

# The Sheath

## March General Meeting

Date: March 26, 2010

Time: Doors open at 7:00PM

Place: San Mateo Garden Center

605 Parkside Way, San Mateo, CA

Take the Alameda de las Pulgas exit off of Hwy. 92.  
The Garden Center is located between 26th and 28th  
Avenues

Mailing address: P.O. Box 6894, San Mateo, CA 94403-6894

***TIME TO PAY DUES - THANKS!***

Skill Session at 7:00PM

**Dennis Olivas**

**Deflasking**

**Meeting plus Show and  
Tell Table - 7:45 PM  
followed by**

Speaker:

**Debra Atwood**

**Know Your Roots**

Opportunity table by  
**Napa Valley Orchids**

### **Know Your Roots Speaker Debra Atwood**

Our speaker for March is Debra Atwood of Napa Valley Orchids. Her talk will focus on the different types of roots orchids have and how that influences repotting, potting media, water and fertilizer requirements. Debra is a fantastic grower, and we all can learn some great culture tips from her.

Napa Valley Orchids was started in March 2001 by third generation Napaian Debra Atwood. A gardener her entire life, this seemed a natural fit after almost 30 years in Napa's hospitality industry and a desire to start a plant business. In addition to growing a greenhouse full of beautiful orchids, primarily species, she also consults, is a regular speaker at orchid societies and garden clubs, and in addition, performs greenhouse maintenance for a handful of clients. Summers you will find her at the St. Helena farmers' market, and winter is show season, 7 to 9 shows a year. Teaching orchid classes and workshops to novice growers is her

way of helping others find their way to the enjoyment and satisfaction of orchid growing. Her brochure on basic growing tips, "Things I wish I'd known in the beginning", is very illuminating and highly recommended. This information can also be found on her web site, [napavalleyorchids.com](http://napavalleyorchids.com).

Currently Debra grows Angraecoids, species Phalaenopsis, Neofinetias, Maxillarias, and what ever else catches her fancy. Her greenhouse maintains an intermediate temperature range, and her plants thrive in the Mediterranean climate of Napa Valley. Her orchid nursery, Napa Valley Orchids, is open most days by appointment and will supply our table. Call 707-255-8266 or email [napavalleyorchids@gmail.com](mailto:napavalleyorchids@gmail.com)

### **Skill Session**

Our skill session for this month will be presented by Dennis Olivas. He will talk about deflasking orchids or what to do if you purchase orchid seedlings in a flask, and need to take them out of the flask to grow them up to blooming plants.

## **Virus Detection by Visual Examination**

### **Text and Photos by Kenneth P. Jacobsen Ph.D.**

Long ago I heard the mantra 'Automate everything, except watering'. Over the years I've learned the wisdom of this advice, because when watering it's easy to do a visual inspection of plants to see if anything is amiss. Paying attention to the plants while watering will quickly show which plants need repotting, which have insect issues, which may have spikes in need of staking, and with a little training, can help us visually spot virus so we can remove virused plants from our collections.

Of course, virus test strips do exist, and they can and should be used to test a collection. This can be a time consuming and expensive process with a large collection, and I've found that multiple leaf sections from larger plants must be tested to get relative assurance a plant is free from virus. In addition, all plants must be tested for multiple years. Sadly, experience has taught me that the plant received from another grower last year, and which tested completely free of virus last year, can show virus signs and test as virused this year, even when totally isolated from other plants so no other virus contamination can occur. I've found that outside plants can first show virus symptoms and test as virused, as long as two years after they are brought home and tested as clean from virus.

So, since testing an entire collection each and every year is unreasonable, there must be a more direct way to detect virus plants. For many Cymbidiums, there is a more direct way, which is by means of visual inspection.

In a way, Cymbidium growers are fortunate because the effects of two of the most problematic viruses can often be seen on the leaves. For the Cattleya family, it's the flowers that show indications of virus, while in other genera such as Lycastes, the symptoms of virus are almost never visible in the plants or flowers, leading to what look to be clean plants silently infecting other susceptible plants in the vicinity.

Odontoglossum Ringspot Virus (ORSV) and Tobacco Mosaic Virus (TMV) are closely related and either one is often identified by ORSV virus lab testing or test kits. ORSV and TMV can be visually identified in the leaves of newer growths on plants by one of the following visual characteristics.



**Very prominent chlorotic streaks in the new growths.** These streaks are very visible, go entirely through the leaf tissue, and are just as visible from the reverse side of the leaf (see photos to the left and right).





**Reddish streaking toward the tips of new growths.** These streaks tend to form a picotee around the tips of the new leaves, and produce streaks into the lower leaf tissue (see photo above).



**Less prominent chloritic streaks on the leaves of a slightly older new growth.** These streaks are still quite visible, but tend to be longer and narrower than the very prominent chloritic streaks. As can be seen in photo at left, any streaking which may have previously existed near the tips of the new leaves has faded, and the central portions of the newer leaves display these longer, narrower streaks.

When any of these three indications are seen in the leaves on a newer growth, it is important to separate these plants from the rest of a collection immediately. With these particular markings, it's possible the infection may be relatively recent, and may not have spread to adjacent plants. Also, sometimes these marks fade as the leaf ages and are not so visible (see photos below) so waiting to remove the plant can be a problem.



After the plant has been removed, all adjacent plants need to be closely inspected for any sign of virus. If the plant in question only displays symptoms on the new leaves, you may be lucky. It's also possible that one of the adjacent plants was the original virus carrier and infected this plant. If possible, the adjacent plants which show no symptoms should be isolated from the rest of the collection for six months or longer, and if no symptoms appear, they should then be tested for virus. Whenever a questionable plant is removed from a section of bench, that bench area should always be liberally doused with a bleach solution to kill any virus.

Other visual cues exist for ORSV or TMV virus on older leaves. Several of these are as follows:



**Light chlorotic streaking and splotching along the entire length or major areas of an older leaf.**

This streaking and splotching is visible on both the upper and lower sides of the leaf, and does not fade further as the leaf becomes still older (see photo at left).



**A light, small mosaic pattern across major portions of an older leaf.** These can sometimes be a little harder to discern, but once the eye is trained they can readily be found in virused plants. Sometimes these areas will appear as small flecks of slightly lighter color on the leaf, and they can be partially masked at some times of year due to specific types of fertilization which stimulate chlorophyll production. Several examples of this can be seen in photos above. It is actually from these smaller chlorotic markings that appear to form a type of mosaic pattern that Tobacco Mosaic Virus gets its name.



**Strange, large, geometric-appearing designs on the leaf.** These may appear as a V-shaped lighter mark across the leaf, as a chevron-shaped mark, as a W-shaped mark, or as a combination of these marks (see photos above). Close examination will reveal that these larger markings are actually made up of heavy and overlapping concentrations of the small mosaic markings in some portions of tissue, bordered by tissue without these mosaic markings.

When any of these three indications are seen on older leaves, you can be sure the plant has had ORSV or TMV for some time. These plants should immediately be removed from the collection, and all the adjacent plants should be inspected and isolated. Adjacent plants have had ample opportunity to be exposed to virus, so finding similar markings on adjacent plants would not be a surprise.

Adjacent plants which show no signs of virus should be tested. If this immediate test is negative, after six months of isolation these plants should be re-inspected and retested. Remember to test each plant from multiple areas, especially a portion of a leaf from every new growth should be included in the test. I've tested multiple areas from plants many times to find that only one of several new growths tested positive for virus whereas all the other new growths tested clean. As for case of virus infections in a new growth, the entire bench area where the virused plant was located should be liberally treated with a bleach solution.



Sometimes other marking appear on leaves which makes me suspect additional viruses are involved, such as those shown in the photo to the left. When tested these leaves tested positive for only the ORSV or TMV virus. They did not test positive for Cymbidium Mosaic Virus (CyMV). I suspect the brown markings at the center of the chlorotic areas are probably due to sunburn or fungal damage rather than a direct result of virus. Among the various virused Cymbidium plants I've seen in a variety of collections, only a couple times have I seen virus markings which were later confirmed to be CyMV, and in none of these cases did I have my camera with me to save a photographic record.

Fortunately for Cymbidium growers, CyMV may be relatively easy to find in plants from the genera Lycaste, Cattleya and Phalaenopsis, but it seems to be rarely seen in Cymbidiums.

My advice regarding any plant displaying the markings discussed and shown in the photographs is to immediately throw that plant away. There's no reason to waste time, effort and money testing such a plant in the false hope that it won't be virused. I've heard many excuses from growers like, 'it's probably a fertilizer burn', 'I've recently sprayed with a strong insecticide', or 'metaldehyde poisoning shows these same markings', but when I've broken out the testing kits and tested plants with these markings, in every single case these plants tested positive for ORSV or TMV. You shouldn't feel bad about having to throw out an occasional plant – we've all had to throw out plants now and then. This is just part of growing. Think of it as protecting the other plants and giving them a better chance to thrive, rather than as losing a plant.

Of course, the most dangerous virused plants in a collection are those that show absolutely no symptoms. When a plant is tested and the test indicates virus, it's usually possible with a very careful inspection to find some visual signs of virus, but not always. There are definitely 'Typhoid Mary' plants in some collections. This is why it's important to inspect and test adjacent plants when virus signs are seen, as one of these adjacent plants may be a silent virus carrier. This is also why many more experienced growers rarely change the location of plants on benches.

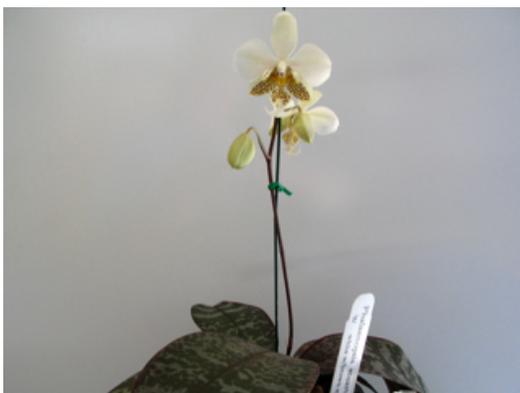
I would also suggest that any *Cymbidium* you obtain from any source, no matter how sterling the reputation of that source, be carefully inspected. If the plant is expensive, it's fine to ask the grower to do a virus test right then and there. Most commercial growers have virus test kits on hand and aren't offended by being asked to do testing. Any plants which aren't tested at the time they're procured should be tested at home before being added to your collection, and preferably isolated from the rest of the collection for at least six months.

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## President's Corner

### About Our Members

The Show was a spectacular occasion, not just for the opportunity to observe so many different kinds of flowers produced by the plants called orchids, but also to observe all the many varieties of volunteers within the Society. Your President has many occasions to observe the enthusiasm level, and degree of involvement, of members in the various orchid fanciers' societies in California at their annual shows. In truth, no other society displays both such wonderful flowering plants and such amazing blossoming volunteers as we at POS. Todd



*Phal. stuartiana* has beautiful foliage as well as lovely flowers.



**Editor's Corner**

Our February meeting was a lot of fun and very informative. We had an excellent format for such a small meeting - the conflict of our meeting with the opening day and evening gala at Pacific Orchid Exposition meant that we had a small turn-out. I spent the day at POE - where I saw almost as many POS members as I did later at the meeting, ended up missing our board meeting, and arrived at our meeting completely discombobulated - my purse, camera, and rain coat were still on the love seat at home. I had 5 plants to bring for show & tell, but could only manage the tiny *Trichoglottis pusillia*. (Photo at right, bought from Andy's Orchids when Harry Phillips gave a talk at our August meeting last summer. Just saying, because several people asked this question at the meeting.)

We covered three different growing conditions at the meeting - indoor, outdoor, and greenhouse - in discussion group format. However, there is another big division in how we go about growing our plants. That division among our members is between those who grow 1 to 300 plants, and those who grow a thousand to several thousand. Many orchid care tasks are done differently between these groups.

I will always remember a skill session I went to many years ago, when Weegie (now concentrating on Cymbidiums) was concentrating on Phals. She had a significantly large collection. I don't know her exact watering method, but it did not consist of carefully placing the spout of a watering pot under the leaves to wet the media on each plant. She discussed the need to water early enough in the morning to give the plants time to dry all the moisture out of the crowns before evening, to avoid crown rot. One of the other attendees of the skill session confidently advised Weegie that she could simply twist up a paper towel and wick the water out of the crown. Dead silence followed this advice, as those in the know grappled with astonishment at idea of wicking water out of several hundred plants. However, as I sat there, I thought how easily this could have been me offering this advice, for up until few months prior, I had not considered what it would be like to own more than five orchids. There is a huge gulf, on some aspects of plant care, between the small hobby grower and the large hobby grower.

Owners of small orchid collections may have time to pick up each plant at least once each week to look for pests and try to spot any developing issues. They can then address these issues per plant. Only treat the affected plant(s), change the watering/and or frequency for a particular plant, use a special potting mix for one plant, and buy or produce pure water for some orchids.

Owners of large collections must take another approach entirely. Spray their entire greenhouse when a pest is found, or regularly on a preventative basis. Water with a hose and spray attachment, or automated overhead watering - dealing with whatever type of tap water they have. Use a less complicated fertilizer schedule. (I rotate 4 fertilizers from 3 makers - way too much nonsense for someone with thousands of orchids!) Buy pots in bulk to save on cost.

Even with these differences, our two groups have more in common than not. The basics of successful orchid care are still the same - finding the best amount of light, the best watering and repotting schedules, the necessary temperatures to induce blooming, the best fertilizer concentrations. And those special little things that can make the difference between success and mediocrity and outright failure with a particular type of orchid are the same for the small and large collections.

We are very fortunate to have a diverse groups of growers in our society, and an immense amount of collective knowledge. Remember that if you receive advice on how to solve an issue and it doesn't seem doable, it may be the difference in collection size that has you stymied. Find another member with a collection size similar to yours and find out how they might have implemented the excellent advice you just received.

Enjoy,  
Chaunie



*Trichoglottis pusillia*

SORRY GANG, NO CAMERA, NO SHOW & TELL TABLE PHOTOS!

February and March seem to be the months for the PINK orchids!



Den. California Pink - \$10 at last year's POE



Left - Den. Ise (opportunity table win), Right - Bc. Maikai 'Mayumi', HCC/AOS from Tanya Lam at the POS 2010 show. Both fragrant.



Epi. Wedding Valley 'Sakurak' bought from D&D Flowers at the POS 2009 show. This was very popular - many went out the door.



Pot. Montana Spirit 'Big Sky' was another plant that flew out the door at our 2009 show - this one from Cal-Orchids.



Den. Oriental Smile 'Fantasy' AD/AOS is my favorite dendrobium, hands down. The colors are yummy, the scent is a combination of apricots and honey, and it blooms several times each year - as long as you have adequate snail and slug control, for it is also beloved by them, so much so that they will eat the buds down into the stem before YOU even see the buds! This one came from Ha'iku Maui Orchids at the 2007 POE - and they were selling them again this year.



Well, there is some pink in the center! This is Epi. Rene Marques, which I received in trade from Mary Gerritsen for a division of my Phrag. Jason Fisher.



Phrag Jason Fisher

R.- Bsn. Bill Worsley 'Highland' x C. Psyche 'Grove'



R. - Phrag. Hanne Popow 'Snow White' x Phrag. Lutz Rolke 'Emily'



Was expected to be YELLOW

**2010 Pacific Orchid Exposition**

**Carnaval!**



## Upcoming Events

**March 19-21, San Joaquin Orchid Society Show** - Sherwood Mall 5950 Pacific Ave., Stockton  
Contact: [www.sanjoaquinorchidsociety.org](http://www.sanjoaquinorchidsociety.org) for more information.

**March 20-21 - Golden Gate Cymbidium Society Show & Sale** - Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Ave., Oakland - 9AM-5PM - FREE admission - [www.ggcymbidiums.com](http://www.ggcymbidiums.com) - or (510) 276-2851.

**March 26-28 - Santa Clara Valley Orchid Society Show and Sale** - Westgate Mall, 1600 Saratoga Ave., San Jose - FREE Admission. For information call (408) 229-2747.

**March 26-28 - San Diego County Orchid Society Show** - Scottish Rite Event Center, 1895 Camino Del Rio South, San Diego. Friday 4PM-8PM, Saturday 9AM-6PM, Sunday 10AM-4PM. Admission \$7, weekend pass \$10. Children under 12 free. Free parking. [www.sdorchids.com/](http://www.sdorchids.com/)

**March 27 & 28 - Central Coast Orchid Show & Sale** - South County Regional Center, 800 W. Branch, Arroyo Grande. Saturday 9AM-5PM, Sunday 10AM-5PM. Admission \$5, children under 12 free. [www.fcos.org](http://www.fcos.org) or (805)929-5749.

**March 27-28th - Napa Valley Orchid Society Show and Sale** - Napa Senior Activities Center, 1500 Jefferson St., Napa 9am-4pm For more information please call 707-251-1630.

**April 10 - California Orchids Spring Sale** - 515 Aspen Rd., Bolinas - 9AM - 4PM - call (415) 868-0203 for more information <http://www.californiaorchids.com/>

**April 17 - Gold Coast Cymbidium Growers Show & Sale** - San Mateo Garden Center, 605 Parkside Dr., San Mateo - 10AM - 4PM FREE admission & parking - Audrey (408) 741-2882  
[www.GoldCoastCymbidiumGrowers.com](http://www.GoldCoastCymbidiumGrowers.com)

**April 17 & 18, Sacramento Orchid Society Show & Sale**, Scottish Rite Temple, 6151 H Street, Sacramento, CA, Saturday 10AM-5PM, Sunday 10AM-4PM, Admission \$5 [http://sacramentoorchids.org/index.php/spring\\_show\\_and\\_sale/](http://sacramentoorchids.org/index.php/spring_show_and_sale/)

**May 1 & 2 - Carmel Orchid Society Show & Sale** - Hidden Valley Music Seminars, 88 W. Carmel Valley Road, Carmel Valley Village, 11 miles East of Highway 1 - 9 AM - 4 PM -ADMISSION IS FREE, Lots of Free Parking. Please visit our websites: <http://www.carmelorchidsociety.org>, [www.carmelorchidsociety.org](http://www.carmelorchidsociety.org), <http://www.cvgardenclub.org>, [www.cvgardenclub.org](http://www.cvgardenclub.org), [www.hiddenvalleymusic.org](http://www.hiddenvalleymusic.org), for more information or contact Joanie Linares, COS Chairperson at [winecow@gmail.com](mailto:winecow@gmail.com)



**Santa Clara Valley  
Orchid Society**  
founded 1951

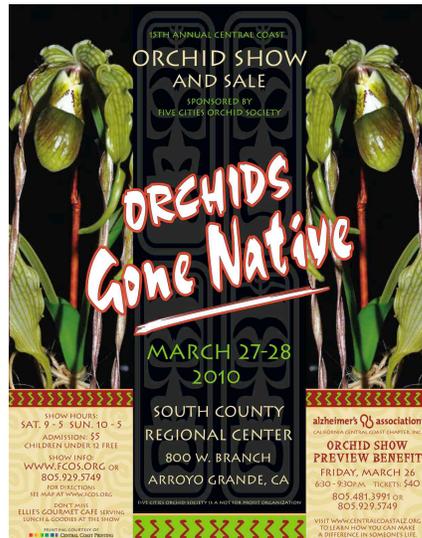
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MARCH 26-28

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WHAT'S NEW? IT'S ALL HERE!  
TO LEARN HOW YOU CAN MAKE  
A DIFFERENCE IN SOMEONE'S LIFE

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### American Orchid Society Corner

Time to plan for an Orchid Conference!

Ready for a fun get away? April 28 thru May 2 is the Spring 2010 AOS Members Meeting which is being hosted by the Oklahoma Orchid Society in OKC. This is an Orchid Conference which includes the Orchid Digest, the Southwest Regional Orchid Growers Association, International Phalaenopsis Alliance, Pleurothallid Alliance and the Slipper Orchid Alliance as well as the AOS – they are all meeting at a fabulous orchid show. The conference starts off with a preview party on Thursday evening, then on Friday the keynote speaker is Joyce Stewart after which sales and the show open to the public. Several orchid lectures are scheduled. Saturday evening is a fun auction followed by dinner and a Hoedown party. You can see all of details as well as download a registration form at [www.aos.org](http://www.aos.org) under ‘Events’ and then ‘Members Meetings’.

As an affiliated society member you are invited to attend this conference including the AOS Affiliated Society Breakfast on Friday, April 30th where we will be sharing the results of our Innovative Society Survey. Please join us for orchids, socializing, lectures and all kinds of orchid fun. Registration is \$89 before 4/1/2010 after which the price goes up to \$109. Every registrant gets a fabulous goodie bag! Hotel rooms start at \$89. Is this meeting too far west for you? The Fall 2010 AOS meeting is in Virginia Beach, VA on October 27 - 31. Attend either or both and you're sure to have a great time. I hope to see you in OKC!

Carol Holdren

AOS Affiliated Society Committee

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### Member News

***A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO: Carol Zoltowski, Frank Bloomquist, Anna Margarita Quiroz, Margery Mayer, David Huff, George Plafker, Ritsuko Furuya, Carl Sutherland, Mort Block, Rose Marie Pfanenstiel, Nancy Francis, Diana Gross, Paul Reeve, Su McMurtry, Randall Takemoto-Hambleton, C. Todd Kennedy, Crystal Wellman, Sandi Dobrowolsky, & Evelyn Jones.***

***Welcome to New Members: Julian Osinski, Laura Alexandre, Delia Carrillo, Jenny Teng, Marron Honigman, Stanley Fuelscher, Dawn Stepro, Robert Stepro, Murdoch Fyfe, Sandi Dobrowolsky, Crystal Wellman, Joe Lee, Sr., Joe Lee, Jr., and Laura Lee!***

***So Glad You are Feeling Better Gloria!*** Gloria Bygdnes injured her back and was out of commission for a few weeks. She has recovered and has resumed her normal activity level now. (Thanks to Gwen Layrtiz for letting me know.)

## Unclassifieds

Members may advertise orchid related items. The ad is free. E-mail your ad to [the\\_sheath\\_editor@earthlink.net](mailto:the_sheath_editor@earthlink.net) or mail to 878 Cashew Way, Fremont, CA 94536. Be sure to include your name and phone number. Ads must be received by the 5th of the month to be included that month's newsletter.

### **Tanya Lam Orchid Supplies** - for all orchid growing needs

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Free delivery to SCOVS, MOS, POS, OSC, SFOS Monthly Meetings

**Entire Cymbidium collection** - over 280 plants - will sell as unit. Make offer. Plants can be seen at Maplethorpe Orchids in Soquel. Call Al Testa (408) 243-7788



The downward facing flowers of this Den. Roy Tokunaga are typical of Dendrobiums from rainy areas.

Source of information: Roy Tokunaga at last summer's Speaker's Day in Sacramento



## 2010 Board of Directors

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*Sheath Snail Mail Co-ordinator:* Jackie Becker

*Accountant:* Sue Rose 650-322-9853

*Web Editors:* Fred Cox & Cordy Wong

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Website address: <http://penorchidsoc.org>

San Mateo, CA 94403-6894

2010 Peninsula Orchid Society  
 Membership Application or Renewal  
 Mail to: Janusz Warszawski - Membership  
 1227 Monte Verde Ct., Los Altos, CA 94024

Member Information (Please Print):

Name(s)

(1) \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate \_\_\_\_\_

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ZipCode \_\_\_\_\_

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**Please Note: We really need your current e-mail address to save postage and printing for *The Sheath*. Also, you will receive last minute information about orchid related events if we have your e-mail address. Your contact information is never sold! Thanks.**

**E-mail:**

(1) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Membership:

Individual \$20.00

Additional Member Same Household \$10.00

Senior (55 and over) \$14.00

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Business \$26.00

*(Membership fees are the same for all or part of the year.)*

Membership Chair's area

Date paid \_\_\_\_\_ Check No. and amount \_\_\_\_\_

Receipt No. \_\_\_\_\_ Cash Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Our membership year runs from February 1 through January 31 of the next year, regardless of the date on which you begin or renew your membership

*Remember  
Dues are due!*

*☛ Please renew by the end of March,  
if you have not done so already*

*♥ If you have - Thank You ! ♥*

*Peninsula Orchid Society  
The Sheath  
Chaunie Langland, Editor  
878 Cashew Way  
Fremont, CA 94536*