



Australian Native Orchid Society - Macarthur Group



November 2019

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President: Mr. W. Southwell (Ph. 46818589) **Postal Address:-** 20 Colo Street,

Secretary: Mr. R. Morrison **COURIDJAH. 2171**

Treasurer: Mrs. C. Asquith (Ph. 46259874) **Next Meeting: TUESDAY, 17th December, 2019**

Life Members: Mr. J. Riley, M. T. Cooke, and W. & M. Southwell. (J. English) **Conservation**

Officer: *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*

FITZPATRICK ROAD BSB 062517 A/C 00909929

Mt. ANNAN. Doors open 7.15pm, benching closes 7.55pm, meeting starts 8pm

Hi to All

A big thank you to Michael for his very informative and interesting talk on the plants that were benched on the night.

Michael has great knowledge about our northern orchids and always seems very enthusiastic about sharing his passion for orchids with the members at meetings.

Well done to Michael for plant of the night and popular choice, well done.

Many thanks to Bob Bishop for bringing the bark for sale and his presentation on the night.

The Christmas Party is on this month, so come along to enjoy this event with a very large hamper as the raffle prize.

Tuber sale night is now in January so bring along any extra tubers that you have or other plants that you are prepared to donate.

A very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all, enjoy the festive season and all the presents that Santa will bring.

Wally

General Meeting – 19 November 2019 **7.55pm**
Minutes of Meeting

The Chair – welcomed everyone to the November meeting.

Attendance: As per the sign on book.

Apologies: Terry Cooke, Neil Robertson, Diane McDougall.

Acceptance of Previous Minutes: Moved: Ian Lawson
Seconded: Graeme Morrison **Carried**

Business Arising: Carried forwarded to General Business

Correspondence: Nil

Business Arising from Correspondence: Nil

Treasurer's Report: Income - \$235.50 / Expenditure - \$156.60 Balance -
\$4,212.36

Moved Carol Asquith **Seconded:** Gordon Bush **Carried**

General Business

Sarcochilus Show Presentation Sashes

Jim Cootes – Champion Any Other Orchid – congratulations first time exhibitor

Sales Table Money Distribution

Trophy Presentations

- Grand Champion Trophy
President explained Trophy would be held by the Club and photos sent to Clover.
- Aub Bruniges Champion Speciosum Trophy was presented to Mary-Anne Warner.

Special mention was made of the success of the sales table and Margaret thanked members for their support.

Sarcochilus Show results were distributed to all members in attendance.

2019 Show Schedules were distributed to all members in attendance for later perusal and discussion and final ratification at the 2020 February meeting. Secretary asked that members provide comments to him via email at ross.morrison1559@gmail.com

Members were reminded to each bring a plate of food to the December Xmas meeting.

Hamper donations were received, and raffle tickets will be sold at the December function.

Guest Speaker – Bob Bishop provided a very enlightening discussion on a variety of growing techniques and resources used to maximise plant growth.

Water Well Pots – Bob strongly advocates the use of water well pots for most orchids including seedlings.

Algaecide - handout provided and Bob explained the use of algaecide to control bacteria, fungus, algae infestations.

Molasses – handout provided, and Bob explained the use of molasses and the controlling effect it has on insect pests.

Charcoal – handout provided, and Bob explained the various types of charcoals and why wood vinegar is important to plants and that good charcoals contain wood vinegar.

Benching Report – Mike Harrison was asked to provide some feedback on the Night's Benching:

Dendrobium fleckerii – plant is a cooler grower from southern QLD. Grows in the cloud forests and above – 1000 to 1300M elevation. Has two variable forms – northern form has many flowers and longer canes and southern form has shorter canes, minimal flowers and produces multiple kiekis. In cultivation plants must be kept moist and grows good on soft brown tree fern.

Dendrobium jonesii var. magnifica – this variation comes from higher altitudes, has larger flowers and flowers later in the year. Like D.speciosum, flowers close up at night. This variation may eventually be described as an alternate species.

Dendrobium agrostophyllum – 32 year old plant growing on specific tree fern – good grower with canes getting larger with age.

Sarcochilus niveus – newly named 'falcatus' related sarc. Large mainly white flowers with some yellow on labellum, Flowers later than falcatus and grows mostly a 300 to 500M.

Aussie Cymbidium Discussion

Tonight's benching has seen the three species of native cymbidiums benched – madidum, sauve, canaliculatum. Cymbidium sauve and Cymbidium canaliculatum have the large range of any Australian orchid.

The Chair thanked Mike for his insightful information and wealth of knowledge.

Raffle - Bob Bishop, Gordon Bush, Ross Morrison

Our next meeting is our Christmas night...Please remember to bring a plate along (with food) and we have three hampers to raffle...

A Merry Christmas to all and a happy and healthy 2020 ..

November Benching Results

Benching Results Class	Place	Plant Name	Owner
Dendrobium species	1	<i>Dendrobium agrostophyllum</i>	Michael Harrison
	2	<i>Dendrobium fleckerii</i>	Michael Harrison
Dendrobium hybrid	1	Den. Jonathon's Glory 'Dark Joy'	Margaret and Wally Southwell
Sarcantinae species	1	<i>Sarcochilus hartmannii Redin</i>	Michael Harrison
	2	<i>Sarcochilus fitzgeraldii</i>	Michael Harrison
Sarcantinae hybrid	1	Sarcochilus Sunvale David	Greg Steenbeeke
	2	Plectochilus Riverdene x <i>tridentata</i>	Don Roberts
Australian Species Other	1	<i>Cymbidium sauve</i>	Michael Harrison
	2	<i>Cymbidium madidum</i>	Greg Steenbeeke
Terrestrial Evergreen Species	1	<i>Cryptostylis subulata</i>	Ross Morrison
Terrestrial Diuris Species	1	<i>Diuris parvipetala</i>	Greg Steenbeeke
Australasian Hybrid	1	Dendrobium Unknown	Carol and Tony Asquith
Growing Competition	1		Ross Morrison
	2		Margaret Southwell
Novelty	1	<i>Cymbidium Cricket</i>	Margaret and Wally Southwell
Judge's Choice		<i>Cymbidium sauve</i>	Michael Harrison
Popular Choice		<i>Sarcocilus niveus</i>	Michael Harrison

Further General Business

- Nil

Meeting Closed at 9.30 pm

OSMOCOTE DOWN UNDER by Clive Halls

You don't always have to follow the rules to get good results with fertilisers, as we have discovered with our odontoglossums and masdevallias at Mount Beenak Orchids.

Growing orchids in Sphagnum moss has always presented a problem when it comes to the application of fertilisers. Most liquid fertilisers, applied at % strength, don't present a problem, provided you do it on a weekly basis – easier said than done! However, slow release fertiliser, such as Osmocote®, when applied to the top of the pot, causes moss breakdown and green slime. Because the moss remains wet for so long, it retains so much nutrient released by the fertiliser that it fails to achieve the desired results – most orchids, especially the fine-rooted epiphytes, such as odontoglossums, oncidiums and masdevallias, need only small amounts of fertiliser.

One day, while re-potting about a hundred zygotepetalum seedlings in Sphagnum moss, it occurred to me to put the slow-release fertiliser in the bottom of the pot, rather than on the top. After covering the drainage holes with some hammer-milled moss, I added a few grains of 8-9 month Osmocote Plus® to half the plants. The remainder received only % strength Manutec® liquid fertiliser once each week. In about four weeks the foliage of the Osmocote-fed plants was definitely greener than that of the others. After eight weeks the plants were not only greener but also taller and more robust. After twelve weeks they were nearly double the size of their deprived mates and also stronger and greener. The root systems were examined in both groups. While both groups had white, strong and healthy roots, those in the Osmocote-fed group had Osmocote pellets adhering to their roots, yet no signs of burning or deterioration in any way.

As this experiment had worked so well, I decided to repeat it using some odontoglossum alliance and masdevallia seedlings. Both of these groups of orchids tend to lose their roots if over-fed, and I have previously found that slow-release fertilisers are unsuitable, even using bark-based potting media. Enough mix (hammer-milled moss (80%) and polystyrene chips (20%)) was first placed in 50 mm tubes to cover the drainage holes and then a little Osmocote slow-release fertiliser was added, as before. Next, single-growth odontoglossum alliance seedlings and masdevallias of 3-4 leaves (both about six months old) were planted in the tubes, using the same mix. Similar results to those obtained with the zygotepetalums were obtained, although (as expected) growth was not as pronounced with these generally less vigorous plant groups. When the plants were nearly a year old, we changed their potting mix to a fine bark (Bio Gro Mini Nuggets), in this case also adding Osmocote to the bottom of the pots. Excellent results were again obtained, the Osmocote-fed plants being well advanced over the control group. Many of the masdevallias had begun to flower – indeed, some had even flowered while in their original 50 mm tubes!

It seems important to use 8-9 month release Osmocote, because we lost a few plants when we used 5-6 month Osmocote, and the roots of those that survived didn't appear to be as strong as the others. There are many different resin-coated fertilisers, but Osmocote is a good brand and widely available, so I have stuck with it. I use two types, each with a different N:P:K ratio. For young plants I recommend Osmocote-Plus, 8-9 month, 16 + 3.5 + 10 + 1.2, and for flowering-sized plants I use Osmocote-Plus, 8-9 months, High K 9 + 4.8 + 15 + Trace Elements. The latter may be hard to get but we have it for sale at our nursery.

The rate of application is difficult to calculate for small pots. For 150 mm and larger pots, it's OK to follow the directions on the container but they don't mention little tubes or pots. I use a pinch (about 10 pellets) in 50 mm pots, a little more in 65 mm pots and two pinches in 80 mm pots – not a particularly precise measurement but the amount doesn't seem to make a great deal of difference overall.

I've been using the above system of fertilising now for two complete seasons, and have entered the third season with continuing positive results. Our plants are better than ever, with excellent leaf colour and good flowering. Our masdevallias now show much less leaf spotting and drop fewer leaves than before. The odontoglossums show less leaf tip dieback, and have stronger spikes that produce more flowers.

With flowering-sized cymbidiums and zygopetalums, we use High K Osmocote but add it to the top of the pot in the same way as we have for many years. We still use a liquid fertiliser (at % strength) during the warmer months, as well as a fish-based or seaweed-based fertiliser a few times each year because of the unique trace elements that these organic fertilisers contain.

Just because the above system works for me doesn't necessarily mean it will work as well for you. Try a few plants first, and see how they respond. If you're happy with the results, try a few more – don't treat them all unless and until you're totally convinced that the system works well for you.

Mt Beenak Orchids From Orchid Society Council of Victoria Website.