

BULLETIN

Eastern Suburbs Orchid Society Inc.

MAY 2016

ISSUE 54/04

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ALL CORRESPONDENCE AND MEMBERSHIP ENQUIRIES TO:

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Meetings:

Held on the 3rd Monday of each month (except January) commencing at 7.45 pm at the St Luke's Community Hall – corner Arden St. & Varna St. Clovelly. **We have an orchid show of member's orchids every month . VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME.**

Next Meeting:

Monday 16th May 2016 at 7:45 pm

Membership fees:

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP : Single \$12.00 Family \$16.00

Guest Speaker:

To be advised

Minutes of April 2015 Meeting

Chaired by President Chris Dalrymple.

1 APOLOGIES, Leonard, T Podder, D Bullock, D Collier, B Collins

2 WELCOME NEW MEMBERS Marieke and Vincent Mourik de Goede. We hope you enjoy and benefit from your Society.

3 MINUTES LAST MEETING The Minutes of the previous Meeting were accepted as a true and accurate record.

4 CORRESPONDENCE Members were notified by the Secretary Helen Mason of:
a) Australian Orchid Foundation Victoria: Essay Competition, and a call for Seed Species and plant donations, book collection.
Helen tabled Bulletins from other Orchid Societies and requested any members interested in receiving them by email, to let her know.

5 TREASURERS REPORT A treasurers report was tabled and accepted.

6 ESOS DISPLAY Members were notified that the next ESOS Show will be held on 30-31 July at Flower Power, located at 84A Wentworth Ave Mascot, in an outside covered corner.

7 SOS DISPLAY: SOS Show is on 7-9 October at Caringbah High School hall. "Destination NSW" Website SOS contribution preparation will make the details available to all people.

8 SYDNEY ROYAL EASTER SHOW: The President Chris Dalrymple congratulated Gavin Curtis for his outstanding performance at the 2016 Royal Easter Show.

9 BULLETIN Chris Dalrymple thanked Warleiti Jap for preparing an excellent Bulletin. It was noted that the Bulletin required more contributions by members.

10 PRESENTATION Irene Bodell put on an excellent illustrated presentation of the Ira Butler award system including its history and latest awards.

11 OTHER BUSINESS

Chris said he would bring high potassium fertiliser to the next meeting for sale at \$8/kg as well as sphagnum moss. Eco-Oil is \$13/litre.

11 CATERING Liz Pinczewski, Cathy Starrett and contributors were thanked for the catering.

12 RAFFLE AND CLOSING The raffle (3 for \$1) was drawn and winners chose their plants. The meeting closed at 9pm. Next meeting is on 16 May 2016.

BENCHING PLANTS at Monthly meetings.

When you arrive, you need to book your plants in so that they are accurately recorded for scoring purposes.

On the booking-in sheet you need to write your name in the left column, record the total number of plants and then tick each class column in which you are entering a plant. For each plant you then need to complete a plant slip showing plant name, class and your name and place it on the bench with your plant. **PLEASE FILL IN THE CARDS CORRECTLY**

Finally you need to sign the attendance book for insurance purposes. Thank you. *Chris*

BULLETIN please support Warleiti by assisting with any snippet of information, articles or even suggestions as to what you would like to see in the bulletin. Even a bit of humour wouldn't go astray. Whenever possible, the bulletin will be sent out a week before the monthly meeting, however sometimes it just isn't possible due to other commitments.

FOR YOUR ORCHID DIARY :

Orchids Out West

13-15 May, Hawkesbury Racecourse

Mingara Orchid Fair & Show

25-26 June, Mingara

Tinonee Orchids Open Day

9-10 July, 768 Tinonee Rd Tinonee

National Orchid Extravaganza *****

12-14 August, Dural. Please note last month had the incorrect date as did most other Society bulletins

St.Ives Orchid Fair

19-21 August, St Ives Showground

All Photographs taken by John



Plant of the Evening:

The Plant of the evening was a magnificent specimen plant of *Bulbophyllum rothschildianum* Grown by Gavin Curtis. *Bulbophyllum rothschildianum* is found in Assam, South Central China and the Eastern Himalayas. It grows well in a bush house in Sydney's coastal regions in bright dappled shade with an average night temperature of between 7 and 20 degrees Celsius. It enjoys strong air movement and the media should never be allowed to become dry, but remain moist; not wet. Fertilize weekly weakly using a growth fertilizer during growth and a blooming fertilizer during Autumn and early Winter.



Bulbophyllum rothschildianum grown by Gavin Curtis

SOME OTHER OPEN PLANTS BENCHED



Oncidiinae Unknown grown by Gavin Curtis



Laelia anceps grown by Warleiti Jap



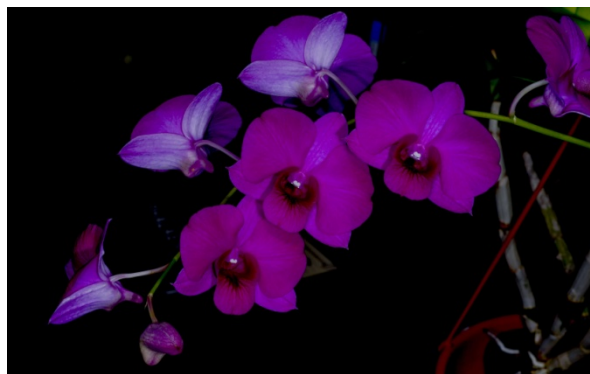
Rlc. Malworth 'Orchidglade' grown by Warleiti Jap



Bc. Yellow Bird grown by Warleiti Jap



Bulbophyllum Elizabeth Ann 'Buckleberry'
Grown by Gavin Curtis



Unknown *Den.* hybrid grown by Gavin Curtis



Phalaenopsis Dragon's Fire Grown by Warleiti Jap

NOVICE WINNERS



Zygonisia Cynosure 'Blue Boy'
Grown by Roger Lodjman



Arundina bambusifolia Grown by Mira Kostic



Unknown Laeliinae grown by Graeme Mertz

NOVICE RESULTS OF APRIL MEETING

CLASS		PLANT	Exhibitor
Cattleyas	1	<i>Laeliinae</i> Unknown	G. Mertz
	2		
	3		
Miscellaneous	1	<i>Zygonisia</i> Cynosure	R. Londjman
	2		
	3		
Species	1	<i>Arundina bambusifolia</i>	Mira Kostic
	2	<i>Epidendrum</i> Sp.	Mira Kostic
	3		



Humour

The real meaning of plant catalog terminology:

"A favorite of birds" means to avoid planting near cars, sidewalks, or clotheslines.

"Grows more beautiful each year" means

"Looks like roadkill for the foreseeable future."

"Zone 5 with protection" is a variation on the phrase "Russian roulette."

"May require support" means your daughter's engineering degree will finally pay off.

"Moisture-loving" plants are ideal for landscaping all your bogs and swamps.

"Carefree" refers more to the plant's attitude than to your workload.

"Vigorous" is code for "has a Napoleonic compulsion to take over the world."

"Grandma's Favourite" -- until she discovered free-flowering, disease-resistant hybrids.

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT FOR ESOS MEMBERS:

Attached to this bulletin is a supplement requested by some members regarding care of "Supermarket Phalaenopsis".

Reminders

Don't forget to assist in packing up the chairs and benches after hall meetings.

Don't forget to send your articles and snippets of information, humour, etc. Tell us about your successes and failures so that we can all learn. We won't laugh....Snicker!!

Don't forget to make yourselves known to new members and make them feel welcome. Maybe you have a friend that might like to come along for the evening.

Keep safe and stay happy.

OPEN RESULTS OF APRIL MEETING

CLASS		PLANT	Exhibitor
Cattleya Standard/Exhib	1	C. Malworth 'Orchidglade'	W. Jap
	2		
	3		
Cattleya Cluster/Novelty	1	Bc. Yellow Bird	W. Jap
	2	Unknown	G. Curtis
	3	Ctt. Minerva	W. Jap
Dendrobium	1	Unknown	G. Curtis
	2	Unknown	G. Curtis
	3	Unknown	G. Curtis
Miscellaneous	1	<i>Bulbophyllum</i> Elizabeth Ann 'Buckleberry'	G. Curtis
	2	<i>Zygo</i> Unknown	G. Curtis
	3		
Oncidiinae	1	Unknown	G. Curtis
	2	Sharry Baby	G. Curtis
	3		
Paphiopedilum Species	1	<i>P. insigne</i>	G. Curtis
	2	<i>P. gratixianum</i>	W. Jap
	3		
Phalaenopsis	1	<i>Phal.</i> Dragon's Fire	
	2		
	3		
Species Americas	1	<i>Laelia anceps</i>	W. Jap
	2	<i>Prosthechea cochleata</i>	C. Starrett
	3		
Species Asia	1	<i>Bulbophyllum rothschildianum</i>	G. Curtis
	2	<i>Coelogyne ovalis</i>	C. Starrett
	3	<i>Coelogyne fimbriata</i>	W. Jap

BULLETIN SUPPLEMENT

Eastern Suburbs Orchid Society Inc.

MAY 2016

ISSUE 54//04

PHALAEOPSIS ORCHID HYBRID CULTURE.

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This supplement to the Eastern Suburbs Orchid Society Bulletin May 2016 is written after numerous questions and requests from new and novice growers relating to the care and culture of the "Supermarket Phallies". The advice given is based on my personal experience, observations and those of friends.

One thing to remember is that everyone's growing conditions are slightly different so what works for me may not work for you.



Phalaenopsis

Phalaenopsis or "Moth" orchids are the most sought after house plants worldwide. A few years ago they were the domain of middle and upper class families. Today they are available for all and sundry through supermarket and hardware chains at low prices.

Light

In their natural habitat Phalaenopsis plants generally grow in relatively dim areas of about 80-90% of shade. A good test is to hold your hand about 300mm above the plant on a bright sunny clear day and the shadow of your hand should be barely visible

Observation of the leaves should indicate whether the light levels are sufficient or too much. Leaves should be firm and healthy bright green. Yellowing of the upper leaves may be the result of too much light. (Don't mistake this for nitrogen deficiency, or if it is the lower leaves, it may be natural leaf drop.) If the leaves are too dark, then so is the light.

Temperature

It is recommended that summer temperatures should not go below about 15 degrees Celsius at night. Day time temperatures can go up to about 30 degrees (Any higher causes growth to slow and stop.). A constant temperature of about 27 degrees day and night will produce fast and strong growth but no flowers.

Commercial nurseries allow the plants to drop to about 12 degrees at night for a few weeks during autumn which will usually initiate flowering.

Humidity

Humidity is important for Phalaenopsis. In the home environment, regular misting of the leaves or resting the pot on a tray of constantly wet gravel will provide the necessary humidity. In the greenhouse or hot house, under-bench misting and fogging will simulate the rainforest conditions that the plants thrive in.

Media

A good open draining medium to grow *Phalaenopsis* is 70% treated bark with about 20% Jumbo or Super Coarse Perlite and perhaps 10% charcoal. The size of the bark and charcoal will depend on the size of the plant. Some growers have success with Sphagnum Moss with horticultural foam mixed in to keep it open. Some use perlite in place of the foam. If using Sphagnum, do not pack it in the pot tightly. Roots need air to survive. Sphagnum moss tends to break down with the use of most fertilisers so re-potting annually becomes essential. The use of Coco fibre or chips is sworn by with some growers. However, it does have a tendency to compact and hence hold more moisture than perceived. Personally, I would only consider using it as an ingredient in a mix rather than the sole ingredient. When buying coco products, I strongly recommend thoroughly soaking with several water changes and, washing and flushing prior to use. This process is to remove salt content which has been found in some brands. It may be beneficial to give the last rinse with a dilute seaweed solution. The pots must have plenty of drainage holes; the more the merrier. The use of opaque or clear pots is really a matter of choice, but the advantage of clear pots is that you can observe the roots and moisture content without tipping out the plant. It is claimed that the aerial roots stay in the pot rather than wandering.

The base of the plant base should be just level with the surface of the mix when re-potting. Do not over-pot, choose a size of pot to suit the roots not the leaves. The best time to re-pot is after flowering. Cut off all dead roots and wash the roots before potting into fresh media. Look for pests and fungi and soak the plants if necessary with an appropriate insecticide.



Good quality orchid bark



Super Coarse and Jumbo Perlite



Horticultural Charcoal



Coco-chips

Watering

It must be remembered that Phalaenopsis do not have pseudobulbs or other water storage facilities, therefore the media must retain some moisture at all times, except with some specialist species which is beyond the scope of this article. This does not mean that the roots should be constantly wet or saturated otherwise the roots are likely to rot, resulting in the loss of a plant. Water them just before they start to feel dry. But never leave water in the crown overnight or in cool weather. That is a sure way to attract crown rot.

A good guide is to get used to the weight of the pots just after watering, and when dry. Another is to poke a bamboo "satay stick" in to the pot and see if you can detect any moisture along its length and towards the bottom.

Air Movement

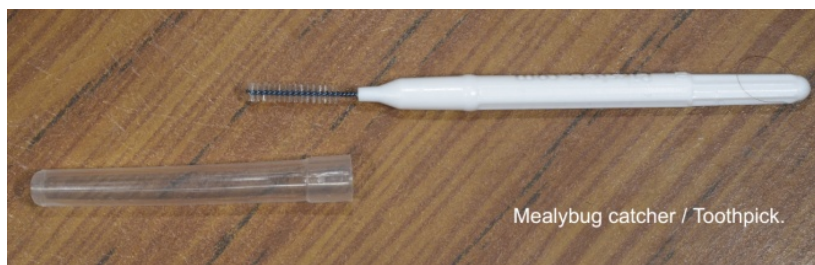
Another point to consider is air movement. Phalaenopsis enjoy buoyant humid air so the use of a fan or even to supply natural ventilation is conducive to good health of your orchids.

Fertilising

Like all living things, they enjoy food. There are many orchid fertilisers on the market so I won't dwell on them. I do recommend that, if at all possible, you fertilise weekly at about ¼ strength. You can use a growth fertiliser during the active growing season and a blooming fertiliser during late autumn and winter. Certain fertilisers available today state that they can be used all year round. It is good practice to heavily flush the media with clean fresh water immediately prior to fertilising at least every fourth watering. If you use a wetting agent, go easy with it, as some sensitive plants don't appear to like it in excess.

Pests

The warm moist environment so beloved of our Phalaenopsis is exactly what the dreaded Mealybug enjoys. Loveable little white fluffy creatures with two delightful rear end feelers. Look under the leaves and in the leaf axis. If the infestation is minor, I find the little toothpicks that look like tiny bottle brushes are ideal for getting down into the leaf axis and hooking the little darlings out. A dab of clear methylated spirits works on them too. Large scale infestations require more drastic action such as Eco-oil[®], or Neem-oil. I have personally used Neem-oil, diluted as per the instructions mixed together with Naturasoap[®]. I have found this to be quite effective and it is harmless to us and the environment. Other methods of large infestation control are by using pesticides such as Confidor[®],



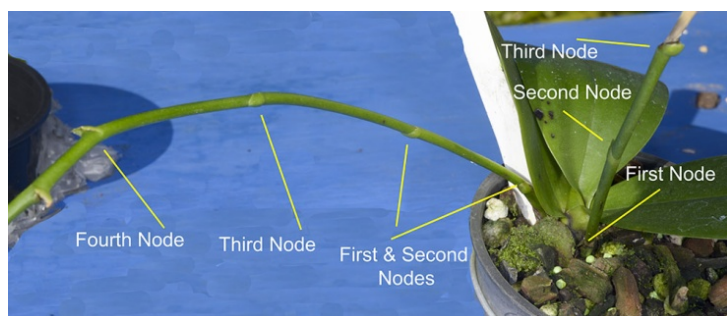
and other chemical pesticides. Brown Scale is another pest, but not in the same league as Mealybugs. Deal with them in a similar manner as that for Mealybugs. Make sure you eliminate ants as they "farm" the various scale insects for

the honeydew the exude. Grasshoppers, crickets and a thousand other pests would enjoy a meal out of flower stems. The best control is to not let them get near to your plants. If your plants are housebound, these are not usually a problem. In the hothouse, I find a general household insecticide spray is a reasonable control. Try and not saturate your plants with household insecticides. A spray in

the air will usually suffice. With all chemicals, it is prudent to follow the manufacturer's instructions and use appropriate personal protective equipment and clothing.

Flowering

As the flower spike is lengthening, it will naturally grow towards the light source. To achieve the natural graceful arching with flowers neatly arranged on each side of the flower stem, avoid turning, moving or changing the position of the plant until the flowers are fully opened. To get more flowers



after the flowers wither and die you can cut the stem just above the third or fourth node, or notch, from the base of the stem. Providing conditions are right, the stem will sprout a new shoot which will become a new secondary flower stem, giving you a fresh show of blooms. Considering that mature plants can flower more than once per year, it is possible to achieve flowers for several months of the year.

Hygiene

Like all living things, diseases and fungi can cause havoc. Make sure the crown of your plant doesn't retain water over night. When re-potting or cutting off dead roots, leaves or flower spikes, use sterilised pots and cutting instruments. A simple flame can be used on cutting blades and a diluted household bleach solution will sterilise both pots and instruments. A sprinkle of ordinary ground cinnamon powder on all cut surfaces and suspected fungus spots will reduce the risk of a fungal attack or fungi spreading throughout the plant. Again, it is your responsibility to use personal protective equipment and clothing.

Author's Note

With so many beautiful plants being sold cheaply through large chain stores, they have almost become a household item bringing colour and exotic vibrancy in reach of every home.

I hope that this article gives some guidance and encouragement on how to care for your Phalaenopsis hybrids. For more information, I can recommend that you go along to your nearest Orchid Society, where I am sure you will find a welcome, new friends and advice.

John McAuley



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