makes it both a challenge and a curiosity for orchid breeders. Because chimeric traits are typically not inherited through seeds, they must be propagated via cloning techniques such as meristem culture or division. However, even clonal propagation may not always guarantee a stable chimeric pattern, leading to variability in commercial production. While unpredictable chimeric patterns present challenges for breeding and propagation, they also open exciting possibilities for new hybrid developments.

For now, I'm keeping a close eye on my mystery orchid, marveling at its beauty while considering its backstory. Whether it's the result of nature's genetic artistry or a viral hitchhiker's handiwork, one thing is certain: it's a conversation starter and a reminder of the complexity behind even the simplest joys. I did order the testing kit, though, so stay tuned for results!

## References

- Bory, S., et al. (2008). "Somaclonal Variation and Transposable Elements in Plants." *Plant Mutation Reports*, 2 (2), 1-5.
- Chandler, V.L., & Stam, M. (2004). "Transposable Elements and Gene Regulation in Plants." *Nature Reviews Genetics*, 5(5), 345-356.

## Creatures in my orchids!

By Vanessa DeShambo

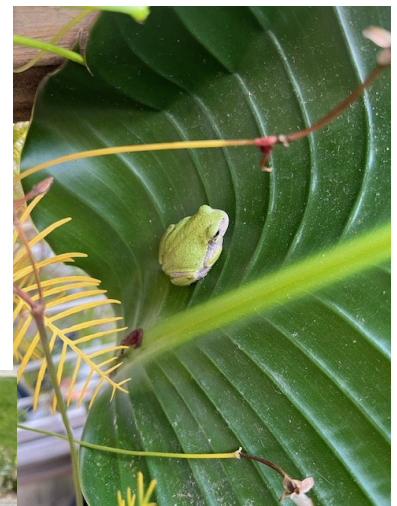
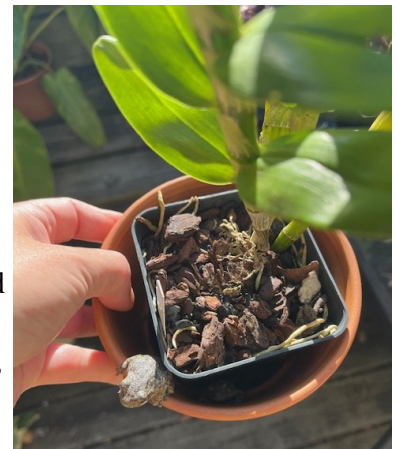
### Ants!

I have a glass cabinet that functions as a mini greenhouse where I keep some of my orchids. Every spring we battle tiny ants (Odorous House ants/Sugar ants—*Tapinoma sessile*) invading our home. We usually can easily fix it with some ant bait. This year I noticed some ants in my cabinet. There didn't seem to be a lot, so I put some baits in the cabinet assuming the problem would take care of itself, however the problem quickly got much worse. I went to water my *Paphiopedilum delatanii* and the pot erupted with ants! I nearly dropped the pot I was so surprised. I tried to drown them and wipe them away with very little success. The entire plant was turning black with ants trying to escape the water. There was a massive colony living in the media! They even had tons of eggs in the bark. I dumped the entire plant and media into a bucket of soapy water.

After I cleaned all the media and ants off of the plant, I repotted in fresh media. I then noticed a trail of ants heading to another plant! I took out every plant and watered thoroughly. I found 2 other colonies of ants that required the plants to be fully repotted. I removed all of the plants, and washed the cabinet, floors and floorboards to remove any scent trails. I replaced the plants, placed a few ant baits in and around the cabinet and the problem seems to be resolved. I haven't noticed any pest issues but if you have ants in your orchids, you may want to look carefully for aphids, scale, or mealy bugs.

### Frogs!

Last year I had several frog friends living in my orchids. They were gray tree frogs! They especially loved hiding in between the square plastic pot and the terracotta pot I had set them in. I evicted no less than 6 individual frogs when I brought my plants in last fall. Several even made it into the house and had to be rescued. This spring, when I put my plants back outside, within one day my friends had moved back in! It was shocking they found the plants so quickly. They don't seem to be hurting anything so far, and they are rather cute, so for now they can stay.



## Outdoor Orchid Care

By Lori Garrett

If you've not already done so, it is a great time to give your orchids—and you—a summer vacation. I must admit, as much as my plants seem to enjoy their summers in the great outdoors, I equally relish the respite that Mother Nature provides me when she offers up plenty of full spectrum sunshine, rain, humidity and gentle breezes to ensure adequate airflow. And during the months when my orchids are on vacation in our backyard, I have ample time to do a thorough cleaning of their indoor winter home in preparation for their autumn return.

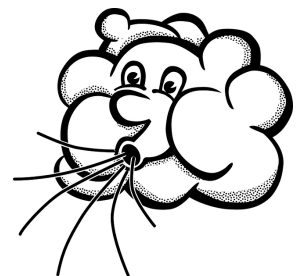
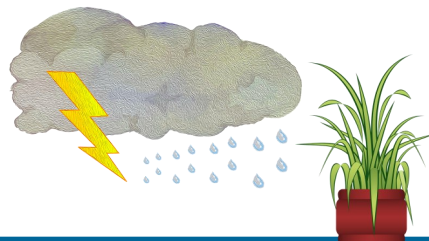


So why do most (not all) of us move our plants outside for the summer? As mentioned above, Mother Nature is a great helper. Orchids are happier in conditions that closely match those of their natural habitats, and growers have different indoor setups and care regimens. I am usually super busy, so all my orchids are on about the same watering schedule indoors—I try to water them once a week—some need it more often, sometimes they get a drink less often. They all grow at the same temperature under about the same light, are too crowded, and experience low humidity and less than ideal airflow. Yes, I can take steps to rectify those problems, but I generally don't—"survival of the fittest." Sticking them outside gives them more of what they want.

Often, another benefit of growing them outside is blooming. For many orchids, blooming is initiated by either temperature fluctuations (usually a change of 15° to 20° F between day and night) or changes in day length, both of which occur naturally outside from spring to fall. You know that Phalaenopsis you have that was in beautiful bloom when you got it but has never bloomed again? It may just be waiting for a good daily temperature variation for a few weeks.

But when your orchids are outside, don't be fooled by the old adage, "Out of sight, out of mind." That can have catastrophic consequences. Although they will likely thrive out there, they may face new challenges: inconsistent water, sunburn, high winds and storms, and more potential pests. You need to keep an eye on them regularly. When I first joined CIOS, I was stunned when I heard that seasoned, knowledgeable members put their valuable babies outside at all! By my second year, I had read up on it and gave it a go. I was amazed at the burst of new growth I got! (In fairness, indoors or out, this is peak growing season, so ALL of your orchids should be more active now). All went well until one morning in September, when I found all my orchids (only about eight at the time) scattered around my yard in varying states of chewed-ness and separated from their labels. I've learned some lessons.

The American Orchid Society says "Outdoor plants should be watered daily, regardless of region. If in drier climates, consider watering twice a day." I say nah, it depends. Yes, there will be more air circulation outside so plants may dry out faster, especially in windy weather, but you need to know your plants. Some don't want to ever dry out completely; some require it. Monitor the media and the plants and adjust your watering accordingly. Also check them when we have a lot of rain—be sure the pots are draining well so the media doesn't stay waterlogged (easy way to rot the roots) and pour off any standing water in the crowns—crown rot can set in and kill a plant very quickly. And the plants will not dry as quickly in high humidity as they will when it is low. Still, know your plants.





Some growers never put *Phalaenopsis*, *Paphiopedilum*, or *Phragmipediums* outside because they are prime targets for crown rot. I do, but I go shake water out of their crowns after a good rain unless there is a strong breeze to dry them out. Minis and mounted orchids will dry quickly and likely need watered every day, maybe more. Watch for signs of underhydration—limp or crinkled leaves, shriveling pseudobulbs—and adjust watering as needed. And don't forget the fertilizer! Rainwater lacks the harsh chemicals used in municipal purification of tap water (good!), but it also lacks nutrients. This is the height of growing season, and that requires food. Fertilize regularly or consider adding time-released fertilizer to keep both you and your plants happy.

Be aware of the daily changes in sunlight. Although many will do well with morning or late afternoon sun, few orchids tolerate being in full direct sun during midday (10AM to 2 PM). The American Orchid Society advises that “nearly all orchids should be grown in half to full shade. If moving from a greenhouse, give them one step down for sun exposure. If they are full sun plants in the greenhouse, put them outside in part-shade. If they are part shade (or a few hours of direct sun) plants, put them in full shade.” Wherever you grow them—outside or inside, especially in a south window—watch for sunburn. If a plant gets too much light, just like us it can get sunburn. Unlike us, sunburned plant parts don't recover. A little sunburn is a warning—move the plant so it gets less light. Very much sunburn stresses the plant, and it may sulk for a bit before recovering. As a general rule, if you think an orchid may be getting too much light, feel the leaves—if they feel hot, move it to more shade. Shade can come from buildings or trees, or a shade cloth hanging above the plants.



Sunburned *Phalaenopsis* leaf

Pests can be quite a problem outside. Ant volcanos, like what Vanessa described in her article, can occur outdoors as well. Mealy bugs, scale ... and LOTS more creepy crawlies and winged wonders are out there. Check your plants carefully and regularly for any signs of new residents and take action quickly if a problem is detected (and certainly check them carefully in the autumn before bringing them back inside to avoid unwanted roommates!). And don't forget the four-legged varmints. I suspect the uprooting culprits during my first summer of outside growing were squirrels, but it could have been opossums, raccoons, the neighborhood woodchuck... Be mindful of where you place your plants and who may come passing through. I now grow mine on tables inside walk-in crop cages that are covered by netting carefully staked at the bottom to prevent furry intruders. Last August, a polite resident squirrel decided to torment me. I saw squirrels lounging on the roof of my enclosures on occasion but NEVER inside them, yet for a couple of weeks straight I found a single walnut placed in a random pot—no plants uprooted and nothing disturbed, just a daily gift to say “I'm smarter than you.”

... I've learned to choose my battles.



### Welcome to our newest members!

- Henry Huang
- Mac Johnson
- Ingrid Kammin
- Robin Kruckeberg
- Glennys Mensing
- Doris Schrock



### Submission Guidelines for CIOS Newsletter

Central Illinois Orchid Society's Newsletter is published quarterly. Please follow these submission guidelines.

The deadline for each edition is the 20th of the month prior to publication as follows:

<i>Submission deadline:</i>	<i>For newsletter edition:</i>
February 20th	Spring Edition (March, April, May)
May 20th	Summer Edition (June, July, August)
August 20th	Autum Edition (September, October, November)
November 20th	Winter Edition (December, January, February)

Your original articles, pictures, and thoughts are welcome—please send them! Submissions may include but are not limited to instructional articles (“how-to”), successes and/or failures, book reviews, travelogues about visits to orchid shows or exhibits, conservatories, etc., “before-and-afters” about your own orchid projects, poems, photos, and most things related to orchids. Also, we would love to see your plants—send your photos.

- In accordance with copyright laws, all submissions must be your own original work. We cannot reprint items that have been published elsewhere without written permission from the author/copyright holder.
- Photos and images must also be your own work. With few exceptions, most photos/images on the Internet are copyright protected and cannot be used without written permission. Members’ images posted to our CIOS Facebook group may be used in our newsletter.
- All submissions undergo an editorial process and may be edited for accuracy, clarity, and length as needed.
- Please do not format your submissions—that is done by the Editor for proper layout, visual appeal, and to ensure style consistency.
- Please submit articles as Microsoft Word documents (not as PDFs please). If you work on an Apple/Mac product, please save your documents as either DOC, DOCX, or RTF (not their default PAGES) and save photos as JPEGs (not their default HEIC).
- Please submit all photos as JPEG files *separate* from articles and please include a list of captions/plant names (if possible)/explanations for each photo. For photos accompanying an article, although you may indicate where you would like the photo inserted, please realize the final layout is at the Editor’s discretion for proper fit and visual impact.
- Send all newsletter submissions or questions to Lori Garrett, newsletter/website Editor:  
[Lorikgarrett@gmail.com](mailto:Lorikgarrett@gmail.com).



Thanks for reading! Next Newsletter: FALL Edition

**Submission Deadline: August 20th.**