

## Australian Native Orchid Society - Macarthur Group

December 2012

Edited by Tony Asquith

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**President** Mr. W. Southwell (ph. 46818589)

**Postal Address:-** 43 Strickland Cres.,

**Secretary:** Mr. J. English (Ph.96079809)

**ASHCROFT . 2168**

**Treasurer:** Mrs. C. Asquith (Ph. 46259874)

**Next Meeting: THURSDAY , 17th January, 2012**

**Life Member:** Mr. J. Riley

**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*

**Venue: BIRRAWA HALL**

*published in this newsletter.*

**FITZPATRICK ROAD,**

**Doors open 7.15pm, benching closes 7.45pm, meeting starts 8pm.**

**Mt. ANNAN.**

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President's Message.

Hi to all, and a very happy and healthy new year

The Christmas party was a great success and a big thank you to all the ladies that made this such a good night.

Winners of the cumulative monthly table shows are, 1<sup>st</sup> Ross Morrison, on 5 separate occasions he won plant of the night and is the well deserved winner of the perpetual trophy. 2<sup>nd</sup> place Wal and Margaret Southwell with 3<sup>rd</sup> place to John English. Well done!! This year my company will be sponsoring this table show again, 1<sup>st</sup> \$80, 2<sup>nd</sup> \$50 and 3<sup>rd</sup> \$30. If you don't enter your plants-you will have no hope of taking home the money! (On behalf of all members....thanks to Wal and Margaret)

In the last two years, there has been two new trophies, the Harry Turner Perpetual trophy – for annual table show winners and Aub Brunidges Perpetual trophy for Champion Speciosum Orchid. At this stage there is no trophy for the annual Sarcochilus Show and this will be discussed at the next meeting, so that it can be awarded this year.

The heat of the summer has caught up to us at last, and our orchids will need special attention during this time.

Good growing

Wally.

Although the attendance at our Christmas party was relatively small, the amount of food was overwhelming. My thanks and appreciation to those who made and contributed the great variety of dishes for the night. Anyone who went home hungry was hard to please. Once again, THANKYOU to all who contributed food, helped to set-up tables and put decorations around and to the cleanup which didn't take long due to the many hands involved.

Margaret.

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A short newsletter this month..this is the time of year that I take a break from newsletters..see you at the meeting..

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2012**

**1. Meeting Opened: 7:30pm, and the President welcomed members to our Christmas Night.**

2. **Apologies: John English**
3. **Minutes from Previous Meeting:**

**Proposed by:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Seconded by:** \_\_\_\_\_

4. **Business Arising from the Minutes: Nil**

5. **Treasurer's Report:**

**Proposed by:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Seconded by:** \_\_\_\_\_

- **Inward Correspondence:**

**Outward Correspondence:**

**General Business Only to have a terrific night!**

The raffle was drawn and the meeting closed..

### **Benching Results**

Dendrobium Species	nil
Dendrobium Hybrid	nil
Sarcanthinae Species	nil
Sarcanthinae Hybrid	nil
Bulbophyllum	nil
Aust. Species (Other)	nil
Terrestrial Pterostylis	nil
Caladenia Species	nil
Diuris Species	nil
Terrestrial Hybrid	nil
Terrestrial Other	nil
Australasian	nil
Australasian Hybrid	nil
Seedling First Flowering	nil

See you at the next meeting

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## **Cymbidium canaliculatum**

by Jim Bridie (Courtesy of Ku-Ring-Gai Orchid Society Bulletin and lately, Bankstown Bulletin 2011)

Canaliculatum is one of three species of Cymbidium that are endemic to Australia, the other two are C. suave and C. maddidum.

Of the three Australian cymbidium species, canaliculatum has the worst reputation for being hard to grow, but the growers who understand its requirements seem to have great success with it. Hence to following article by Michael Harrison on the way Eric Webeck grew it.

Cym. Canaliculatum tolerates extremes of both heat and cold but it is a dry climate orchid that has more often been killed by overwatering than anything else. Here is some basic advice.

- + Plenty of good air movement and bright light.
- + Excellent drainage is required so a coarse or open potting medium is needed.
- + Regular watering during summer, especially when in active growth but plants must be allowed To dry out prior to being re-watered.
- + During winter plants can be allowed to become much drier with occasional misting in the Mornings to prevent shriveling of the psuedobulbs.
- + Terracotta pots have been found to be more preferable by some growers, especially if you have trouble keeping you handsoff the hose.

References: Gary Yong Gee's website at [www.yonggee.name/Notes/Cym\\_canaliculatum.htm](http://www.yonggee.name/Notes/Cym_canaliculatum.htm)

## **Cymbidium canaliculatum - Cultivation by the Webeck Method**

by Michael Harrison (1986) (Courtesy of Ku-Ring-Gai Orchid Society Bulletin)

During the middle of 1985, I had the opportunity to visit the home of Eric Webeck, the purpose being to see his collection of *Cym canaliculatum*. Eric has something of a -reputation as a grower of this orchid, and after having seen a couple of his plants at monthly meetings of the ANOS Sydney group, I was anxious to have a look at the entire collection.

Eric lives in Pymble. One of the long established areas of Sydney's suburbia, this region features a comfortable, relatively mild climate, with a fairly even year round rainfall, averaging 1387 mm per annum. The altitude (165m at Canisius College), prevailing weather, and good soils, have always attracted the well to do and many beautiful old homes and gardens bear testament to the gracious lifestyles of days gone by.

An old tennis court forms what is now Eric's orchid house. At each end of this area (north and south) there is a glasshouse measuring 12m x 5m. The large area in between these glasshouses has overhead shading but is quite open on the side. The shading consists of strips of aluminium approx. 2.5cm wide which run north south for the entire length of the shadehouse. These strips are threaded through chicken wire to keep them in place and are arranged to give a shade factor of 50%. Here Eric grows his collection of *Den kingianum*, *D. x delicatum* and *D Bardo Rose*. I do not know how he gets away with it but all these plants are grown on steelmesh panels supported only inches above the ground by house bricks. Many of the pots are overgrown with liverworts and ferns, especially *Sellaginella* sp. (club moss), due no doubt to the heavy watering and feeding program Eric favours. To look at these conditions one would think that if the constant moisture did not rot the plants, then the snails and slugs would run amok, but this is clearly not the case; these orchids are performing superbly, as well as any collection of these types I know.



In what must be a unique undertaking, every *D. kingianum* in the place, and there are hundreds, is a product of line breeding, a program Eric commenced many new years ago with a couple of plants collected from the Cornboyne Plateau. At no time has any other *D. kingianum* been introduced into this line, so that every plant is a direct and exclusive descendant of the original clones. Eric's famous *D kingianum* 'Bungan Castle', which was awarded an AM and a Cultural Certificate by the OSNSW in 1979, is one of the progeny of this breeding program. More recently, *D. kingianum* 'Ruperta' has been attracting the attention of judges at ANOS and OSNSW Shows. Incidentally, *D. kingianum* 'Bungan Castle' is now a huge specimen plant in an 18" plastic tub. A very floriferous and vigorous clone, it is quite spectacular when seen in full bloom.

Specimen plants are Eric's forte, and on-one who has visited the annual Mona Vale show in recent years could forget his magnificent *D. x delicatum*, also known by the clonal name 'Bungan Castle'. It appears in perfect condition year after year, and year after year, Eric collects the WH Murdoch Award and medal for the Champion Specimen Hybrid Orchid.

Eric's plants of *Cymbidium canaliculatum* are housed in the glasshouse at the northern end of the shadehouse/tennis court, and except for a few plants of hybrid *Cymbidiums*, are the only plants in this rather large structure. This glasshouse is very open in design, with a skillion roof inclined to the north, and walls that extend down to just below bench level, leaving the bottom half metre or so completely open. The two doorways are also permanently open and the resulting free air flow around and under the benches is responsible, I believe, for a large measure of Eric's success with this orchid.

The pots of *Cym. canaliculatum* are situated on the bench running along the north wall, so that during summer they receive some shade from the white washed roof, and during the cooler months, when the sun is at a lower angle in the northern sky, the clear glass on the wall allows full sun through onto the plants. Eric uses terracotta and cement pots for the larger plants and plastic pots for the smaller plants. He also uses some 5 litre steel cans for intermediate size plants. His potting mix consists basically of medium grade bark but may also include some coke ash and a little leaf compost out of the garden. (PS from Jim Brydie: The bark used in those days was different to the product we buy today. It was from older pine trees and much harder. We also tended to use it virtually raw, as opposed to the composted variety available commercially today.)

In a significant departure from accepted cultural practices for *Cym. canaliculatum*, Eric waters and feeds his plants just about every day, except during the cooler months when this is cut down to just once or twice per week. He uses a compression hand pump sprayer with a 1/4 strength solution of Thrive plant food and applies this to the surface of the potting mix, but not to the plant's foliage. This almost daily watering/feeding program keeps the mix constantly damp and also provides the roots with a permanent supply of food. From time to time, the plants are given a good soaking with plain water from the hose to flush the potting mix.

At the beginning of each growing season, Eric dresses the pots with fowl manure and also generally adds a pinch of iron chelates and Epsom salts. Of particular interest, is the importance Eric attaches to the pH of the potting mix.

He assesses this by testing the last free water dripping from the bottom of the pot after watering, with pH indicator paper. He aims to maintain a reading on the alkaline side of neutral, and to this end he adds to each pot, a tablespoon or two of dolomite lime twice a year or as necessary. This Eric says, slows down the breakdown of the potting mix and it is this breakdown and the subsequent 'souring' (becoming progressively more acid) which causes this species in particular to regress in cultivation.

In summary, there appear to be several important factors account for Eric's success with *C. canaliculatum*. Free air circulation, coupled with good light, is essential. The fact that the plants are protected from rain is significant, for even though the roots are kept damp, the head of the plant remains relatively dry. This is probably of particular benefit during the winter in Sydney, when periods of cold rainy weather may persist for days. Finally, the regular feeding and maintenance of an alkaline potting mix are, according to Eric, of fundamental importance.



Editor's note: While the article is over 25 years old..it is interesting to note methods in use those days. Maybe someone might this on a plant or two.