

## Yellow Leaves & Orchids... What Does it Mean?

It's Ryan "The Orchid Guy" here again :-)

In the last few bulletins, we talked about one of the most common questions people have when things aren't going quite right with their orchids:

"What's going on when all the flowers suddenly fall off, and what should you do about it?"

Today, we're going to touch on another very common orchid problem and one that you might be facing right now if your orchid is sick...

And that is:

"What's causing your orchid's leaves to turn yellow? And what should you do about it?"

In today's bulletin, hopefully I can shed a little light on what's going on with your plant when the leaves are yellow, and leave you with a few pointers on what you can do about it :-)

First, it's important to know that as part of the natural, healthy growth cycle of your orchid, the oldest leaves on your plant will yellow and eventually drop off. This is perfectly normal.

HOWEVER... if you're finding that young leaves are also yellowing, then you may actually have a problem on your hands.

Younger leaves may become yellow if they're not exposed to enough light, or are lacking fertilizer, make sure you're giving your orchid enough light...and the right type of fertilizer.

Orchids that are exposed to too MUCH light may also have yellow-light green leaves...

HOWEVER, when orchid leaves are getting too MUCH light, the yellow-green color will usually be accompanied by round or oval brown-colored sunburn spots.

(The presence or absence of these brown-colored spots is usually the best way to distinguish whether the problem is too little or too much light.)

Now, if you find that your leaves are yellow... AND at the same time also droopy, soft, plucked, and pleated... this is usually a sign of under watering.

Finally, if the leaves of your plant are mostly green, but have small, yellow "spots", then this is usually a sign of insect damage.

If you suspect that your problem is insect- related, it's important to act fast, because if left untreated, certain insects can decimate your orchid (and spread to the rest of your collection) in as little as just a few days.

So... to sum things up:

The fact that your leaves may be yellow will only tell you part of the story.

Understanding the context - what is it that's accompanying the yellow leaves - is essential to know whether your plant is simply experiencing part of its natural growth cycle...

Or whether you have a problem that needs addressing right away.

Don't worry, as you gain more experience, you'll find yourself developing a "sixth sense" for just this sort of thing :-)

Until next time...More tips to come!