



Australian Native Orchid Society - Macarthur Group

June 2015

Edited by Tony Asquith mail: aaasquith@bigpond.com. Phone 4625 9874



President: Mr. W. Southwell (Ph. 46818589) **Postal Address:-** 8A Boundary Road,
Secretary: Mr. J. English (Ph.86262934) **PARRAMATTA. 2150**
Treasurer: Mrs. C. Asquith (Ph. 46259874) **Next Meeting: THURSDAY , 18th June, 2015**
Life Member: Mr. J. Riley, M. T. Cooke.

Conservation Officer: R. Hanman *ANOS Macathur Group disclaims any responsibility for any losses which may be attributed to the use or misuse of any materials published in this newsletter*

**Venue: BIRRAWA HALL
 FITZPATRICK ROAD
 Mt. ANNAN. ,** **Doors open 7.15pm, benching closes 7.45pm, meeting starts 8pm**

President's Message

Hi to all.

A big thank you to Gerry Walsh for his talk and demonstration at the last meeting.

Congratulations to Noel Bates for plant of the night and popular choice at the May meeting.

Mary-Anne gleefully accepted the new perpetual trophy for our first Autumn Show. This is now an annual event and a booking has been made for the 7th May 2016. Sales money and sashes were distributed.

Thanks to Diane McDougall for the donation of plants, well done.

Alan Stephenson will be the guest speaker at our June meeting, always very interesting talks and news from Alan.

Show dates for this year are the 26th September and the 2nd October, both to be held at Narellan Town Centre.

Sales table for all your supplies will be at the next meeting, so stock up on what you need.

FEES ARE NOW DUE

Wally

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 21st MAY, 2015.

Meeting Opened: About 7.30pm, and President Wal welcomed members.

1. **Apologies:** Colin Long and Don Roberts.
2. **Minutes from Previous Meeting:**
Proposed by: John English **seconded by:** Peter Gibson
3. **Business Arising from the Minutes:** Nil
4. **Treasurer's Report:** Moved Carol Asquith Second: Tony Asquith

Inward & Outwards Correspondence: Various Newsletters, sent & received..

Delegates Report nil

General Business

Gerry Walsh gave a very informative talk on NZ and Lord Howe Island epiphytic Orchids.

Rosemeadow show gave us 4 new members and was an ideal location. The show was a success and the display was quite good. Mary-anne and Noel were presented with ribbons.

Moved by Ross and seconded by Terry to make this show an annual event.

The meeting was reminded of the Mid North Coast Speciosum show.

Raffle Results.. Peter Brown (2), Greg Knight, Richard Dimon (2).

Next Meeting Speaker will be Alan Stephenson.

And the meeting closed.. about 9.30pm

GOOD GROWING

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This article is from the “verandah Session” of Kabi ANOS Group and was published in the Kalhari, Bulletin of this group, in November, 2014.

Growing Phaius

Robert Reitano.

Members shared cultural tips for growing *Phaius*. This article lists the input from various members who appear to be having success in the culture of this terrestrial group. (Please note that where members names are mentioned, I have removed their name for privacy reasons. Editor)

There appears to be various potting mixes that members are having success with. A member presented the group with some prepared notes regarding his mix and method. He uses 3 parts Searle’s mix, 1 part Cymbidium and Bromeliad Mix, 1 part Peat Moss and 1 handful of Blood ‘n Bone. He stuffs the drain age holes of the pot with sphagnum moss to stop the mix from falling out or washing through. After potting up the plant, he waters it with a root stimulant like Auxinone to promote root growth and help revive sick plants. Auxinone is a synthetic equivelant to the more natural Seasol. Some growers use Searle’s Premium mix, whilst others suggested using Native Mix with the addition of very coarse river sand.

The ability for the mix to hold enough moisture and yet be free draining is imperative so the mix does not become too soggy or become sour. Additionally, it is important to have an open mix as the roots need oxygen to remain healthy. Whilst some of these mixes hold less moisture than the more dense ones, some growers prefer to sit their pots in a saucer of water and keep this topped up during the more warmer growing season and remove these saucers during the winter months. It is recommended that plants be repotted each year after flowering to keep the mix fresh; however a member believes it may be advantageous in using some of the old mix to inoculate the new mix with any essential fungus that may present.

A few members also remove older leaves after repotting to stimulate the plants to produce new, strong growth and reduce the risk of leaf pests that often congregate under the older leaves. These plants are believed to be gross feeders during the growth season and some members have suggested regular applications of organic fertilisers like pelletised chicken manure during this time.

A number of growers have also had positive results from a generous application of a 50/50 mix of Blood n Bone and Dolomite sprinkled on the top of the mix and watered lightly for this to form a crust. This then breaks down very slowly over time, whilst feeding the plant with every watering. These plants tend to respond to strong dapples light with some growing plants under trees in the garden and others growing them under greenhouse conditions. They tend to tolerate very bright to almost full sun during the winter months, but must be protected from the harsh summer sun.

Australian Native Epiphytic Orchids



Den. bigibbum

The majority of Australian epiphytic orchids can be easily grown in cultivation. Only one species is known to occur naturally in areas near Melbourne, it being *Sarcochilus ausfralls*. In contrast, there are around 100 species of epiphytic orchids in Queensland. Plants originating from Northern Queensland need growing conditions similar to their natural habitat.

When purchasing new plants, the first consideration should always be the conditions necessary for a plant to grow, for, without the appropriate conditions, these plants will not survive. For

these reasons seedling plants (weather warm growing or not) grown locally are much better acclimatized to local conditions and are therefore hardier than plants imported from other climatic regions. Plants may be mounted in many materials such as compressed or natural cork slabs, branches of rough barked trees, black weathered tree fern slabs and pieces of weathered hardwood. Brown tree fern slabs contain substances, which are toxic to orchid roots and are not suitable hosts. Those species, which have pendulous or creeping rhizome (*Dendrobium teretifolium* (*Dockrillia*) and *Dendrobium monophyllum*), should normally be mounted.

Pests

As with other orchid species pests can be a real problem in growing native orchids. In fact some pests are attracted to native plants before attacking any other species of orchid. Snails, slugs, mealy bug, scale, fungi, aphid, grub, grasshopper, rot, and man are the most common problems to name a few. Control as for any other orchid species.

The Aboriginal tribes used native orchids such as, *Spiranthes*, *Caladenia*, *Glossodia*, *Diuris*, *Microtis*, *Prasophyllum*, *Thelymitra*, *Edochilus*, *Acianthus*, *Dipodium*, *Lyperanthus*, *Geodorum*, and epiphytes such as *Cym. Madidum*, *Cym. Canaliculatum*, and *Speciosum* as a source of food. They also chewed various orchids as medicines for coughs, colds, and dysentery.

Fertilizers

Epiphytic orchids respond to the regular application of fertilizers by producing strong healthy growth. Fertilizers are best applied during spring and early summer while the plants have a long growing period ahead of them. Late applications of fertilizers may delay dormancy and interfere with flowering. Organic fertilizers are excellent for orchids because they release their nutrients in a slow, gentle manner over a period of time. Blood and bone and hoof and horn are fairly commonly used to promote orchid growth. Liquid fertilizers are an excellent means of promoting healthy growth. Applied at less than the recommended strength means you can apply more frequently, which helps in producing much better growth.

Slab Culture

Many epiphytic orchids grow well on a slab or a section of a tree branch, and relish the extra air movement and rapid drying which occurs after watering. Plants grown on slabs are easily moved and can be moved about until a suitable position is found. Orchids grown on slabs require fairly high humidity and bright light. Orchids with a creeping habit or pendulous stems grow best on a slab, whereas those with crowded, erect pseudobulbs are much better accommodated in a pot.



Den monophyllum

Fertilizers for Ground Orchids

We have seen that most terrestrial orchids rely heavily on a mycorrhizal fungus for their survival. This relationship can be readily upset by the excessive use of fertilizers and hence any fertilizing of terrestrial orchids must be carried out with care. A small quantity of blood and bone (10 grams per 9 litres of mix) added to the mix would be beneficial. One or two applications of quarter strength fertilizers can also be of benefit to some species.

Mulching

Mulching the soil surface with a thin layer of fine leaves has the advantage of reducing moisture fluctuations in the upper layer of soil and inhibiting the germination of weed. It also reduces soil splash when watering, resulting in less leaf rot. The best mulching material is chopped she-oak needles, but the fine sieved leaves from under tea trees can also be satisfactory. The mulch should be applied when repotting so that the new shoots grow up through it.

Pollination Native Orchids

Dendrobium smililee is the only Australian orchid that is known to be bird pollinated. The flowers lack fragrance are often pendant and contain nectar. The bird is Bush Canary or Yellow Honeyeater.

Beetles are frequent visitors to the flowers of large species of *Prasophyllum*, *Microtis parviflora*, *Microtis unifolia*, and *Peristeranthus hillii*.

Calanthe tripilcata are sort after by moths,
 Habenaria triplonema like to be pollinated by Hawk moths,
 Bulbophyllum weinthalii attracts blowflies,
 Microtis parviflora are also visited by small black ants,
 Rhizanthella gardneri are pollinated by termites.
 Phaius, Calochilus, Caladenia, Thelymitra, Geodorum, Spiranthes Acianthus Eria, Chiloglottis
 are self pollinated.

NEVER SAY DEAD IN RELATION TO NATIVE ORCHIDS

Far from being difficult and hard to grow, orchids are quite tough, adaptable plants. Several years ago Australian native orchids were being transported in cardboard cartons. When the plants were unpacked the cartons were set aside for future use. Almost a year later to the very day a cardboard carton was picked off the shelf of a garden shed to be re-used. Inside was a small plant, Dendrobium kingianum that had been over looked the year before. The plant was dry and shriveled but still alive. It was placed in a mixture of brown sugar and water for 4 hours, then planted in a small terracotta pot, followed by normal watering and fertilizing. Next year it had recovered sufficiently to bloom and has now developed into a flourishing specimen that has a host of blooms every spring. Few other plants could have survived such an ordeal.

These notes have been used at our Cultural and New Grower's Meetings. They are from various sources and we thank the authors. All articles are supplied in good faith and the Bribie Island Orchid Society and its members will not be held responsible for any loss or damage.

(From Bribie Island Orchid Society Website with appreciation)~~~~~

Benching Results MAY Meeting 21/5/2015.

| | | |
|--------------------------|--|-------------|
| Dendrobium Species | Den. Rigidum | N. Bates |
| | Den. Monophyllum | R. Morrison |
| Dendrobium Hybrid | D. Topaz Dream 'Ben' x 'Sweet' | M. Warner |
| | D. Bobby 'White' x Burana 'White' | M. Warner |
| Sarcanthinae Species | nil | |
| Sarcanthinae Hybrid | nil | |
| Bulbophyllum | B. schillerianum | R. Morrison |
| | B. schillerianum | R. Morrison |
| Aust. Species Other | nil | |
| Aust. Hybrid Other | nil | |
| Terrestrial Pterostylis | P. ophioglossa | T. Cooke |
| | P. nana | T. Cooke |
| Dockrillia | nil | |
| Terrestrial Hybrid | Pt x conoglossa | R. Dimon |
| Terrestrial Other | Acianthus fornicates | T. Cooke |
| | Corybas hispidus | T. Cooke |
| Caladenia Species | nil | |
| Australasian Specie | Pt. tenucauda | T. Cooke |
| Australasian Hybrid | D. Elanor Chan | N. Bates |
| | D. Top Hat x bigibbum | R. Dimon |
| Seedling | | |
| Seedling First Flowering | nil | |
| Growing Competition 1. | N. Bates 2 nd . R. Morrison | |
| Growing Competition 2. | nil | |

**Plant of the night and the Popular Choice was Dendrobium rigidum grown by Noel Bates
 Congratulations**

GOOD GROWING..

Editors Note: Comment on Windows 7 usage.....aaaagggggghhhhhhhhhh!