



# Australian Native Orchid Society - Macarthur Group



OCTOBER 2023

Edited by Tony Asquith mail: [aaasquith@bigpond.com](mailto: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: 17th October, 2023**

**Life Members:** W. & M. Southwell, A. & C. Asquith & R. Morrison, M. Yabsley.

**Conservation Officer:**

*ANOS Macathur Group disclaims any responsibility for any losses which may be attributed to the use or misuse of any aterials 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 7.00pm, benching closes 7.30pm, meeting starts 7.30pm**

Hi to All

Congratulations to Ross for plant of the night and Mike Harrison for popular choice at the last meeting.

Bob Bishop gave a great presentation at the last meeting. The growing forum was very well received with good input from the members.

Kyle and Justin decided that this year they would seek sponsorship for our orchid shows and have done an amazing job with great results with money and plants being donated by a variety of organisations.

The October show will be on the 21<sup>st</sup> at Oran Park shopping centre. Plants for sale will be needed, so any spare plants would be great. Sale sheets and pot stickers for native plants will be available at the meeting and the show.

The Bloom Festival held at Picton Botanic Gardens will be held on the 5<sup>th</sup> November this year. The club puts on an orchid display and plant sales to the public. Because of the nature of this festival, the general attendance is from gardeners or people who want to buy plants. There is quite a few nurseries there selling plants and it is worth a look. Open from 8.00am to 2.00pm. Display and sale plants will be needed, contact Wally.

Good growing  
Wally

**Christmas is fast approaching and Carol is beginning to make up our Christmas Hampers we have at our dinner evening....please keep in mind that we will be seeking donations for the hampers starting the October and November meetings....**

**Please be advised that Campbelltown Orchid Society is setting up their Mid-Spring Show at Macarthur Square to run from Thursday to Sunday, 19th to 24th October ..It's the last show for the society for the year... well worth a look!!!**

**DON'T FORGET....MEETING STARTS 7.30pm**

**Minutes of Meeting**

The President welcomed everyone to the September meeting.

**Attendance:** Members: as per sign on book

**Apologies:** Greg S, Margaret S, Norm B, Mick D.

**Visitor:** Nil

**Acceptance of Previous Minutes:**

**Moved:** Robert Moon **Seconded:** Graeme Morrison **Carried**

**Business Arising:** 35 Year celebration held over to October Meeting.

**Correspondence:**

Central Coast ANOS, Newcastle ANOS and KABI ANOS Newsletters were received and forwarded to members via email.

Invitation to Australian Orchid Foundation AGM – 14 October – forwarded to members via email. Kiwi Bark Brochure - forwarded to members via email.

**Treasurer's Report:** The Treasurer highlighted income received, accounts requiring payments and the existing closing balance.

**Moved:** Justin Lee **Seconded:** Gordon Bush **Carried.**

**Editor's apology:** there should be a photo of Kyle Hall Receiving his show trophy here...sorry, couldn't get it to print from email..

**General Business**

- Spring Show Award / Prize Money / Sales Money was presented by the President. Congratulations to Kyle Hall on winning the Grand Champion and Aub Brundige Memorial Award
- 2023 Spring Show Results provided in TAB A
- 2023 Sarcophilus and Late Spring Show Schedule was provided.
- Electronic Transfer System was discussed and decided the Secretary investigate and report back at the October meeting.
- Greg Steenbeeke needs help in housing some orchids for 24 months while he undergoes a relocation. Members were asked to take 20 or so orchids. Members to leave their name with the Secretary.

**Guest Speaker:** Bob Bishop facilitated a “Growing Epiphytic Orchids” forum, which allowed members to discuss all areas of orchid growing – repotting, growing media, fertilizers, pest control, watering processes. Forum was well received and insightful.

**Benching Discussion :** A new segment was trialed with 5 plants selected for growers to spend 3 mins discussing the plants growing habits:

**Dendrobium kingianum ‘Real Dark’** Mike Harrison

**Dendrobium x suffusum** Tony Asquith

**Sarcophilus spathulatus** Justin Lee

**Dockrillia linguiformis** Kyle Hall

**Diuris orientis x sulphurea** Ross Morrison

## Raffle Winners

Carolyn Wright, Noel Bates, Bob Carter, Peter Brown

## Monthly Benching Results September '23

Benching Class	place	Plant Name	Owner
<b>Dendrobium Species</b>	1	Dend. kingianum 'Black Beauty	Justin Lee
	2	Dend. Kingianum 'Real Dark'	Mike Harrison
Dendrobium Hybrid	1	Dend. Awesome 'Coconut Ice''	Mike Harrison
	2	Dend. Elegant Heart	Mike Harrison
Sarcanthinae Species	1	Sarcochilus <i>spathulatus</i>	Mike Harrison2
	2	Sarcochilus <i>spathulatus</i>	Justin Lee
<b>Rhizobium Species</b>	1	<i>Dockrillia striolata</i>	Mike Harrison
	2	<i>Dockrillia schoenina</i>	Mike Harrison
Rhizobium Hybrid	1	<i>Dockrillia</i> Tweetas 'Curly Gold'	Mike Harrison
	2	<i>Dockrillia</i> Australian Ginger	Mike Harrison
<b>Pterostylis Species</b>	1	<i>Pterostylis baptistii</i>	Ross Morrison
	2	<i>Pterostylis gibbosa</i>	Ross Morrison
Diuris Species	1	<i>Diuris sulphurea</i>	Colin Long
<b>Caladenia Species</b>	1	Caladenia carnea	Ross Morrison
Terrestrial Species Other	1	<i>Chiloglottis trapeziformis</i>	Mike Morris
<b>Terrestrial Hybrid</b>	1	<i>Diuris orientis x sulphurea</i>	Ross Morrison
<b>Australasian Hybrid</b>	1	<i>Dendrobium</i> Lime Delight	Justin Lee
<b>Growing Comp. 2</b>	1		Carol Asquith
Dendrobium	2		Tony Asquith
<b>Judges Choice</b>		Diuris orientis x sulphurea	Ross Morrison
<b>Popular Choice</b>		<i>Dendrobium kingianum</i> 'Lord Vader''	Mike Harrison

A big thankyou to Jim Cootes for judging and well done to exhibitors.

Meeting Closed at 9.25 pm

-----  
GOOD GROWING ALL.

## **AUTOMATIC SPRINKLERS versus HAND WATERING by Brian Milligan**

All commercial growers and many large-scale hobby growers use automatic sprinklers to water their orchids and many smaller growers therefore believe that they should do the same as soon as they can afford the cost. But there are pros and cons to both systems, which you should consider before you install an automated watering system.

The obvious advantage of a fully automated sprinkler system is that you can program the computer and theoretically take off for a round-Australia holiday. Unfortunately, it's not quite as simple as that. The optimal frequency of watering is highly dependent on the weather, even when the plants are grown under cover. They become dry very rapidly under warm, windy conditions and may need watering two or three times as frequently under such conditions as they will if the weather is cold and windless. Maybe this isn't so important during the summer months but orchids greatly resent being continually wet during cold, wintry weather, so an automated system with a simple timer is not ideal, especially in winter.

Another disadvantage of sprinkler systems is the difficulty of ensuring even water distribution over all the plants. It's possible to achieve this by judicious placement of the sprinklers but much water is still lost on paths and beyond the boundaries of the growing area. Even then, complete coverage may not be achieved if a strong wind blows from a particular direction.

Hand watering, for preference using a water-breaker spray head (e.g. a Dramm head), permits each plant to be watered individually and for the water to be directed both over and beneath the leaves, thus ensuring that the compost is thoroughly wet and both the upper and lower surfaces of the leaves are wet (thus, minimising the likelihood of infestation by spider mite, commonly referred to as red spider, which prefer the drier conditions beneath the leaves). Sprinkler systems are seldom effective with large-leafed orchids like lycastes or anguloas, because their leaves very effectively shed most of the water beyond the confines of the pot. Hand-watering is also advantageous at flowering time, because it permits the orchid to be watered without wetting the flowers. Many cymbidium flowers develop unsightly fungal spots if their flowers remain wet for any length of time and so it is best not to water them overhead, especially on still days when the water may take hours to evaporate.

From the above arguments you can see that I strongly favour hand watering. Yes, it takes quite a time to do but at the same time you can also note those orchid spikes that need staking and detect any insect pests or diseases – just remember to take action when you have finished watering. I have an automated sprinkler system, but use it solely beneath the benches in my glasshouse and masdevallia shade house to maintain a continual high level of humidity.

So why do professional growers use automated sprinkler systems? Solely because it would be hopelessly uneconomic to water all their orchids by hand. Large nurseries take most of the night to water, section by section; they usually water at night, especially in summer, because less water is lost by evaporation then and the mains water pressure is higher at that time.

The big advantage of an automated sprinkler system for the hobbyist comes into play if he or she takes frequent or extended holidays. Fortunately I have several good orchid-growing friends who water my orchids when I go on holidays, a strategy that works well if you are able to reciprocate when they are away. If you ask someone to water your orchids when you go away, try to persuade an orchid grower to do the job. Others with little experience of orchids tend to over-water or else do it each weekend regardless of the weather.

**From OSCOV Website (With the hope that I haven't printed it before!!)**

---

**Editors note: I haven't printed the September Show Results as Secretary Ross has already sent out an email regarding our show.**

## THE CULTIVATION OF SARCOCHILUS SPECIES AND HYBRIDS by Alan Hope

These readily available orchids are easy to grow in Melbourne's climate and, once mature, flower regularly each year. A judicious choice of species and hybrids can extend the flowering period from spring to midsummer.

*Sarcochilus hartmannii* is one of the most popular species in cultivation. Its range extends from central New South Wales to Queensland, where it is usually found growing at medium altitudes in lightly shaded areas. It is therefore well adapted to shade house cultivation in Melbourne. Like many other *sarcochilus* species, it grows amongst leaf litter in a variety of locations, or as a lithophyte on rocks. Although it can be grown on a slab of wood or tree fern, I prefer pot culture, using a mix of pine bark and small pebbles to ensure good drainage. *Sarcochilus hartmannii* tolerates higher light levels than some species and grows and flowers well under 50% shadecloth. Plants hung high in the shade house during winter benefit from the slightly warmer and brighter conditions. The better forms of *S. hartmannii*, especially those originally collected from Blue Nob in the Nightcap Ranges, south of Murwillimbah in northern NSW, produce glistening white, shapely flowers on a semi-upright inflorescence.

*Sarcochilus aequalis*, known as the southern form of *S. hartmannii* before it was recently accorded separate species status, flowers in early spring and produces smaller, cream-coloured flowers on crowded, pendulous spikes. It grows well in Melbourne and eventually develops into a spectacular specimen plant.

*Sarcochilus fitzgeraldii*, sometimes called the 'ravine orchid', has white or cream flowers with a central red blotch or spots. It flowers in the spring and grows well in Melbourne. As its common name suggests, it is found in ravines and moist gullies, enjoying much more shade than *S. hartmannii*. Its main requirement is a cool, airy spot with 70-80% shade and plenty of water during its active growing period. Most growers choose a wide, shallow pot to accommodate its extensive root system and use a coarse mixture of bark chunks and pieces of sandstone or river pebbles as potting mix. *S. fitzgeraldii* tends to grow in a creeping fashion, its leaves flattened and curved inwards, rather than following the more upright growth habit of *S. hartmannii*. While there are many attractive cultivars, the eye-catching flowers of *S. fitzgeraldii* '50 cents' are noteworthy for their large size and deep red centre.

*Sarcochilus falcatus* is another cool-growing species suited to Melbourne's climate, although some growers find it is a difficult species to grow well. Commonly known as 'the orange blossom orchid', its white sepals and petals and yellow-margined labellum make *Sarcochilus falcatus* a most attractive orchid. Its range extends from eastern Victoria to Queensland, the flowers differing in size, petal shape and lip markings at various locations, although their overall colour remains constant. *S. falcatus* grows well when mounted on a weathered slab, tree branch, tree fern or natural cork. Small terracotta pots with an open mix have also proved to be successful in starting a plant in cultivation.

*Sarcochilus ceciliae* grows on rocky outcrops in the mountains of northern Queensland. It has beautiful pink flowers carried on upright inflorescences, however the growth tends to be sparse and straggly, and its narrow leaves give the impression that the plant is 'on its last legs'. This is generally not the case, as it is a tenacious orchid, well adapted to surviving long dry spells. Shallow pots should be used, as *S. ceciliae* is basically surface-rooting. A potting mix of small rocks (scoria, sandstone, limestone) and larger bark chunks is suitable. It is essential that the roots not be covered by the potting mix when transplanting; simply place the plant on top of the potting mix and secure it with fishing line or wire pegs. Some *S. ceciliae* hybrids, such as *S. Lois*, also seem to grow better if potted in this way.

While there are several other *sarcochilus* species, most are poor growers outside their natural habitat. You will occasionally see the lovely green flowers of *Sarcochilus olivaceous* or the small pink flowers of *S. hillii* on the show bench, but many of the others, such as *S. australis*, native of the Otways and wet bushland areas of Gippsland, are difficult to cultivate. Some growers have kept these species going on their natural bush mounts and have used them in hybridising.

**Sarcochilus Hybrids.** One of the first hybrids, produced in 1963, was *S. Fitzhart*, bred from *S. hartmannii* and *S. fitzgeraldii*. Its flowers are usually white to pink with solid or spotted centres, and held on upright inflorescences. Over recent years, as better 'line-bred' cultivars of *S. hartmannii* and *S. fitzgeraldii* have become available, *S. Fitzhart* has been re-made many times, with consequent improvement in flower shape, colour and size. Other common hybrids include *S. Heidi* (*S. Fitzhart* x *S. hartmannii*), *S. Melba* (*S. hartmannii*

x S. falcatus), S. Lois (S. hartmannii x S. ceciliae), S. Mavis (S. ceciliae x S. fitzgeraldii), S. Pinky (S. Mavis x S. hartmannii) and S. Bongeen (S. Mavis x S. fitzgeraldii), to name a few.

Recent hybrids include S. Rosalie, S. Powder Puff, S. Colonial Rose, S. Penny Ann, S. First Light, S. Otways, S. Pink Blossom, S. Selina, S. Lone Star, S. Peach Spot, S. Sun Spot, S. Jewell, S. Wandjina and S. James Woolf. You should look out for these more recent hybrids as most have superior colour, shape or character.

**This article is from OSCOV website and was from the year 2000 list. I hope I haven't printed either article earlier.**

**GOOD GROWING TO ALL.**

**DON'T FORGET OUR SHOW NEXT SATURDAY!!!!**