



Australian Native Orchid Society - Macarthur Group

SEPTEMBER 2021

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



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, 21st SEPTEMBER, 2021 (ZOOM)**

Life Members: Mr. J. Riley, W. & M. Southwell, A. & C. Asquith and R. Morrison. (J. English, T. Cooke Dcd.)

Conservation Officer:

ANOS Macathur Group disclaims any responsibility for any losses that may be attributed to the use or misuse of any material public in this newsletter

Venue: BIRRAWA HALL

Should you wish to pay into our account for your fees

FITZPATRICK ROAD

BSB 062517 A/C 00909929

Mt. ANNAN.

Doors open 7.15pm, benching closes 7.55pm, meeting starts 8pm

Hi to All

The Aub Brunidge memorial trophy for champion speciosum is this month and all entries must be in by the 21st. Good luck to all.

After what seems a very long time with the corona virus restrictions, there is light at the end of the tunnel with dates being announced for the easing of restrictions for double vaccinated people. It is now only a matter of time until meetings can resume. Now is a very good time to be even more careful to follow the rules so that all members will survive this rotten virus.

Have fun and go for a picnic in your local park.

On behalf of the members, we wish Ross a very speedy recovery and to be back on your feet soon. Get well we need you.

Be careful, stay well, better times are coming.

Wally

Please keep in mind that fees are really overdue.. Account Details above!!

For those who haven't heard, our esteemed Secretary Ross, was on an orchid discovery outing in the local bush for our Survey Project, along with Jim Cootes, and had a fall. He has a broken hip and hopefully is operated on Wednesday, 15th. Get well soon Ross!!!!

Our next meeting (on ZOOM) will go ahead and will be chaired by Greg. See you there.

No minutes for the last meeting for obvious reasons.

The Australian Orchid Foundation will hold its AGM (in Victoria) On Saturday, 23rd October at 2pm and will be followed by a talk by Mike Duncan...his subject will be "In big things, little things grow: Mountains of Orchids." and will cover two of his favourite spots in Australia.

For a link to the meeting, email AOF@AUSTRALIANORCHIDFOUNDATION.ORG.AU

This article is from Canberra Orchid Society website.....

Growing hardy terrestrial orchids

Adapted from Chapter 11 Australian Terrestrials, in *Growing Orchids in Cool Climate Australia* 2nd Edition 2013, (available from the Orchid Society of Canberra)

This article is aimed at new growers of Australian terrestrial orchids (Pterostylis, Diuris, Chiloglottis, Caladenia etc.) and other European (e.g. Satyrium) or South African (e.g. Pterygodium) terrestrial orchids. In general, these orchids have an annual cycle of dormancy, growth and flowering. They are adapted to conditions of hot dry summers and cool moister winters so they tend to be dormant below ground in summer and grow and flower from autumn to spring.

We'll start our discussion in spring, as that is when many people buy their first terrestrial orchids, in bloom.

While the plants are in spike and bloom, ensure you keep the mix moist. After flowering has finished, the leaves will naturally start to yellow and dry down so reduce watering to almost nil so that the tubers do not rot. In December and January, repot the tubers, water once and then not again until the leaves appear. Thereafter water regularly to keep the soil moist. After a time, flower stalks will appear and the next round begins.

Pots and Mixes

Standard pots (i.e. those that are taller than wide) are best as it gives the plants more opportunity to send new tubers deeper to where they find the optimum moisture level. If you have a few pots of these orchids, it's best to standardise on one size/shape of pot so you can manage the watering more easily.

There are as many mixes for terrestrial orchids as there are growers, but many of us in Canberra have success with a fine seed-raising mix (preferably without added fertiliser although that is hard to find these days). The advantage to such a mix is that it is easy to sieve out any new tiny tubers at repotting time.

Repotting

Repot in December and January when the tubers are dormant. Most growers repot annually because the colony-formers can produce a lot of new tubers in a year and the pots can become over-crowded very quickly. Having said that, there are some species (e.g. Caladenia sp.) that are resent repotting and should be disturbed as little as possible. If you get hooked on growing Australian terrestrials, you should join the Orchid Society to get tips/tricks/plants from our experienced growers.

Scrape the mulch off the top of the post and tip the mix into a tray. You can either put the mix through a fine sieve or sort through it by hand, collecting all the tubers.

A 150 mm diameter pot will hold 15 to 20 large tubers. The object is to have the surface of the pot covered by foliage so put in extra small tubers that will not flower but will produce leaves and cover the surface.

Don't line the bottom of the pots with shade cloth, or you may find tubers caught up in it the next time you repot. Fill your pot to within 65mm of the top, place a small pinch of blood and bone over the mix, remembering that like all Australian native plants they don't like much fertiliser, and then place 25mm of mix on top. Arrange your tubers on top of this mix, eye upwards. When you examine the tubers you will see that each tuber has an eye from which the new growth will appear. If the tuber is dirty and you cannot see the eye, the tubers can be rinsed in warm water. However, like most garden bulbs, the positioning of the eye doesn't seem to matter too much and the plant will grow to the surface, so don't stress too much.

After having placed the tubers, cover with another 25mm of mix and top the pot with a cover of clean and chopped casuarina or pine needles. This is to make watering easier as there is less soil disturbance, and also the plants sit nicely on top of the needles to create a good display.

Give the pot a good watering to settle the mix, and then place in the shade or dappled light. Be careful to give minimal water until the plant starts to show new growth, then water regularly until flowering finishes and the whole cycle begins again.

Light and Temperature

These orchids are quite hardy and can be grown outside in Canberra, with a little protection from frost in winter and rain in summer. Balconies are good, shade houses are good and even windowsills work. While the plants are dormant, keep the pots in a shady place out of the sun so the pot doesn't heat up and cook the tubers. While the plants are actively growing, they do best with bright indirect light, dappled sunlight or morning sun. If the plants are growing tall instead of making a flat rosette, it is a sign that they need more light. If the flowering stems bend towards the light, make sure to rotate the pot regularly to keep them growing straight.

From SUTHERLAND SHIRE ORCHID SOCIETY's Website.. A humorous memory of the Late Neville Roper's literary skills...a little light reading!!!!

The Show from Hell

Ever come home from a show feeling less than satisfied with your show bench results? Consider the following events that can only lead one to decide that this was indeed, the show from hell.

To give your ripper intermediate cymbidium every chance of taking out Grand Champion at your local show you spend three hours each day for four weeks training and arranging each of its eight racemes of thirty plus blooms.

Not only does this entail a lot of time but it creates a level of frustration bordering on psychological warfare as you try to manipulate those springy little yoyo's, apply at least five metres of green twist tie without damaging any buds, insert eight reshaped dry cleaners coat hangers and then 'pack' the flowers with a melange of cardboard, tissue paper, sponge rubber, pipe cleaners and Styrofoam - you know, all that stuff you see adorning the back of empty station wagons parked in the car parks outside show venues .

Having driven the twenty kilometres to the show at a conservative 40kph to minimise potential damage to your Grand Champion in the making you eventually place it on the show bench in pristine condition with, thankfully, no need to use the words 'damaged in transit'. At this point in time you are at peace with the world knowing that the announcement of your plant as Grand Champion is little more than a formality. That is until you discover that your painstakingly engineered 200mm. pot full of stud intermediate cymbidium has been beaten for Grand Champ. by a Masdevallia in a 50mm pot. with a single paltry flower!

Your rapidly rising blood pressure reaches stratospheric levels when you realise that the Masdevallia flower doesn't even need a stake!

After a few deep breaths your blood pressure begins to subside. As calmness finally prevails, the show marshal instantaneously elevates your anger to a new personal best when he informs you that it was "close, real close. If your cymbidium didn't have that pollen cap starting to go off."

By the end of the show you have accepted, albeit grudgingly, that the judges decision is final and it was only an orchid show. After all Reserve Champion and a cheque for \$25 is a pretty respectable outcome anyway. Your ego saving mental fall back position has been achieved largely due to the general opinion of sympathetic club members, that you have been the victim on an injustice - "Who were the judges?" "typical mix up" "Half of them hate cymbidiums and the other half grow Masdevallias" and "the short black one with the studded collar could have done a better job than the bloke with the white cane!" being typical commentary.

Eventually the show from hell is nearing the end and pull down time is approaching. You are now consumed by the desire to get your reserve champion, its decorations and your prize money into the car and on the road ASAP. No need to street crawl at 40kph on the home journey.

The prize winners are being presented with their trophies and prize money. You clap politely when 'Mr. Masdevallia' is called to the dais. He is all smiles as the president shakes his hand while back in the crowd the best you can muster is a sort of pained gesture, a cross between a fear grin and a death stare. Anyway you assure yourself that the club members clapped loudest when you were called to the dais and surely now even 'Mr, Masdevallia' realises how lucky he has been.

Your escape plan is to make two trips to the car. The first trip is to deliver your hard earned winnings, the packets of fertiliser and some seedlings purchased from the sales stall during the day. The second journey will be needed to convey your sizeable Reserve Champion intermediate cymbidium to the back of your station wagon. This operation proceeds uneventfully until, on approaching your car, you realise that your left hand is the one most easily freed from supporting the Reserve Champion but your car keys are in your right trouser pocket!

The solution, you decide, as you stand in the car park, is to carefully transfer more of the load from the right arm to the left and.....

EXPLETIVES!!! Broken pot on the asphalt! Potting mix everywhere! Battered pieces of prize winning foliage spread for metres and microscopic pieces of petals decorating the car park! And the loudly exclaimed "I hate *&#@#**^% orchids" ringing in the ears of stunned onlookers. You dip your now liberated right hand into your trouser pocket and extract your car key.

As you do so "Mr. Masdevallia', smarty pants, all smiles, bloody Grand Champion, is standing at his car, the one parked next to yours, still cursing his 'butter fingers' as he bends down to salvage the pieces of what was once the Grand Champion and you decide that there is justice after all, even at the show from hell!

Neville Roper, 2007

Dendrobium canaliculatum and its Hybrids By Mel Wheeler

An important characteristic of *Den canaliculatum* is its short thick pseudobulb which gives this species the common name the "Onion Orchid". This characteristic is passed onto its progeny. *Den canaliculatum* is often mistaken with *Den carronii*. With *Den canaliculatum* all dorsals, sepals and petals are the same length, whereas with *Den carronii* all dorsals, are longer than the petals and sepals.

Den canaliculatum comes in a wide range of colours from white, pinks, violets, yellows and browns to almost black. Thus when used in hybridising they give us a very wide range of colours. Another bonus is the number of flower spikes that are produced on each bulb, anywhere from five to eight spikes on each bulb. This creates a very spectacular specimen in a very short time. Another advantage of these hybrids is that they bloom more than once a year.

Den canaliculatum likes plenty of water during the growing season of the summer months. They like good drainage so they can dry out quickly. They also like good air movement and high light. This can be obtained by hanging plants high under a fibreglass roof. The heat from the fibreglass helps the plants to dry out quickly between waterings. When plants begin to spike, lower them to about two metres so as not to burn off the developing inflorescences.

Some growers grow them on slabs of cork, Callistemon and Melaleuca branches while most growers use pots with a bark and charcoal mix. They are best repotted every two years. These plants grow and flower best when fertilised each week with a low nitrogen fertiliser such as aqua-k, phostagen etc. The most common disease and pests are usually crown rot from not being allowed to dry out and aphids which like to get among the flower buds.

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.

The article above is from Bribie Island Orchid Society's website... Take a look at the site – lots of growing information

"See you all" at the Zoom meeting next Tuesday...See Greg's email for details..... GOOD GROWING