

# Bulletin of the Orchid Society of Canberra, Inc.



GPO Box 612, Canberra, ACT, 2601, Australia

Volume 18, Number 2

March-April 2003

## Regular monthly meetings

Monthly meetings of the Society are held on the first Tuesday of each month (except January) in Room 1, Griffin Centre, Bunda Street, Civic. Meetings commence at 8:00pm with the library and trading table open from 7:30pm.

Tues 4 March: Theo Schutz will speak on Masdevallias. Theo and Jenny grow orchids very well indeed and are most knowledgeable. We will also start our cymbidium growing competition that night (details inside).

Tues 1 April: To be announced.

## Coming events

**8-9 March 2003. Horticultural Society of Canberra Autumn Show.** Full details inside.

**15-16 March 2003. Orchid workshop sponsored by the Sapphire Coast Orchid Society** at Kianniney Cabins. Speakers to include Dennis Diehm on setting up orchid displays and Gary Hart on paphiopedilum species and pleurothallids. Contact Robyn Noel right away if you want to go and haven't signed up already.

**29-30 March 2003. African Violet Gesneriad Society of Canberra Annual Show.** 6 Parkinson St, Weston. Saturday 12-5pm; Sunday 10am-4pm. Admission \$2. Displays, demonstrations, plant & product sales.

**6 April 2003 (Sunday), 11am- late afternoon. Orchid Society of Canberra Workshop and BBQ** at the home of Jane Wright (135 Osburn Drive, Macgregor). We'll start with a look at the fundamentals of slipper orchids using slides from the Australian Orchid Council. BBQ lunch then around noon (please bring your own meat and drink and some salad or dessert to share). After lunch we'll look at the wonderfully handy things you can make with wire, and a few other topics still in the planning. If you have a special interest, please let Jane know asap so it can be organised. All members are welcome. New members are especially encouraged to attend as it gives you opportunity to get to know the other members and to pick their brains in a social environment.

**16-21 September 2003. 16<sup>th</sup> Australian Orchid Conference and Show "Orchids in the Wine State".** Adelaide, SA.

## Orchid Course

Ian Fraser of Environment Tours fame is offering a 2 evening course on orchids (11, 18 March 2003) in which he will, "look at all aspects of these wonderful plants, the most recent group to arise and already the most successful in terms of sheer numbers of species. What makes and orchid, how they arose, their conservation and some secrets about their incredible ecology – stories I wouldn't dreamed of inventing. (Well all right, I'd have dreamed of being able to but couldn't have done so!) It will conclude with a substantial illustrated tour of all the southern Australian orchid groups."

When: Tuesdays, 11, 18 March 6:30-8:30 pm

Where: Canberra Seniors Club, Watson Street, Turner (across Barry Drive from the Environment Centre).

Cost: \$40 including refreshments and GST. Cheques payable to Environment Tours.

Bookings: Essential, asap; as Ian needs 8 to run the course.

Contact him on 6249 1560 (8am-7pm, 7 days) or at [ianf@pcug.org.au](mailto:ianf@pcug.org.au)

## Committee Members

<b>President-</b> Jane Wright	<b>6254 1119</b>
<b>Vice President-</b> Robert Rough	<b>6241 2729</b>
<b>Treasurer-</b> Robyn Noel	<b>6258 5734</b>
<b>Secretary-</b> Brian Leedham	<b>6251 6621</b>
<b>Dean Carriage</b>	<b>6258 7698</b>
<b>Yvonne Day</b>	<b>6297 5162</b>
<b>Ben Wallace</b>	<b>6238 0935</b>
<b>Gerlinde Lenz</b>	<b>6288 7413</b>
<b>John Ryan</b>	<b>6254 3590</b>

## Committee meetings

Now on the WED in the week following the general meeting.

**March:** John Ryan

**April:** Robyn Noel

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## MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING 4 February 2003

Attendance 35 Members, 5 Apologies, 1 Visitor.  
President Jane Wright opened the meeting at 8.02 p m, and welcomed all present.

### Minutes of previous meeting.

The minutes of the meeting of 5 November 2002 were approved on the motion of Robert Rough, seconded by Ben Wallace.

### SECRETARY'S REPORT

Presented by Brian Leedham

*Newsletters:* Eurobodalla (Oct); Kiama (Nov); OSNSW (Nov & Jan); Gosford (Nov & Jan); Sapphire Coast (Nov & Jan); ANOS Vic. (Nov & Dec); Miriam Ann Orchids (Dec/Jan); Albury/Wodonga (Dec); Wagga (Nov); Campbelltown (Feb).

*Catalogues:* The Orchid Oasis (20002/3); Florafest (Specials Catalogue).

*Publications:* The Orchid Review RHS (Nov/Dec & Jan-Feb); Orchids AOS (Sept/Oct & Nov); Orchid

Emporium (2003 booklist); Orchid Digest (Oct/Dec);

Orchids Australia (Dec); The Alpine Gardener (Dec)

*Correspondence:* Hort. Society (Receipt for donation of \$45; Aust. Orchid Review (subs notice); The Orchid Review (sub. Notice); Bank Statement (Nov / Jan); Deans Trophy Centre (invoice); Easy Orchids (re Borneo tour); COMSTAT (invoice and discount voucher); AOC (Minutes of Council meeting); African Violet Society (re Show 29/30 March); OSNSW (re judges for 2003; Open Garden Scheme (schedule for 20003); C/wealth Bank (re transaction fees); Orchids in the Wine State (request for sponsorships); Sapphire Coast (re bi-annual workshop 15/16 March).

The Secretary's report was accepted on the motion of Sandra Corbett, seconded by Lynne Phelan.

### TREASURER'S REPORT

Presented by Robyn Noel. Balance at bank was \$7461.26.

The Treasurer's report was accepted on the motion of Mark Fraser, seconded by Bob Evans.

### OTHER BUSINESS

#### *Horticultural Society*

President Jane reminded members that the Horticultural Society's Autumn Show would be held on 8/9 March, and urged all members with orchids in flower to consider benching them at this Show.

#### *Sapphire Coast Workshop*

Jane also reminded members that the Sapphire Coast Workshop would be held over the weekend 15/16 March at the Kianniny Cabins, and asked all members intending to attend to register with Robyn Noel.

#### *Gunther Anglberger's illness*

Ray Palmer advised members that Gunther's health had deteriorated rather rapidly late last year. He has had a successful operation for a brain tumour, and is now undergoing radiation therapy. Members unanimously wished Gunther a speedy recovery to full health, and arranged for a card to be sent expressing our very best wishes.

### LIBRARY

Laurie Woods advised members that the Orchid Review has listed the new Cattleya hybrid named after former member Lila Rose, who past away from cancer last year.

Laurie also pleaded with members who have books on outstanding loan since last year to return them as soon as possible so that the library inventory can be completed.

### GENERAL BUSINESS

In the absence of a guest speaker (Ted Gregory was - understandably - not prepared to leave his orchids for any length of time whilst drought conditions continued) it was arranged that we would have a general discussion on how to handle our own orchid collections during stressful times such as those existing at present.

Theo Schutz led off with a description of how he is dealing with severe drought conditions at the coast. He is only permitted to water for half an hour on alternate days (on the odds and evens approach now familiar to Canberrans). He has over 3000 orchids, so he has split his system into two, and waters each half every four days. He is able to water with a bucket or watering can at any time, so he is able to top up any particular plant needing extra water as required, although he still has problems with smaller plants which dry out quickly. He also puts plants down lower to take advantage of more shade, and turns his fans off overnight to reduce evaporation, bearing in mind that they must go on again by day to stop the possibility of fungus developing on the plants. He also keeps a bucket of water in the glasshouse so that he can plunge any plant which appears too dry. There is talk of going to Stage 4 restrictions soon, and that will be extremely difficult.

Ben Wallace advised that he spent all day on 18 January (the firestorm day) watering lightly over the top of his plants. Although he has a bore, the water has too much iron, and could not be used on his orchids. He will have to purchase 3000 gallons of water next week for both drinking water and for watering his orchids.

Mark Fraser advised that he and Sandra were without power for 4 days, which was quite a problem because the fans did not work, and the glasshouses reached 45 degrees, but he only lost one plant. The plants in the glasshouses survived with morning and evening watering.

Jane Wright watered at night so that plants could take up moisture overnight. Mark noted that this would be good for CAM plants. Ben agreed that watering CAM plants at night helped keep the humidity high at night so the stomates would open so that they could take up carbon dioxide; he noted that CAM plants can take up moisture at any time through their roots, and stomates react quite independently of what is happening at the plant's roots.

Other suggestions made were :

Put plants under the house where it is cooler (Sheila Cudmore). Hang moist hessian around the plants to create a Coolgardie safe concept, and add extra shade cloth (Laurie Woods). Use overhead misters (John Ryan). Use expanded peat moss in trays under seedlings and small plants to increase humidity (Robert Rough). Bob Evans said that he has an adjustable watering program throughout the year (presently every second day) depending on the weather.

**Raffle :** Won by Bob Evans, Norma Bush (2), Theo Schutz, Greg Smith.

**Door Prize :** Ben Wallace, Brian Leedham

The meeting closed at 9.46 p m.

## Horticultural Society Show

Lancaster Hall at Wesley Uniting Church, Fitzroy Street between National and Dominion Circuits, Griffith. The shows are open to the public on Saturday from noon-5pm and on Sunday from 11:30-4pm.

Members are encouraged to enter their orchids in the classes organized specifically for the Orchid Society. The procedure for entering plants is:

1. By 8pm on the Thursday preceding the show, phone Mrs. Linn Doyle (02) 6231 7755, and tell her how many plants of each category you plan to enter. Note that you must have owned and been in possession of the orchids for at least 6 months.
2. Bring your plants to Lancaster Hall for staging on Friday (6-10pm) or Saturday (7:30-10am). There is a 10 cent charge for each entry.
3. If you win any prizes, your winnings (1<sup>st</sup> \$1, 2<sup>nd</sup> 50c) must be collected before the show closes. Uncollected money will revert to the Horticultural Society.
4. Collect your plants immediately the show closes at 4pm on Sunday. The speed at which this Society can pull down a show is awesome!

### Autumn Show 8-9 March 2003

#### Orchids OPEN SECTION

##### Cattleya Alliance

- 154 Cattleya species
- 155 Hybrid - standard
- 156 Hybrid – intermediate

Best specimen plant from classes 154 – 156

##### Paphiopedilum

- 157 Species
- 158 Hybrid

Best specimen plant from classes 157-158

##### Vandaceous Alliance

- 159 Species
- 160 *Phalaenopsis* hybrids
- 161 *Vanda & Ascocenda* hybrids

Best specimen plant from classes 159-161

##### Oncidium Alliance

- 162 *Oncidium* species
- 163 *Oncidium* hybrid
- 164 *Odontoglossum* alliance species
- 165 *Odontoglossum* alliance hybrid
- 166 Other *Oncidium* alliance species

Best specimen plant from classes 162-166

##### Pleurothallid Alliance

- 167 *Masdevallia* species
- 168 Other Pleurothallid species
- 169 Hybrid including *Masdevallia vietchiana*
- 170 Hybrid not including *Masdevallia vietchiana*

Best specimen plant from classes 167-170

##### Orchid not otherwise specified

(classes 171 & 172 may be subdivided at the discretion of the judges)

- 171 Species
- 172 Hybrid

Best specimen plant from classes 171 & 172

#### NOVICE SECTION

- 173 Cattleya Alliance
- 174 Paphiopedilum
- 175 Vandaceous Alliance
- 176 Oncidium Alliance
- 177 Pleurothallid Alliance
- 178 Orchid not otherwise specified

Best specimen plant from classes 173-178

#### MAJOR PRIZES

All entries in the orchid sections will be considered for the major prizes.

##### *Champion Orchid of the Show*

The Laurence Woods Perpetual Trophy (to be held for one year), \$20 plus a ribbon.

##### *Reserve Champion Orchid*

The Lila Rose Perpetual Trophy plus \$15 and a ribbon.

##### *Champion Specimen Orchid*

\$10 plus a ribbon.

## Cymbidium Growing Competition

Trevor Hughes has most kindly donated 40 seedlings of *Cymbidium* Margaret Thatcher 'Perfection' for a members' growing competition. At the March meeting, those that wish to participate will be given 1 plant, a pot and a label. We will record who has a plant. Then, at the November meeting, all plants will be brought in for inspection and judging of progress by Trevor. This will continue at intervals until we get the first flowering.



Margaret Thatcher 'Perfection'

*Cymbidium* Margaret Thatcher 'Perfection' is a standard cymbidium, with large yellow flowers and very attractive broad lip with a red border

## Orchid Web Sites - Thanks

Many thanks to John Ryan for sharing his find on the Genus *Sophranitis* on the internet. It made me drool to see such beautifully cultivated gems. Another site worth visiting is a virtual orchid magazine from Brazil. (There's a version in English.) If you are growing any Brazilian orchids (isn't everyone?) you can find it at <http://www.delfinadearaujo.com>. It has some free goodies if you want an orchid screensaver or wallpaper. The current issue, #19, contains a good description of the ecosystems and habitats of Brazilian orchids. It shows very clearly the cultural needs of rupicolous laelias. There are some interesting articles in the back issues which are also accessible. Some of the English translation is a bit wobbly but it's easy to read and the site is a breeze to navigate.

Lynne Phelan

## Orchid Web Sites

Last month I provided details of an outstanding web site for the genus *Sophranitis*. This month it is *Cattleya walkeriana* and the closely allied species *Cattleya nobilior*. You will note that Japan seems to figure highly in the better web sites.



Try these web sites:

<http://www.orchid.or.jp/orchid/people/walke/index.html>  
<http://www.orchid.or.jp/orchid/society/acw/>  
<http://www.biorchids.com.br/walkerianas.htm>

John Ryan

## Journal Reviews

### Orchids Australia - December 2002

Kevin Butler of Ezi-Grow Orchids describes seven selected **hybrid cymbidiums**, which have red, brown and purple tone parents producing interesting labellums. Peter Taylor continues his "selected species series" with a report on *Gastrochilus bellinus* native to parts of Burma and Thailand. This species is an intermediate to warm grower: it is space efficient and has fairly accommodating cultural requirements. Peter believes it should be on the want-list for species enthusiasts.

This issue provides an overview of some **newly discovered orchid species**, including a terrestrial orchid from the Northern Territory.

Darwin orchid grower Des Pike describes the construction and use of **host tubes** made from plastic roof guttering mesh.

More than 200 colour photographs of **Western Australia's sun orchids** (*Thelymitra* sp.) are now available on the Web.

Peter Chiles discusses **bulb rot in cymbidiums** and Noel Grundon concludes his views on **the role of water** in the life of orchids. Some guidelines **how to grow *Coelogyne cristata*** successfully are given by a few Tasmanian orchid growers.

### Australian Orchid Review - December 2002 / January 2003

The lead article covers part two of Gary Yong Gee's essay on the genus **Aerides**. Colour photographs of ten species and their various colour variations are shown.

***Vanda sanderiana*** has long been coveted by collectors and hybridises and is considered one of the world's most handsome orchids. Robert Fuchs of R.F.Orchids-Florida describes and illustrates this species influence in *Vanda* breeding.

Ronald Boyd shows how to make your own **metal orchid stakes**.

If you **cannot** get one or more of your **orchids to flower** then read Brian Milligan's notes on this subject.

The **Cymbidium Section** of this issue reports on the **highlights of the Orchid Festivals** staged late last year in Ararat and at the Glen Waverley Shopping Centre with photographs of the various champion class winners and awarded plants.

The first FCC/ AOC given to a cymbidium in 18 years was awarded to **Cym. Gladys Whitesell "Heavenly"**. This hybrid cymbid is heavily influenced by the inclusion of our native *Cym. madidum*.

Reviews of the **Cym. Red Beauty hybrids** and the hybrids produced by Wondabah Orchids are included.

### Orchids (American Orchid Soc.) - November 2002

A new species of **Sobralia** from Peru is discussed and two others new to Peru are documented.

Watercolour **botanical paintings** are the realm of Carol Woodin. This issue shows some of her work relating to orchid species.

***Cattleya violacea*** has the widest distribution of the bifoliate *cattleyas*. Its habitat together with growing conditions is discussed.

***Ornithocephalus montealegreae*** from Costa Rica is described, where in the last decade 190 new orchid species were discovered.

**Establishing an indoor grow room** is an alternative to growing orchids in an outdoor greenhouse. Proper lighting and a vapour barrier are pre-requisites for such a venture. Robert St.-Jean's, who has been growing orchids under artificial light for more than 20 years in Ottawa- Canada, provides information on such a controlled environment.

### The Alpine Gardener - September 2002

This issue is a China Special. Describing some of the outstanding flora of the northern Sichuan and the Qinghai and Gansu provinces. One article deals entirely with the orchid wealth of these provinces.

Hans de Vries

## Cymbidium species – Month by month\*

I have often heard cymbidium hybridisers claim that they will soon have cymbidium hybrids that will flower all year round. But this is possible now with a collection of cymbidium species, so where is the big change? All the plants I describe in this article are ones that I grow and that are available in Victoria. Unless stated otherwise, they will grow and flower without heat in Melbourne.

In January and February not many orchids are in flower, but several of the thick-leaved cymbidiums are usually in bloom. One is *Cymbidium aloifolium*, the type species for the genus, which means that it was the first cymbidium described. It is appropriate that it should be the first top flower, together with *Cymbidium finlaysonianum*, *Cym. bicolor*, *Cym. atropurpureum* and *Cym. rectum*. All these species require heat and so we grow them with our cattleya. Their need for heat is not surprising because they grow in the lowlands of Asia, often in full sunshine. However, *Cym. suavissimum*, which can be grown without heat, also flowers at this time. It is closely related to *Cym. floribundum* but has upright spikes and produces its flowers about three months later than *Cym. floribundum*.

In March and April *Cym. lancifolium* comes into flower. Also known as *Cym. aspidistریفolium*, it forms a small plant with tapered leaves. Growing naturally in leaf litter on the forest floor, each bulb develops on an ascending rhizome so the plant is continually raised above the accumulation of leaf litter. Due to the altitude at which this plant grows in nature (up to 2300 m) it will grow cold in Melbourne.

In April and May, a number of cymbidium species are in flower. One of my favourites is *Cym. dayanum*, which grows cold and is often still in bloom in July. It makes a good specimen in a 125-150 mm pot and produces a series of spikes over several months. Another species that flowers in April and May is *Cym. erythraeum*, its smaller plant size and flowers resembling those of *Cym. iridioides*.

The distinctive bell-shaped flowers of *Cym. elegans* appear in May and June. *Cym. erythrostylum* also flowers at this time – it's an outstanding species with white flowers and makes a charming specimen plant. It was an important parent in the breeding of many early-flowering standard cymbidiums.

In July, *Cym. tracyanum* begins to flower and continues to produce its twisted, reflexed and highly scented flowers in light and dark brown shades until August. Its flowers have about every fault the judges would penalise in a cymbidium hybrid (but it is nevertheless a very attractive and desirable plant – editor). *Cym. iridioides* (often known as *Cym. giganteum*) also flowers at this time. It is sometimes confused with *Cym. tracyanum*, although the plant and flowers are quite different.

Come August and September, one of the gems of the orchid world, *Cym. hookerianum*, often known by its

synonym *Cym. grandiflorum*, comes into flower. It has celery-green foliage and large green flowers.

Unfortunately, many plants labelled as *Cym. hookerianum* are actually early hybrids, but once you have seen the real thing, the impostors are easy to pick. *Cym. insigne* flowers in September. Its flowers vary from pink to white; you can easily recognise its influence in many early standard cymbidium hybrids.

In September and October we see the flowers of *Cym. sanderae*, also called *Cym. parishii*, although this is now thought to be a different species. *Cym. sanderae* has large spikes of cream-white flowers with heavily marked lips.

From September through November you can see *Cym. lowianum* in flower. This is a large plant with long, arching spikes carrying many flowers, which are usually green, although a yellow form has been found. I have purchased many plants and later discarded them because of questionable leaf markings. Finding disease-free plants can be difficult because plants of this species have been in cultivation for many years.

In October we have *Cym. floribundum* in flower. Also known as *Cym. pumilum*, this miniature species has been used to breed most miniature and intermediate cymbidium hybrids. Because of its small plant and small flowers, it makes an excellent specimen plant. At this time of year, *Cym. devonianum* also flowers. It is also used to produce miniature and intermediate hybrids. It has large strap-like leaves and produces small flowers on pendulous spikes. In my experience, *Cym. devonianum* grows best with a little heat in winter.

During November and December, the Australian cymbidium species, *Cym. suave*, *Cym. madidum* and *Cym. canaliculatum* begin to flower. Only the first of these grows well in Melbourne without winter heat.

As you have seen, a collection of species cymbidiums will provide flowers all year round. With the exception of January and February, you can do this with cool-growing plants. All of the species mentioned have been collected by us over the last few years and are not uncommon. I have not mentioned those species that we have as yet to grow or flower successfully.

Stephen Early.

\*Reproduced with thanks from, "Orchids in Victoria" edited by Alan Hope and Brian Milligan. Melbourne 2001.

[Editor's note: These same species often flower a month or later in Canberra than in Melbourne]

The photos on the following page are reproduced with thanks from the Internet Orchid Photo Encyclopedia compiled by Jay Pfahl.

<http://www.orchidspecies.com/index.htm> (ed)



*Cymbidium aloifolium*



*Cymbidium insigne*



*Cymbidium elegans*



*Cymbidium madidum*



*Cymbidium lancifolium*

### Popular Vote February 2003

Cattleya species	<i>Sophranitis mantigueras</i>	Don Chesher
Cattleya hybrid – miniature	<i>Laelia Maronii</i> (= <i>L. anceps</i> 'alba' x <i>L. rubescens alba oculata</i> )	Robert Rough
Cattleya hybrid – intermediate	<i>Potinara</i> Hoku Gem 'Freckles'	Brian Leedham
Exotic Dendrobium	<i>Dendrobium</i> Singapore White	Bob Evans
Oncidium species	<i>Oncidium carthagense</i>	Bob Evans
Oncidium hybrid	Burrageara Nelly Isler	Brian Phelan
Paphiopedilum species	<i>Paphiopedilum parishii</i>	Jane Wright
Paphiopedilum hybrid	<i>Paphiopedilum robelenii</i> x <i>lowii</i>	Ben Wallace
Coelogyne species	<i>Coelogyne speciosum</i> subsp <i>speciosum</i>	Don Chesher
Any other species	<i>Gastrorchis humboltii</i>	Jane Wright
Orchid of the Night	<i>Gastrorchis humboltii</i>	Jane Wright
Judges' Choice	<i>Paphiopedilum robelenii</i> x <i>lowii</i>	Ben Wallace

#### Contributions to the Bulletin:

All contributions welcome! Hand written, typed and computer generated material all ok and will be included as soon as possible subject to space. Contributions preferably by 14th of Jan, Feb, April, June, August, October.

#### Contributions to the editor, Jane Wright

**In person:** At meetings, or if I am not there to Robyn Noel or Brian Leedham.

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