



# Australian Native Orchid Society - Macarthur Group



October 2021

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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: 16th NOVEMBER, 2021**

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

**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*

**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 6.45pm, benching closes 7.55pm, meeting starts 8pm**

**Hi to all,**

Wonderful news with face to face meetings again. It will be great to spend time with our friends and have general discussions.

**Only double vaccinated members will be allowed onto the hall.** Bring your vaccination certificate to show at the door. This is important as the council has lots of rules on the hall hire that we must comply with or risk having cancellation of the hall hire. Masks must be worn inside the hall.

This month is the Annual General Meeting and election of committee, new members on the committee are always wanted as there is always something to do.

Christmas party in December and this is always a good night. Bring your partner with you. Margaret will be organizing numbers for catering.

The Christmas hamper raffle will be drawn and we are looking for donations for the hamper, Carol will be accepting these.

Good growing

Wally

The following is from Camden Council, received 4/11/21

In line with the Public Health Order from Monday 8 November 2021 hirers will be required to adhere to the following rulings:

1 person per 2m2 capacity – please see the spreadsheet attached for facility capacities:

- Gym and dance classes 20 person cap for classes will remain
- Caps removed for use other than gym and dance classes
- Hirers will be responsible for ensuring attendees present record of vaccination and/or exemption certificates. Only attendees who are fully vaccinated should be permitted into facilities.
- People under the age of 16 who are not fully vaccinated are allowed unaccompanied in their workplaces and all outdoor settings, but must be with a fully vaccinated member of their household in hospitality venues (unless collecting takeaways), entertainment facilities, major recreation facilities and places of worship, unless they work at the venue.

- Ensure your group/organisation's COVID Safety Plan is current. Service NSW have provided new COVID Safety Plans to align with the easing restrictions. All regular hirers must complete the update COVID Safe Plan as part of your return to operation planning. I have attached a link to assist - Gyms and indoor recreation | NSW Government.
- Masks are mandatory in all indoor settings (except children under the age of 12).
- Touch point cleaning by hirers will continue.

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### Meeting Dates

<b>19 January</b>	<b>16 February</b>	<b>16 March</b>	<b>20 April</b>
<b>18 May</b>	<b>15 June</b>	<b>20 July</b>	<b>17 August</b>
<b>21 September</b>	<b>19 October</b>	<b>16 November</b>	<b>21 December</b>

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**FOR SALE. Cymbidium Maddidum in a 12 inch pot with 6 long spikes in flower... split and repotted 12 months ago.. plant originally purchased from Mr. Annan Botanical Gardens a while back...running out of room and so is available for \$50.. Call Carol 4625 9874 if interested.**

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This article is from the Barrita Orchids Website and is from Scott Barrie... Looking for Sarcophilus? Check out Barrita Orchids Website for plant availability..

### Growing Sarcophilus

A Sarcophilus plant consists of basically leaves and roots. As such, it has very little water storage in comparison other orchid plants, such as a Cymbidium, which can store enough water/moisture to survive for many months of dry or drought conditions. This tells us straight away that the plant is expecting a consistent or regular supply of moisture. I say moisture as this encompasses more than just water. In the natural/wild growing conditions of monopodial orchids, it is often high humidity that hydrates the plant more so than rain.

### Potting mix

We chose to use inert media for all our orchids. Perlite mixed with Horticultural Rockwool and styrene in rough thirds, has proven over many years to give excellent results for us. Choosing a media for your conditions and the intensity of your activity or connection with your plants is very important. This media dries quickly and so requires regular watering, every day or two in small pots, to prevent it drying out. Media proportions may be varied to hold moisture for a longer period to suit individual needs. The reason we choose this inorganic media is the stability. This media will never change, no decomposition, no reduction of air spaces in the pot and most importantly of all no need to remove the media at repot time. Sarcophilus can be sulkers after repotting. The less disruption caused to the roots, the happier the plant will be. If you chose to move it to another media, look for one that will retain moisture while not breaking down to rapidly.

### Water and fertilizer

As I said in the opening paragraph, Sarcophilus plants have very little water storage, so providing moist media is crucial to success. Our media has a very high, air-filled porosity and consequently dries very fast. This leads us to irrigate frequently. A Sarco should never dry out completely. To dry out will stop the growth of a plant and once it stops a period of "sulking" will follow. We only use liquid fertilizer, provided as often as possible is best. A good quality balanced fertilizer is important, and we prefer our fertilizer slightly lower in nitrogen than the other macronutrients. A 10:15:15 balance is quite acceptable for the winter period and 15:10:15 for the summer time. The most important part of fertilizing is to keep the concentration low.

### Light levels

Light equals flowers. Traditionally Sarcos have been grown in low-light conditions, an interpretation from viewing wild plants growing in shaded locations. However, shady growing has the effect of limiting flower production. The plant reacts to the light it is given. Leaves are the plants light collectors, how the plant feeds itself. Plants change leaf angle and arrangement to catch as much light as possible or needed

for growth. Example. A plant grown in low light will elongate in the stem and orientate it's leaves to face the light. In a Sarco, the plant will go almost vine like in growth habit. The growth will lay down flat and arrange it's leaves

in a fan pattern. A plant growing in maximum light will have shortened stems and a compact leaf arrangement. In Sarcos we see an upright growth habit with leaves tucked into the rosette.

The plant grown in shady conditions will have a lush and luxurious appearance. But, will not produce the flower spikes of the tougher high-light plant. The presentation of the flower spike will always be pendant in low light.

### **Temperature**

Our temperature range is from 1 degree Celsius minimum in winter and we will have maximum summer temperatures of high 40s. Sarcophilus grow naturally where the temperatures go below freezing, but only for a short while. When we have excessive high temperatures, we mist the environment to help the plants cope. Sarcophilus need to have at least 6 weeks of nightly minimum below 13 degrees Celsius to initiate spikes. Once this initiation period is over you can heat them to get flowers out early. But this can have an affect of the longevity of the blooms. We prefer to let them elongate naturally.

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## *Summer Survival*

Dear Orchid Friends:

Sydney summers...those long, languid, steamy days. Summer is an important time in maintaining the health of your orchids. Summer is usually a time of less flowering, so it's an ideal time to get your orchids into shape. High temperatures, humidity and an intense sun can make your orchids susceptible to problems or disease. Here are some tips so you may enjoy healthy orchids.

Summer is an excellent time to repot your orchids if needed. Check whether your plants need dividing. It may be that the plant has outgrown the pot or the medium has started to decompose. If the medium begins to decay, it retains more moisture and restricts airflow to the roots. A soggy medium invites pests as well. Repot after the plant finishes Flowering and when it shows signs of new root growth. Use the smallest pot that will accommodate approximately 1 1/2 - 2 years growth. Don't overpot in a pot that is too large. Remove and wash away the old potting medium. Examine the roots. Snip any rotten, decaying roots. Divide the plant if desired and place in a clean pot with fresh medium.

Insects are most active during the warm summer months. Get into the habit of looking at your plants. Inspect the undersides as well. As temperatures increase, good air movement is important to your orchid plants. Healthy orchids are more resistant to pests and diseases. Remove dried sheathing on cattleyas to rid of hiding places for insects. You may find an occasional insect on one of your plants, but this is not cause for panic. Separate the plants from the others and treat it appropriately. Early inspection of your plants will locate those stray insects and allows you to take action before it becomes a problem throughout your entire collection. We live in Sydney...an occasional insect is not uncommon.

A large percentage of orchid problems are caused by either too much or too little water. Too much water can cause root rot and the excess moisture may allow a virus or bacteria to settle. A stressed plant also invites insects. Rinse off the leaves on your orchids to keep spider mites away. Orchids outside on porches or in your yard should be protected from excess rainfall. It may be necessary to apply a fungicide and insecticide on occasion if needed. An occasional application of fungicide is an extra protection in high humidity and helps to keep viruses at bay.

Other care tips: Keep your orchids out of the hot, midday sun to prevent sunburn. Use clean potting materials and disinfect your shears between plants. This helps prevent any spread of disease. Fertilise your orchids regularly. Growth achieved now will better support the flowers later. Brighter light, longer hours in the day, higher temperatures cause the orchid plants to consume more so fertilise regularly.

Summer is an excellent time to truly get to know your plants. Enjoy your orchids. Have fun with your orchids...hold them, inspect them. A little summer care now will reward you with beautiful flowers later.

Article from Five Dock's Orchid Society's Website

### **Awarded Natives of the Early Years**

Recently when good friend Dennis Wood loaned me his copy of 'The Australian Orchid Council Awards Register: 1964 - 1986 ---Nos. 1 to 600' to research an article that I was writing on Dendrobium Speciosum

'National White' I took the opportunity to scan the record for other native orchids that received awards in the early years. I was greatly surprised to discover that of the first 600 awards only 18 were awarded to native orchids.

While the small number of native species and hybrids to receive award recognition may have been a surprise so too was the relatively large variety of species and hybrids across a number of genera

- 4 Sarcochilus species
- 1 Sarcochilus hybrid
- 5 Dendrobium species
- 7 Dendrobium hybrids
- 1 terrestrial species

There was also a large variety of growers achieving these awards. Most growers only appear once or twice on the list with J. Smith being the exception with 3 awards.

Just what this all means I'm not sure. Perhaps in these relatively early years of interest in native orchids there were few specialist native growers. Maybe early attempts at hybridising were struggling in their attempts to develop quality breeding lines. Possibly growers were not encouraged to put natives up for award consideration. It is also possible that the 18 awards that were given compares very favourably with the level of recognition granted to other genera - I didn't have the inclination to count all of the other awards!

Regardless of these possible justifications it is surely the case that orchid species and hybrids being grown in their country of origin where a greater availability of genetic material, large areas of suitable environment and a healthy interest in all things native exist there should have been greater recognition of our native orchids. 18 awards out of 600 represents a mere 3 out of every 100 awards granted or 3 awards every 2 years over the first 12 years of AOC awards - I rest my case!

#### Summary Of AOC Awards to Native Orchids 1964 -1986

Award No.	Plant	Owner	Award	Year
159	Den. Bardo Rose 'Berowra'	R. Kerr	HCC	1975
231	Sarco. falcatus 'Miriam Ann'	A. J. Merriman	HCC	1977
296	Den. Bardo Rose 'Teresa'	C. Brandon	HCC	1979
297	Den. speciosum 'National White'	C. Brandon	HCC	1979
298	Den. kingianum 'Bungan Castle'	E. Webeck	AM	1979
299	Sarco. hartmannii 'Kerri'	J. Williams	AM	1979
330	Den. Ku-Ring-Gai 'Ann Brown'	W. Brown	HCC	1980
339	Caladenia catenata 'Gigantea'	J. Smith	HCC	1980
371	Den. striolatum 'Lesley'	I. Brewster	HCC	1981
382	Den b'bum var. superbum 'Blue Horizon'	J.Mackinney	AD	1982
388	Den. Rachele Simpson 'Qlander'	S. Hayden	HCC	1982
392	Den. Hilda Poxon 'The Lodge'	Mr & Mrs R. Rankine	HCC	1982
425	Sarco. Fitzhart 'Wollumbin'	B. Simpson	HCC	1982
454	Den. falcorostrum 'Anembo'	E. Gogerly	AM	1983
473	Den. Bardo Rose 'Bronilyn'	J.Smith	HCC	1983
492	Den. Hilda Poxon 'Gold Star'	J. Smith	AD	1984
496	Sarco. hartmannii 'Sylvanvale'	K. Wilson	HCC	1984
527	Sarco. hartmannii 'George'	G. Colthup	AM	1985

20 or more years later some of these plants are still seen as winners on show benches or appear as parents in nursery catalogues - they have been good enough to stand the test of time.. but what became of the others?

Neville Roper Sept 2003

From Sutherland Orchid Societies Website)

**Please, if you are feeling unwell, please give the meeting a miss!!!**

And just a little more for you to see!!!!

**This article was printed in Manly Warringah Orchid Society's September newsletter and is printed with thanks and permission of the author, Cary Polis.**

### **Cary's Shadehouse**

Spring has really sprung at my place, especially with the natives. The Dockrillias in particular have been outstanding. Things like *calamiformis*, *teretifolia*, *fairfaxii*, *schoenina* and *pugioniformis*. I'm really finding that the ones that are in mesh pots are doing far better than the ones on mounts, no matter which way they have been planted.

I have used 3 basic methods:

- 1) just plant straight into the pot
- 2) cut a window or flap on the side of the mesh pot and poke the roots through making sure that the plant is secure
- 3) cut a window or flap in the base of the pot and poke the roots up into the pot. Seeing that they mostly have hefty roots, I use large or medium bark. This technique works well with other things as well, including *Sarcochilus falcatus*, especially on the side of the pot. In fact Guy (Cantor) just ties them onto the side and this allows the roots to find their own way in.

One of the really good things about growing orchids (and gardening in general) is that you can experiment quite a bit with your growing techniques. It can lead to unusual and spectacular results.

How many times have you admired a plant on the bench which has been grown in an unconventional manner, ending up in not only a healthy, robust plant but almost a work of art? For example, it wasn't that long ago that the idea of growing orchids successfully in water well pots would have been debunked by the "experts". There is a whole range of orchids that are more than suited to this technique with brilliant results. I have never been able to grow *Dendrobium agrostophyllum* for any length of time, just standing by helplessly watching it go into an irreversible state of decline leading to death but now I have one in a waterwell and it is one of the stars in my bush house.

Of course when trying different things you must be prepared for some failures, but this tends to happen anyway no matter what you do. Right now you should be actively engaged in repotting, feeding and general maintenance. I've been having too many distractions and interruptions like fishing, bushwalking and car projects, not to mention all the things that Jill wants me to help her with in the garden and the house. Just repotting the odd plant on the run here and there is not exactly the most efficient way of doing things but it's still something. Even this week is not looking that good for me especially now that the COVID restrictions have eased. I certainly have a number of big potting jobs looming that I need to get onto and this is the best time of the year for that.

So somewhere, sometime I'm going to have to bite the bullet and get stuck into my "orchid jobs", and sooner rather than later. I still make the time everyday at least once, to go into both the bush house and the hothouse and cast an eye over while doing a walkpast to ensure that nothing awful is happening anywhere. Like any interest, what you put into it is directly related to what you get out of it.

Good growing and I hope to see you all at a meeting soon.

Editor's note: This article was published in Mt. Kur-ring-gai Orchid Society and Jim Brydie (Editor) added a note for extra information:-

Just in case some growers haven't tried 'net' pots or water well pots before, the 'net' pot is 140mm wide and the waterwell pots are 200mm and 155mm, but they are available in some other sizes of both types, as well. The water well pots don't have a clip on base, they only have one drain hole in the centre, on a short pedestal which makes a water reservoir.

Additionally, Cary advised me that he used poly styrene bits in the bottom of the pot to keep roots above the water in the base, but was not happy with the results. He is now using the round “ceramic balls” in the bottom of the pot and is happy with the results.

GOOD GROWING