

Orchid Culture Meeting II:

Preparation for the 2020 Growing Season
with Emphasis on Repotting/Dividing Your
Orchids

Outline of Talk

- Repotting/Dividing Common Orchids- Alex
 - Cattleyas
 - Oncidiums
 - Dendrobiums
 - Phalaenopsis
- Mounting and Growing Orchids – Ken Campbell
- Q and A

Repotting Basics

- A strong, healthy root system is of prime importance for successful growing, maintaining and blooming of your orchids.
- The best time to repot and divide a plant is during active periods of root growth which is usually at the beginning of the growing season when the plants start to put out roots with green or reddish tips.
- Reasons to repot
 - Orchid has outgrown its pot
 - Medium has broken down
 - Want to change medium to suit your growing conditions
 - Plants are not growing well in existing medium
 - Want to multiply (divide) plant for our auction or to share or swap with friends

Repotting Basics

- Repotting Tips
 - Use gloves, sterile tools and clean surfaces to avoid transmitting disease and viruses
 - Remove plant from pot, discard broken down medium and dead roots, bulbs and leaves.
 - Check for diseases and treat accordingly. Do not damage new roots and growth.
 - Select pot to allow at least two years of growth, but don't overpot, i.e., use too big a pot for the orchid, which does not allow plant to dry properly between waterings.
 - Type and size of media should be proportional to size of pot and select media that is appropriate for the type of orchid. Do not reuse old media.
- Many resources available online of articles and videos for repotting your orchids as well as for pests and other good orchid info
 - POS and AOS websites (www.palomarorchid.org, www.aos.org)
 - St. Augustine Orchid Society website (<https://staugorchidsociety.org>) has numerous articles by Sue Bottom on many aspects of orchid growing (See Alex's handout on repotting for more details and sites)

Repotting/Dividing Cattleyas

- Cattleya Alliance Orchids are best repotted when new roots are forming but can be up potted (slip potted) at other times if necessary
 - Catts reproduce along a rhizome and many do so linearly with some branching
 - Maintain at least 3 good bulbs when dividing or repotting and select pot for at least 2 years growth
 - Place back end of rhizome at rear of pot to allow space at front for new growth
 - Cattleyas that grow in multiple directions should be placed in center of pot
 - Cattleyas that tend to over grow pots can be grown in baskets or mounted
 - Use bark/perlite mix (3:1 ratio) or special rescue mix in clay pots to minimize orchid that tend to escape pots or prefer baskets
 - Use larger bark mix for pots 5" and above, medium bark mix for 3-4" pots and small bark mix for 2" or lower pots
 - Write up new or update tag to reflect when repotting orchid

Repotting/Dividing Oncidiums

- Oncidium alliance orchids can be treated similarly to cattleyas.
 - Repot/divide when new roots being formed
 - Most have finer roots than cattleyas and tend to like more water so may want to use slightly smaller bark in pots and include shredded sphagnum moss to improve moisture for those needing it (i.e. miltonias and hybrids with odontoglossom in background)
 - Many tend to grow in multiple directions so place in center of pot when repotting and remove most of the old back bulbs if leafless.

Repotting/Dividing Dendrobiums

- Most dendrobiums like to be root bound so use slightly smaller pot when repotting
 - Best to repot after blooming
 - Most have thinner roots than cattleyas and tend to like more water so may want to use slightly smaller bark in pots to improve growth
 - Aussie dends can be grown well in bark mix or washed coconut husk chips
 - Many different types of dendrobiums so mix can be different depending on water requirements

Repotting/Dividing Phalaenopsis

- Many phals come from the nursery grown in sphagnum moss and tend to be overwatered by hobbyists which result in early death of the orchid
 - Repot/divide when plant outgrows pot or medium is breaking down in pot.
 - Prefer to grow smaller plants (3-4") in moss as they don't have to be watered as frequently than when grown in bark mix
 - Larger plants are grown in small/medium bark/perlite mixes supplemented with varying amounts of shredded sphagnum moss to maintain higher moisture in mix than in straight bark.
 - Prefer to repot in spring after blooming.
 - Remove any dead roots and place in fresh mix or up pot (slip pot) to minimally disturb roots

Repotting/Dividing Paphiopedalums

- Paphs can be grown in sphagnum moss or bark mixes depending on size of plant and water requirements
 - Paphs grow as terrestrials and thus like finer mixes especially as most have fine, hairy roots.
 - Can be repotted at any time of year and do better when repotted every year or two.
 - Bark/perlite mixes tend to be supplemented with some charcoal and certain paphs like a bit of calcium (dolomite) added to the mix
 - Conduct internet search to determine best requirements for your particular paph.

Growing and Mounting Your Orchids

Ken Campbell