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The Spike
May 2016

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EASTERN IOWA ORCHID SOCIETY

The Spike

A small group of people with a big love of growing orchids.



Caularthron bicornutum photo by Nile at the Ft. Worth Botanical Center on his recent Texas trip.
Tropical epiphyte from Columbia

Presidents Message

As you all know, we will be selling orchids at the Noelridge greenhouse on Mother's Day, May 8th. If you would like to help out, but forgot to sign up for a time, don't worry about it. Just come on out and join in the fun, and let's see if we can't sell every orchid we have this time.

Remember, the next meeting is going to be the second Tuesday of the month this time; that will be May 10th. It will be at the usual place and time, just a week later than usual. I encourage everyone to attend, as we will be deciding where and when we will be holding our future EIOS meetings. If you don't care when or where we have the meetings, come anyhow because Andy Coghill-Behrends will be

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Calendar of Events

May EIOS Meeting new date, old location and time. Program: the genus Clowesia presentation By Andy Coghill-Behrends	5/10/2016
Mothers Day Showcase At Noelridge Display and sale 10 to 5	5/8/2016
CIOS Speakers Day: New date and location Saturday at the Lions Club Merle Hay Rd. Des Moines	7/30/2016
Summer Meetings TBD	
August get together	??

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Andy Coghill-Behrends Terrarium Project



After becoming a student judge, I began travelling to many more orchid shows that I had been accustomed to. The first weekend of February, I went to the Batavia Orchid Society Show for the very first time. While the wind that Friday nearly blew me off the road several times – the bridge over the Mississippi River was particularly frightening – I arrived safely and the Dusdiekers, Hamptons, and I set up our show trophy winning display. Of course, I had to hit the sales tables and managed to walk away with only one purchase: a small, mounted plant, *Dischidia ovata*. It wasn't an orchid – actually a member of the milkweed family – but I liked the striped leaves and at \$5.00 I figured I couldn't go wrong.

I spent the next four weeks wetting the cork slab almost daily (man, those itty-bittys need a lot of attention). Then, the first weekend of March, I headed to Neenah, WI for the Northeastern Wisconsin Orchid Show (one I have attended for many years – where I visit my parents). One of my favorite vendors sells at the show and he usually sells lots of plants from Ecuagenera. I managed to pick up a few more mounted plants there: *Masdevallia mandarina*, *Trichoceros onaensis*, and *Bulbophyllum clandestinum*. I was quickly realizing that I had a bit of a “mighty mini” problem. While I enjoy trying to grow some of the miniature orchids, I have had little success. They require constant attention... OR, very high humidity (something my basement-growing setup couldn't provide, but I had an idea hatching).

The next weekend was the Chicago Orchid Show at the Chicago Botanical Gardens (which I had attended last year, but only to view). Bill Page, the Dusdiekers, the Hamptons, and I set up what I

can only say was what I consider one of our best displays ever. We didn't win the show trophy, but you should be proud of your society. I couldn't leave, however, without stopping at the booth of New World Orchids out of Michigan. I hadn't shopped with them before, but I ended up picking up a *Gastrochilus retrocallus* in bloom and a *Porroglossum andreatteae*. The obligatory stop at Hausermann's Orchids on the way out of town added a *Dendrobium unicum* in bud to the list of tiny orchids I would have to devote time to.

The very next weekend was the Illowa Orchid Society Show. Yes, we won the show trophy this time, but I also "won" a *Dendrobium pachyphyllum*, *Masdevallia calura*, *Bulbophyllum biflorum*, and *Oncidium Kukoo* (a very small primary hybrid). I now had 11 eeny-weenies and it was time to take action on my plan.

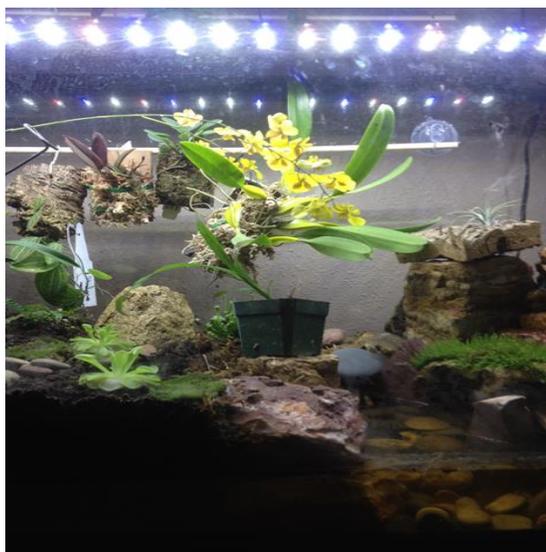
I had, sitting in the garage, a 20-30 gallon aquarium, a small water pump, some aquarium rock (large and small), peat moss, and sand. A couple quick runs to the garden center, Goodwill, and fish store garnered some sphagnum moss, small terrarium plants, a computer fan, a Plexiglas lid, and an LED aquarium light with blue and red cells. I set up the aquarium on a desk in our home office and began laying the groundwork. First came the large rock features: a barrier to divide the "pond" area from the "land area" and a water feature, using the water pump. Some lake rock filled in the gaps.

Then, wet sphagnum moss was used to plug holes in the rock features to prevent the substrate from leaking into the water area. Sand went into the bottom of the growing area, then some lake rock, then a layer of sphagnum, and – finally – peat moss to create the topography. Some terrarium plants, butterworts, and moss from my patio went onto/into the peat and a few pots were sunk in as well to house plants (careful to keep the bottoms of the pots above the water line). Dowels were suspended by suction cups on two sides of the tank to house the hanging plants and then all the babies found their homes.

My friend, Stacy, helped me hook the computer fan to an old cell phone charger to ensure good air circulation and we set up the lights (complete with "moonlight setting" for entertaining) – the LED setup keeps the temperature low in the terrarium, perfect for many of these little plants. This setup provides nearly 100% humidity and decreased the need for watering from daily to about once per 5-7 days. Already, the *Dischidia* (my first weeny one from early February) is in bloom, the *Dendrobium unicum* is in heavy bloom, and *Gastrochilus retrocallus* – though it lost its first bloom – has two new flowers. Altogether, a very inexpensive way to maintain some orchids that would otherwise be very difficult to keep. I've already got my eyes on a 50-gallon aquarium...



Left side of the terrarium: *Dendrobium unicum* in full bloom and more hanging plants on the "land" side.



Middle of the terrarium: hanging plants and the transition to the "land" area. (*Catasetum* seedling in the pot, placed temporarily for humidity).



Right side of the terrarium, computer fan and *Masdevallia calura* sitting in the rock feature.

Eastern Iowa Orchid Society

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The Eastern Iowa Orchid Society

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growing orchids*

www.easterniowaorchidsociety.org



Eulophia Keithii (now *adamanensis*) Tropical terrestrial from Southeast Asia, grows in grasslands and is deciduous during the dry season blooming as rain starts in spring. It has flowers like our "Putty Root" which blooms late May in the timber Nile

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presenting a program on the genus *Clowesia*. This will be the last meeting we will have for a while, as there will be no regular meeting for the next three months. We may have a get together at Dusdiekers in August, but that has not been finalized yet. Remember to bring whatever you have for the raffle table, or you're going to have to keep it until September. Also remember to bring whatever beautiful or weird things you have for show and tell. I'll see some of you at Noelridge on Mother's Day if you decide to come out and join in the fun, and we always do have a fun time. I hope to see you all at the meeting.

Bill

Hosts for Upcoming Meetings

May

Call Bill Page if you would like to Volunteer
If you would like to volunteer to help with refreshments, please e-mail Lois Dusdieker (lois-dusdieker@uiowa.edu).

Directions to First Presbyterian Church in Iowa City

From East on I-80 take exit 249 on Herbert Hoover Hwy turn left and go about 5 minutes on Rochester and turn left on Mount Vernon Dr. As soon as you turn left the church parking lot is on your left.

From West on I-80, take exit 246 turn right to Dodge St, turn left to Scott Blvd, turn right on First Ave, and stay on until you meet Rochester Ave, turn left, go few minutes, turn right on Mount Vernon Dr. As soon as you turn right the church parking lot is on your left.

The meeting is in the Youth Room, as soon as you enter the building turn left & turn right.