



Australian Native Orchid Society - Macarthur Group

MARCH 2024

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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. 4625 9874 – 0499 765222)

Next Meeting: 19th MARCH, 2024

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 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 7.00pm, benching closes 7.30pm, meeting starts 7.30pm

Membership renewal due JULY.

Hi Everybody, No report from President Wally...he wasn't at the last meeting. At this stage, he will be at the next meeting.

General Meeting – 20 February 2024 7.30 pm

Minutes of Meeting

The Vice President welcomed everyone to the February meeting and highlighted the fact that Wally had damaged his wrist and was unable to drive but was hoping to be back for the March meeting. The meeting wished Wally a speedy recovery.

Attendance: Members: as per sign on book:

Apologies: Maureen G, Wendy E, Greg S, Joy G, Ian L, Jim C, Rob M, Phil G, Julia B, W & M Southwell

Acceptance of Previous Minutes: Moved Gordon Bush Seconded: Graeme Morrison Carried..

Business Arising

The Newsletter highlighted the awarding of an Order of Australia to Clover Bradley. Congratulations and thoroughly deserved for her services to the community.

Correspondence:

ANOS Inc – Website changes – Club details and Show Dates

Robert Reitano – Guest Speaker in September

NPWS Licence Renewal

Membership Requests : Thank You to ACE Ohlsson Produce Supplies.

Graeme Bradburn and Nita Wheeler – Thank you for Tuber Bank donations

Central Coast / Newcastle ANOS Newsletters

Native Orchids of Macarthur Update

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

Moved: Carol Asquith

Seconded: Carolyn Wright

Carried.

General Business

Draft 2024 Show Schedules were distributed and requested changes needed by April Meeting.

- Jim Cootes currently away presenting at the International Orchid Conference in Taiwan
- NPWS Licence Renewal is not a renewal but a full reapplication. This reapplication is currently underway.
- EBay – a process has begun to prosecute an Ebay orchid seller who has been taking orchids from the wild and selling on Ebay.
- New Grower Assistance – all members are encouraged to bring plants and request advice / assistance with all matters associated with orchid cultivation.
- Dendrobium Beetles – the short life cycle was explained and the wave effect highlighted.
- Information on ‘keiki formation was further discussed.
- NEW Sponsorship - ACE Ohlsson Produce Supplies has become a sponsor and is supporting the Grand Champion of the Autumn Show. As part of the Sponsorship a 10% discount on all products is available to all products purchased from ACE Ohlsson Produce Supplies.
- TLE Electrical Supplies will also sponsor a champion at the Autumn Show
- Sales Plants – Carol has donated a couple of sales plants tonight and members are encouraged to sell plants at meetings.
- 2024 Show Dates

Autumn Show 11 May, Spring Show 14 September, Late Spring and Sarcophilus Show 19 October

Group Forum: Fertilising Orchids – Types, Management and Usage.

A group discussion was had on fertilisers and their usage. why keiki’s form and the management of them. The discussion was very productive and provided valuable insights. Thank you to all members that contributed and Kyle for managing the forum.

Benching Discussion on Selected plants:

Dendrobium Awesome Mike Harrison	Dendrobium Star Spankler Kyle Hall
Dendrobium Phil’s Candy Justin Lee	Growing Plant Carol Asquith
Dendrobium Red Ballerina ‘Macquarie’	Mike Harrison

Raffle Winners: Zoe-Joy S, Mike H, Carol A

Monthly Benching Results

Benching Class	Place	Plant Name	Owner
Dendrobium species	1	Dendrobium toressae	Kyle Hall
	2	Dendrobium toressae	Mike Harrison
Dendrobium hybrid	1	Dendrobium Red Ballerina ‘Macquarie’	C & T. Asquith
	2	Dendrobium Awesome	Mike Harrison
Sarcanthinae species	1	Sarcophilus eriochilus	Ross Morrison
Rhizobium species	1	Dockrillia brevicauda	Wally Southwell
Australian species other	1	Cestichis coelogyoides	Mike Harrison
	2	Cestichis reflexa	Ross Morrison
Terrestrial Evergreen	1	Spiranthes australis	Ross Morrison
	2	Spiranthes australis	Ross Morrison
Terrestrial Species Other	1	Chiloglottis diphylla	Justin Lee
	2	Chiloglottis diphylla	Justin Lee
Australasian hybrid	1	Dendrobium Andre Millar	Justin Lee
	2	Dendrobium Phil’s Candy	Justin Lee
Seedling	1	Sarcophilus dilatalus	Ross Morrison
Growing Competition	1	Ross Morrison	
	2	C & T Asquith	

Judge's Choice *Cestichis coelogynoides* Mike Harrison
Popular Choice *Cestichis coelogynoides* Mike Harrison

A big thank you to Graeme Morrison for judging and well done to exhibitors .

March Meeting – Guest Speaker Eric Lielkajis - A Meander Through South QLD Spring 22

Meeting Closed at 9.25 pm

A little history regarding our hobby

THE WARDIAN CASE by Brian Milligan

London Surgeon Nathaniel Ward could have no idea of what would follow when in 1829 he found a chrysalis (butterfly cocoon), sealed it in a bottle, and set it aside to watch it hatch. The chrysalis never hatched but by next spring two tiny seedlings, a grass and a fern, had sprouted from the damp earth on which the chrysalis was lying. These seedlings continued to grow, sustained only by the moisture trapped in the bottle. Twenty years later, the fern was still alive!

Nathaniel Ward experimented with other plants in sealed glass containers and had great success with ferns, which otherwise died in the smoky atmosphere that prevailed in London during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Ward showed one of his fern-cases to the Linnean Society and thus began a hobby among the British gentility that by 1850 (after the punitive tax on glass had been repealed in 1845) had grown to full-blown “pteridomania”! By then, almost every London drawing room contained a fern collection in a sealed glass case or ‘Wardian’ case, as it came to be known. Designs ranged from simple, square or round cases to elaborate affairs resembling Gothic cathedrals, Tintern Abbey and the Crystal Palace! By 1860 the Wardian case had run its course (in Victorian drawing rooms, at least), and was replaced by the home aquarium!

However, the Wardian case had a far bigger impact on horticulture than as a means of beautifying Victorian drawing rooms. The London nurseryman, Conrad Loddiges, was one of the first to appreciate its utility. He used a Wardian case to send a consignment of plants to Sydney in 1834, and was delighted to hear that they had survived the long sea voyage. The success of this venture led to the successful importation into Britain of many exotic plants, including orchids, from all corners of the globe using Wardian cases. One of the most important crops from which Britain benefited commercially was rubber. Large numbers of rubber tree seedlings raised at Kew Gardens from seed collected in Brazil were successfully transported to Malaya in Wardian cases. Within forty years Malaya had displaced Brazil as the world’s major source of natural rubber. Eventually synthetic rubber replaced natural rubber for many uses but I believe that natural rubber is still used for aircraft tyres and other specialty products.

Not all orchid species were transported from their native homes to Britain in Wardian cases. In fact most orchids had to endure being sealed in wooden cases for the journey. Cases with glass tops and/or sides were fragile, and especially likely to be damaged during transport from the orchids’ native habitat to the nearest seaport or navigable river. And then, for maximum benefit, the Wardian cases had to be stored on board ship where they were exposed to diffuse but not direct sunlight, not in a pitch-black hold. However, those plants deemed to be most valuable were usually carried in Wardian cases. John Gibson used Wardian cases to transport orchids and other exotic plants that he collected in India for his employer, the sixth Duke of Devonshire, in 1837. The added expense of using Wardian cases was of no consequence to the Duke, who probably spent more money on his orchids than any one before or since!

The development of the commercial airliner spelled the end of the Wardian case for transporting plants internationally. However, it is still used by amateurs for growing orchids and other exotic plants in city apartments, especially in countries with cold climates. Advertisements for Wardian cases with temperature, humidity and light controls still appear in overseas orchid journals. And it all began with a chrysalis and a fern spore in a bottle.

ARTICLE FROM OSCOV WEBSITE

Editors note...I tried to get a picture of the wardian case...It is there on Google..Later models used copper foil around the glass..Copper foiling around the glass edges, I believe was developed by Louis Comfort Tiffany for leadlighting around 1900.

In view of comments at recent meetings I pass this article on!! Again from OSCOV (from 2001)

HOW I GROW AUSTRALIAN DENDROBIUMS (AND DOCKRILLIAS)

by

Brian Milligan

Over the last twenty years I have accumulated a large number of Australian native dendrobium species and their hybrids. Most are grown in open-sided shade houses that are either permanently fitted with fibre-glass roofs or have clear plastic sheeting fitted temporarily during winter and spring. This article describes those dendrobiums that I have found to grow and flower best under these conditions.

Virtually all native dendrobiums are prone to frost damage and therefore it is necessary to provide some form of protection during winter. A solid roof constructed with either fibre-glass or polycarbonate sheets is preferable at this time but its presence at other times means that one has to water throughout the year, whether rain has fallen or not. Another disadvantage of a permanent roof is that it traps hot air during summer, and as a consequence the plants suffer from hotter conditions than they would otherwise experience in a shade house simply covered with shade cloth.

A temporary cover fitted during winter and early spring protects the plants and buds from frost during winter and prevents the flowers being damaged by heavy rain in spring. When removed after the flowering season is over the plants experience a cooler environment and better ventilation than they would receive in a house with permanent roofing. The only disadvantage is the hassle of fitting and later removing the plastic sheeting each year. Long-lasting Solarweave® sheeting fitted with belt eyelets simplifies this task – one of my covers is still in good condition after ten years' use (admittedly it's stored indoors during summer, the season when most deterioration would otherwise occur).

Most of my native dendrobiums are grown in pots that are either suspended from the roof or hung from vertical wire mesh fitted to the end walls. In this way the plants receive maximum light and ventilation, both of which are essential for good culture. Nearly all are grown in squat pots and are planted in a mix of pine bark and river stones (4:1). The size of the bark and stones depends on the size of the plants – seedlings are grown in 5 mm bark with similarly sized stones, and transferred to 5-10 mm material after a couple of years. I sieve out the smaller material from the 5-10 mm bark to provide larger bark for large plants. Not all plants are grown in pots. Some dendrobiums, particularly those now known as dockrillias, are grown on mounts, either of tree fern or natural cork.

During summer I water the dendrobiums every second day, although in very hot weather I water daily, preferably in the evening. Weak liquid fertiliser (usually Campbell's A®) is applied every week or two; it's important not to use a nitrogen-rich fertiliser because such fertilisers promote the development of keikis at the expense of flowers, particularly in the case of *Dendrobium kingianum* and some of its hybrids. The plants need less water in spring and autumn and the frequency of watering and fertilising should be reduced accordingly. The plants are watered weekly in winter but not fertilised at this time.

Australian native dendrobiums are prone to attack by several insect pests. Aphids are particularly fond of the new growths and flower buds. It's important to spray for these pests as soon as they are detected, not only to minimise the immediate physical damage they cause, but also to reduce the likelihood of them transferring virus from one plant to another. Orthene® is an effective aphicide but it's not sold at normal outlets, being available only in 1 Kg packets from large suppliers. Another common pest is the leaf-roller caterpillar, which sows the new leaves into a protective cylinder, thereby sheltering from pesticide dusts and contact sprays. One of the worst pests is scale. When present on the foliage, these insects are easy to control with summer oil but when they secrete themselves in the grooves on the older canes they seem much more resistant. However, I find that the insecticide Malascale® will eradicate them, particularly if the treatment is repeated and the heaviest infestations are physically scraped off the worst spots.

By far the most commonly grown Australian native orchid is *Dendrobium kingianum*, although many plants in older collections are bush-collected plants with small pink flowers on weak, pendulous racemes. Today, many line-bred *D. kingianum* seedlings that are likely to bear strong, upright racemes of much larger, more colourful flowers are available. Colours range from all white through white with purple lips (sometimes

referred to as variety *Silcockii*), white with pink stripes to all shades of pink up to purplish red. Some cultivars carry two or even three racemes per cane, and up to ten flowers per raceme, making spectacular specimen plants at maturity. *D. kingianum* seems to be more prone to frost than many other dendrobiums, so grow it in a 'cosy' spot in your shade house, not on the perimeter. Also, it's prone to develop keikis instead of flowers if fertilised with nitrogen-rich fertilisers (or with heavy applications of potassium-rich fertilisers).

Another of my favourites is *D. falcorostrum*, a species that definitely enjoys winter cold (it sometimes experiences snow in its native habitat in the mountains of NSW). Its glistening white, perfumed flowers are a delight in the shade house but not indoors, where its perfume soon becomes overpowering.

Dendrobium speciosum, in its six different varieties, occasionally provides a marvellous spectacle at spring shows, but I hesitate to recommend it to new growers in Victoria. Seedlings bred from selected cultivars are likely to provide the most rewarding plants but if you intend to follow this route, start young, because they will probably take ten years before they bloom! And then within a few years the plants in flower will be too large to remove from your shade house, let alone get into your car to take to a show! Add to these difficulties the widely held view that *D. speciosum* flowers well in Melbourne only every third year (when we receive above-average hours of sunlight), and you can see why I'm reluctant to recommend it, even though I admit to growing a few seedlings myself.

In preference to growing *D. speciosum*, I would suggest that new growers acquire some of its hybrids, for example *D. Delicatum* (*D. speciosum* x *D. kingianum*) or *D. Andrew Persson* (*D. speciosum* x *D. falcorostrum*). These hybrids flower reliably each year on much younger, smaller plants, although eventually they, too, can develop into massive specimens.

Another well-known species is *D. tetragonum* but I don't find it easy to grow and would therefore recommend in preference some of its hybrids, such as *D. Hilda Poxon* (*D. tetragonum* x *D. speciosum*) or *D. Star of Gold* (*D. tetragonum* x *D. falcorostrum*). Both hybrids produce large yellowish flowers, generally two or three times each year (a trait inherited from the first named parent).

Every collection should include a few representatives of those dendrobiums now known as dockrillias. Many of these have pendulous cylindrical 'leaves' supported on a wiry rhizome. Examples include *Dockrillia teretifolia*, *D. schoenina* and *D. mortii*, which grow well for me on tree fern mounts. The first two grow well when hung up high but the third does better under the cooler, shadier conditions that prevail lower down in my shade house. *D. striolatum* may be grown either in a pot or on a mount. Eventually it develops into a large 'mat' that produces an impressive display of flowers in spring.

Last but by no means least are the so-called hot/cold, warm/cool or Tropicool™ dendrobiums, most of which are bred by crossing the cooler-growing species of section *Dendrocoryne* with *Dendrobium bigibbum*, the warmth-loving species commonly referred to as the Cooktown Orchid. Primary hybrids bred from *D. bigibbum* need winter warmth in Melbourne but seedlings bred from these primary hybrids are quite amenable to cultivation in a cosy shade house.

Two hybrids which have done well for me on the show bench are *D. Anne's Rainbow Surprise* (*D. Colonial Surprise* x *D. speciosum*) and *D. Jonathan's Glory* (*D. Colonial Surprise* x *D. Kingrose*), both bred by Issy Klein and named after his grandchildren; each of these hybrids has *D. bigibbum* as a great-grandparent. The strong, upright racemes, large flower size and deep purple colour of this species are traits that seem to be inherited by its hybrids through multiple generations. Every collection of Australian native orchids should include a selection of these popular eye-catching hot/cold dendrobium hybrids.

My apologies for late delivery...illness wiped me out a bit..

GOOD GROWING ALL