

BULLETIN

EASTERN SUBURBS ORCHID SOCIETY INC.

NEXT MEETING: 7.45pm Monday 18 February 2018 at Community Hall, on corner Arden and Varna Sts Clovelly *(held 3rd Monday of each month except January)* **Visitors always welcome.**

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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

Single \$15 Family \$20

(Due 1 July each year)

All correspondence and membership enquiries to:

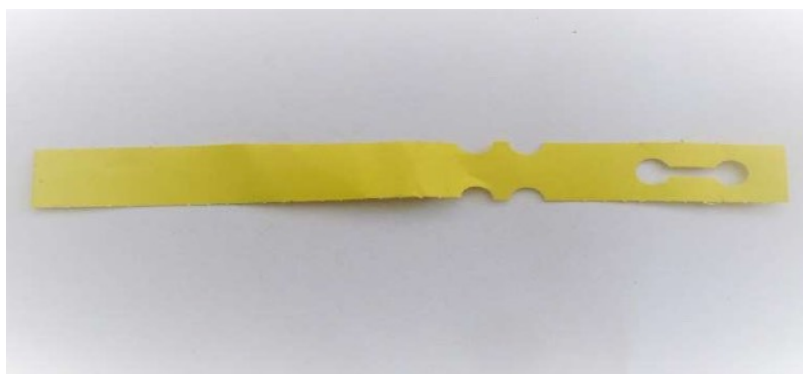
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HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL MEMBERS!

"How do I Sell my Orchids?"



PLEASE USE THIS SALES LABEL WHEN SELLING YOUR ORCHIDS

- 1) DO NOT BRING any plants that are diseased or infested with pests.
- 2) Plants must be well-established within their pots or mounts (NOT recently re-potted). Please do not water them that day.
- 3) Plants must be clearly labelled with the correct species or hybrid name or "unknown".
- 4) Each plant should have a yellow wrap-around sales label as above. (obtained from the Society) The seller's name and sale price must be on each tag. These must be returned to the Society for future re-use.
- 5) The seller must complete the Seller's Form with his/her name, date, along with the plant's name and sale price.
- 6) Once sold by the Sales Manager, the yellow label will be removed and the amount received marked against the plant name on the Seller's Form provided by the seller.
- 7) The Sales Manager will calculate the amount owed to each seller after deducting 15% commission for the Society.
- 8) Information against each seller's name should be transferred to the Sales Form as appropriate (ESOS retains this as a permanent record).
- 9) The Sales Manager will return unsold plants and the completed Seller's form, yellow labels, and 85% of proceeds to the seller.
- 10) The Sales Form is to be signed in the appropriate place by the seller as proof of receipt of payment (ESOS retains this as a permanent record).
- 11) The Treasurer will bank the Society's proceeds from plant sales.

Dendrobium Mousmee

(Jim Brydie kindly allowed re-printing of his article)

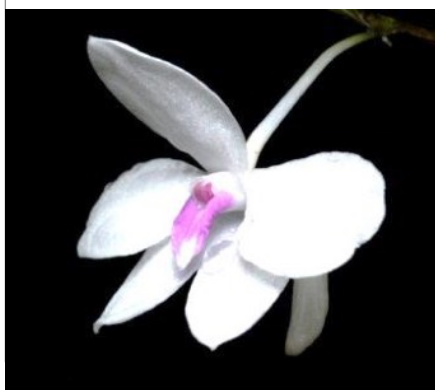
Dendrobium Mousmee (right) was registered in 1941 by the famous French Orchid Nursery Vacherot and Lecoufle. It is rumoured that the cross was made much earlier, in the 1920's, but if there was such a delay in registration, I am afraid I can't explain it.

The Orchidwiz database shows the hybrid parents as *Den furcatum* x *Den thysiflorum*, but I think the *furcatum* part is wrong. The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) hybrid register at Kew Gardens in London gives the parents as *Den bronckartii* x *Den thysiflorum*.

I think the conflict may arise through an associated species name - *Den amabile*. The name *amabile* (meaning 'lovable') is given as a synonym for both *Den bronckartii* and for *Den furcatum*, but unfortunately for all parties, there are two different orchids published and described as *Den amabile* by different taxonomists at different times.

The *amabile* that is a synonym for *furcatum*, is the one described by Schlechter (in 1910?). The other *Den. amabile* was originally published as *Callista amabilis*, by Louriero in 1790, and is the species that has been known more recently as *Den bronckartii*. Louriero's description of that species even predates the establishment of the genus *Dendrobium* itself, as "Dendrobium" was only established by Olaf Swartz in 1799. As the name *amabile* was published before the name *bronckartii*, **the correct species name today should be *amabile***. Personally however, because of the complication of the two *amabiles*, and because there is so much published information still by the name *bronckartii*, I choose to keep using the name *bronckartii*.

The two "*amabiles*" are completely different species but perhaps their common link to that name has sometimes led to *furcatum* being incorrectly given as a synonym for *bronckartii*.



The real species *Den furcatum* (on left) originates in Sulawesi, an island in Indonesia. It has branching narrow stems with grass-like



leaves, and has an inflorescence of only 2 or 3 white flowers about 3cm in diameter. It is totally unrelated to the group of Dendrobiums (ie section Callista) containing *Den thysiflorum*, *bronckartii*, and *Mousmee*. Just from the look of *Mousmee*, I think it is safe to assume that this *furcatum* can't be one of its parents, and that the real parent is *bronckartii* as specified in the RHS database.

Den bronckartii (below right) is found in Hainan province in China, and near Quang Tri in Vietnam. It is believed to occur at elevations around 1200m, which should make it a relatively cool grower here, but perhaps not frost tolerant in the coldest parts of Sydney. It is a tall grower. Not



all plants are the same, but you might expect canes around 90cm tall. It has a long, 30cm, pendulous flower spike with more than 25, pink and gold 5 to 6cm flowers. I have never seen a live *bronckartii*, but I have seen pictures, and I have seen *Den Mousmee*. I also knew of the legend that *bronckartii* had been lost to cultivation for 50 or 100 years, so when I saw a vendor selling flasks of *bronckartii* at a Sydney orchid fair a few years back, I couldn't resist buying one. I have shared a few plants around amongst friends to ensure their survival, but for me at least, they have been very slow growing. It is most likely just a reflection on my culture of this particular species, but the biggest seedling I still have, after about 6 years, is only about 15cm high. (Note: this article was written in 2015)



The other parent of *Mousmee* is *D. thyrsiflorum* (left) which is widespread in SE Asia in the foothills of the Himalayas from India to Vietnam. It occurs at elevations between 1200 and 2000m, usually in humid forests where it enjoys lots of light and air movement. The slender canes are strongly upright and can be up to 60cm tall. They have a pendent, densely flowered inflorescence, about 30cm long and carrying 30 to 50 flowers. The flowers are white with a gold lip and although they can be 4 - 5cm across they are usually smaller. *Thyrsiflorum* is very similar to its sister species *D. densiflorum* which has a similar 'bunch of grapes' inflorescence. *Densiflorum* however, is a slightly smaller plant and its flowers are gold with a slightly darker gold lip. In early years, *thyrsiflorum* was often referred to as a so called '*D. densiflorum* variety *alba-lutea*' (below).



Getting back to the main subject of *Den Mousmee*. The story goes that a Queensland nursery owner imported two plants in the early 1940's, and that divisions of these have been the sole source of *Mousmee* plants in Australia. Whether this is true I can't say, but it is a good story anyway. Many have suggested that such a lovely hybrid as *Mousmee* must have been remade over and over. However, it seems that *bronckartii* was never widely available and perhaps it was a little more difficult to maintain than some of the other callista group Dendrobiums. Anyway, with *bronckartii* subsequently being "lost", it seems *Mousmee* was never remade until very recently. Like *bronckartii*, *Mousmee* is a tall grower with stems at least 90cm tall when growing well. It has been awarded a number of times over the years. Most awards are for the culture of particular plants rather than for its flower quality but a couple of clones have achieved AM's in different parts of the world. When you read the judges descriptions of the awarded plants however, some seem to be so different that I can't help wondering about the old controversy about whether all the plants

being put around as *Mousmee* are actually *Mousmee*. There has been heated debate here in Sydney for example, regarding a plant labelled *Den Mousmee* "Lloyd Bradford". Now let me state from the beginning that although I doubt that it really is a *Mousmee*, my opinion is worth no more than anyone else's opinion and many experienced growers believe it is *Mousmee*. Unless someone happens to spend a fortune on a complex DNA analysis to prove it one way or the other, we will never know.

Mousmee "Lloyd Bradford" (right) received a cultural award in Sydney in 2003, and as you can see, it sure deserved the award no matter what it is. The judges description says the natural spread of the flowers was 3.7cm wide and the spike length was 15cm, both of which to my mind seem rather small for a *Mousmee*. In addition, the lip form and the overall flower colour don't look like what I know as *Mousmee*.



As part of his research, one Sydney grower sent pictures to the Vacherot & Lecoufle nursery in France asking for their opinion and received the following reply: "Dear Sir, as far as we can see on your pics, the dendrobium called *Den. Mousmée* 'L. Bradford' looks like *Den farmeri-thrysiflorum*. *Den Mousmée* has long spikes and bears flowers with an oblong non-fimbriated orange lip with a white margin. It keeps its leaves for years. *Den farmeri-thrysiflorum* is deciduous and will flower on leafless canes. Flowers are mainly white with very light pink marks. The lip is round and completely orange with no margin".



These photos show close ups of "Lloyd Bradford" (left) and two pictures sent by Vacherot and Lecoufle (right). One is their *Mousmee*, the other is their plant of the other primary hybrid *farmeri-thrysiflorum*. You can see for yourself, the similarity of "Lloyd" to the *farmeri* cross.



So what does all this mean? What next?

The problem with issues like these, is that people tend to get upset about the name of "their" plant being challenged. It is a pity really, because it is no reflection on the owner or the person from which it was obtained. With all the best care in the world by nurseries, orchids have been mislabeled since orchid growers started buying them. This is especially the case with species orchids, many of which came out of the jungle without flowers. Some of my most rare and prized species came to me by accident as something else, and I have long since stopped worrying about an orchid not flowering true to label. Just enjoy it for what it is. It is slightly different with hybrids, but with plants like *Mousmee* which are most likely divisions of divisions of divisions, I am certainly not surprised that labels might have been lost or worn off over the years and plants mixed up. If anyone has a "Lloyd Bradford" or any of the other maybe *Mousmees*, you shouldn't be disappointed in any way. They are highly desirable in their own right, no matter what they

turn out to be. In the meantime, if you are thinking of buying a *Mousmee*, I would suggest you ask for a picture of the flowers from the piece you are buying. There is nothing else that looks like the *Mousmee* flower. The second criteria I would look for is the size of the canes. *Mousmee* should have canes of 90cm or more, and a smaller back division should still be well over 60cm. Sydney has an ideal climate for them, so why not try growing this sensational plant with such a mysterious past? Or we could just enjoy the beautiful flowers that Gavin benches each year.



Coming Up in 2019

- **18 February:** Presentation by Gary Hodder on the ID and control of pests and diseases of orchids
- **18 March at 7.15pm:** Novice Workshop
- **New sales procedure** run by Warleiti Jap
- **A new separate category** for plants benched in Novice Class with the Ernie Page Trophy retained for Open Class
- **27-28 July:** ESOS Show, Flower Power Nursery, 84A Wentworth Ave Mascot
- **5-6 October:** SW Regional Conference
- **11-13th October:** Southern Orchid Spectacular at a new larger venue: Sutherland Basketball Stadium, Waratah Park, Old Princes Highway, Sutherland
- **24-28 July:** APOC 13th Conference, Borneo Convention Centre, Kuching (<https://www.apoc13.com>)



... and that is WHY the chicken crossed the road.



BENCHING PLANTS AT MEETINGS

In order to bench a plant for judging, you must have owned it for at least 6 months.

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

1. Write your name in the left column of the Plant Booking Sheet
2. Record the total number of plants
3. Tick each class column in which you are entering a plant, and the number benched.
4. For each plant you need to complete a Plant Slip showing the plant name and benching class no. as well as your own name and if Open or Novice. Then place it face down on the bench beside your plant. If you are uncertain, please ask the Judge or the President.
5. Please do not water your plants before benching!

- Herbert Chen has created a very professional ESOS web site (www.ESOS.org.au). Members are urged to contribute to it, and to refer to the Discussion Forum for advice, or to sell plants.
- Noelene Weatherby will place a bulk order with Garden City Plastics, so let her know what you need at the next meeting and save \$\$\$.
- **FOR SALE:** ESOS logo purple T-Shirts (\$25) and fertiliser (\$7/bag) and sphagnum moss (\$5/bag).

The Role of Frogs in Orchid Growing

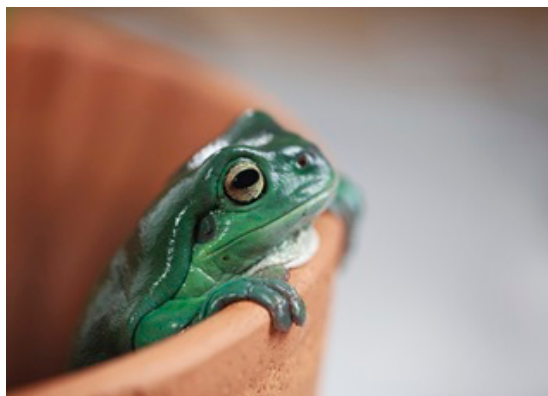
By providing a simple pond and sheltered breeding habitat, it is easy to attract local frogs to your garden, where they will enjoy eating all those insects that may damage your prize winning orchids.

How to Create a Frog Habitat

It is quite easy to set up a suitable habitat for frogs, which have recently declined at an alarming rate in Australia, and need to be protected from extinction. You need to provide a pond with appropriate landscaping, so they have somewhere wet to breed and somewhere safe for tadpoles to develop and mature into frogs. Create a bush setting with plenty of ground cover, grasses, shrubs, and shade to offer protection from the wind and sun, and to provide a safe haven for frogs. Frogs also need water for about three months of the year, during the summer, to allow tadpoles to develop. However your container of water may also attract mosquitoes. It is best to get advice from a local aquarium dealer about the best fish to stock in the pond, to control mosquito larvae. ***Rain is the best source of water, to avoid any risk of contamination. If you must use tap water, let it stand for at least a week to eliminate chlorine.***

How to Grow Tadpoles

It may take from 2 to 12 weeks for tadpoles to develop into frogs, depending on the type of frog, the local temperatures, volume of water, and day length. You will need about a litre of rain water for each tadpole. It is better to collect the rain in an open bucket, rather than use it from the roof. Try to refresh it each week, especially if it goes cloudy. Also check if tadpoles hang vertically from the water surface, as this means they need more oxygen. You may need to add aquatic plants, or an aerator like that used in fish aquariums. It is quite unnecessary to feed tadpoles as they will have all the algae and organic matter they need in a stable pond environment. If you notice them turning on each other you will need to experiment with a food source. Try any well rinsed organic lettuce (not Cos or Iceberg) or small amounts of flaked fish food every 2-3 days. Too much will foul the water and you will have to start all over again. Be sure to provide at least three quarters shade, and don't forget to include a perch, overhanging shrub or floating waterlilies. This will give newly metamorphosed frogs somewhere to go when they leave the water. If new frogs remain in water they will drown as their gills no longer function. Mature frogs will demonstrate their value to orchid growers when they control insects on plants. They will use the shelter of plants, leaves, small rocks, branches and leaf litter to shelter in during the day, while hunting mostly at night.



Do Not Move Frogs or Tadpoles

It is most important to be aware of the risk of spreading diseases to native species if either frogs or tadpoles are collected and moved to a garden habitat. It is highly recommended that you never collect them from somewhere else. If your pond is set up correctly there is nothing you can do to prevent them from arriving!

Control the Spread of Cane Toads

It is very important to know the difference between Australian native frogs eggs and the eggs of the introduced cane toad pest. Frogs lay clumps or spreading mats of eggs, usually attached to a rock or vegetation underwater, or in a frothy foam on the water surface. Cane toads always lay long strings of eggs like small black pearls in a clear jelly tube. If you ever see these anywhere, pull them out of the water and put them in the garbage bin or let them dry out in the sun. You need to be extra vigilant because cane toads can hatch very quickly and disappear (within 24-48 hours after eggs are laid).

FUTURE MEETINGS

Members are advised that the ESOS Show will be held on 27-28 July 2019, and the proposed dates for 2019 meetings and Shows are:

18 March	19 August (AGM)
15 April	16 September
20 May	21 October
17 June	18 November
15 July	16 December (Xmas Party)

ESOS 27-28 July, Flower Power Nursery, Mascot
SOS 11-13 October (NEW VENUE: Sutherland
Basketball Stadium, Waratah Park, Old Princes
Highway, Sutherland)

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