

GREENHOUSE GADGETRY

FLAMING CUTTING TOOLS

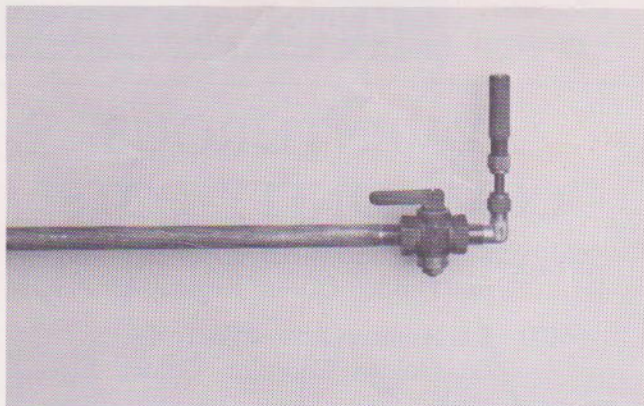
FRED BARNES

For flaming cutting tools to prevent spread of possible virus or bacterial infection from one plant to another, a gas-fired Bunsen burner such as used in chemical laboratories, may be used. Or, you can make a very efficient Bunsen burner by securing from a local heating and plumbing shop a "manual" pilot from a gas room heater. These pilots are usually thrown away when a heater is changed from manual to automatic control, so this part of your Bunsen burner should cost you nothing. Connect this burner to your gas supply with a handy shutoff cock.

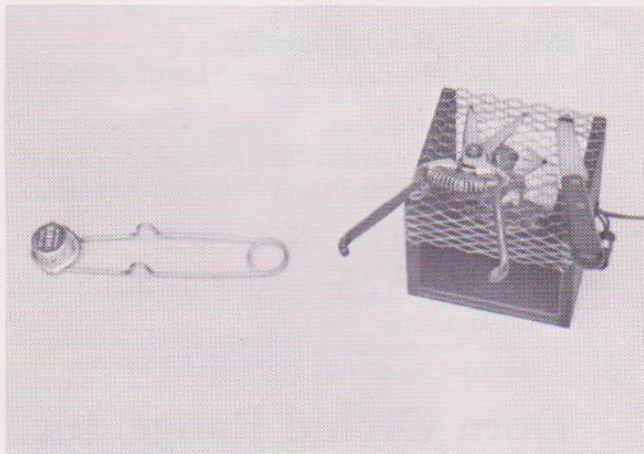
If gas is not available in your greenhouse, a small portable propane tank torch may be used for flaming your tools.

To effectively sterilize the cutting tool, draw the blades slowly through the flame until they are very hot — but not red hot as this will draw the temper of the steel and ruin the cutting edges.

For lighting the flame, do not attempt to use matches, as they become soggy in the humid air of the greenhouse. Use a flint spark lighter which can be obtained at a hardware store or welding supply shop.



"Gas Pilot" Bunsen Burner for Flaming Cutting Tools.



Flint Spark Lighter and Homemade 3" Fan Case for cooling hot tools for immediate re-use.

Should I Specialize in One Genus

FRANK FORDYCE

This question reminds me of the man who said, "I prefer blondes," meaning blondes are his first choice but he doesn't limit his interest to blondes alone!

It is my belief that one of the prime reasons people are attracted to orchids is the tremendous variety the family offers. The Orchid family encompasses one of the widest ranges of color found in the floral kingdom, while flower sizes range from a minute fraction of an inch to 1½ feet.

Of additional interest is the fact that orchids are found in practically all regions of the world. Hobbyists often find new friends in far away places, exchange plants, methods of culture and frequently their mutual hobby stimulates the interest to visit each other. In doing this each hobbyist involved widens his knowledge and understanding of his world neighbor.

While most hobbyists like to specialize in one genus, learning as much as possible about its culture and its allied hybrids, they add further interest by acquiring additional species as they become aware of their intrigue. Let us take for example a *Cymbidium* hobbyist. He usually endeavors to collect exhibition mid-season varieties branching into early and late types to extend the blooming season. He may become intrigued with the miniatures and polymins or perhaps he prefers certain brilliant color ranges. He undoubtedly buys seedlings hoping to bloom that choice FCC variety himself (naming it after his wife), but playing it safe adds mericlonés of proven value to his collection as well. He observes distinctive plants at commercial ranges and purchases either back-bulb or green bulb divisions.

To build such a diversified collection would seem to present a full time interest all its own — yet more and more cymbidium hobbyists are branching into other types of orchids compatible to their first love.

Cattleya hobbyists seem to branch into other genera most frequently, for although cattleyas have a wide range of color, season, and size, they usually bloom only once per year and for a relatively short period of time. The Cattleya hobbyist who wishes to have orchids continually in bloom must possess a huge collection, thus insuring constant bloom, or he must add interest in the form of compatible plants such as phalaenopsis, vandaceous types, oncidiums, warm odonts, and miltonias, warm "paphs." and a myriad of other fascinating types.

My recommendation is to specialize in one genera, striving for perfection in plant and flower production but do not restrict your interest to that one type. Like the man who prefers blondes, upon second glance you may find redheads have an intriguing appeal all their own!