

Bulletin of the Orchid Society of Canberra, Inc.

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ABN 34 762 780 850

Petalochilus fuscatus



Volume 30, Number 2

Mar-Apr 2015

Regular monthly meetings:

Monthly meetings of the Society are held on the **first Wednesday** of each month (except January) at the **Seventh Day Adventist Church, corner Gould and Macleay St. Turner**. Meetings commence at 8:00pm with the library and sales table open from 7:30pm.

Meeting Program

March: - Mark Fraser and Sandra Corbett -
Orchids in Japan

April: - TBA

Upcoming Events

Orchid Workshop: hosted by the Eurobodalla Orchid Club – 21 & 22 March 2015, Kyla Hall, Tuross Head

Connect and Participate Expo: Saturday 28 March 2015, 11am – 4pm. Old Bus Depot Markets, 21 Wentworth Avenue, Kingston.

Castle Hill International Orchid Fair: Friday 17th & Saturday 18th April, Castle Hill Showground

Canberra Horticultural Society Events

Autumn Flower Show: 7 & 8 March, Wesley Centre, 20 National Circuit Forrest

For further information and the show schedule, visit the Horticultural Society's website: www.hsoc.org.au



February Orchid of the Night & Judges' Choice Species:
Paphiopedilum dianthum, grown by David Judge

Committee Members

President:	<u>Bill Ferris</u>	6297 5635
Vice President:	<u>Karen Groeneveld</u>	6299 7080
Treasurer:	<u>Bob Forrester</u>	6231 0203
Secretary:	<u>Peter Coyne</u>	6251 7660
Committee:	<u>Mark Clements</u>	0417 471 917
	<u>Zoe Groeneveld</u>	6299 7080
	<u>Jacquie Bannerman</u>	6154 7178

Committee meetings:

3 March: Bill Ferris

31 March:

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From the President

As summer draws to a close we start to think about preparing for the coming colder weather and the possibility of a frost around Anzac Day. Otherwise this summer seems to have been favourable for orchid growing – few hot, very low humidity and windy days. The speciosums and kingianums have put on substantial growth. I have been standing speciosums in shallow trays of water which they seem to have enjoyed but they will be taken out of the trays in the cold weather. April is also the time to cut back on watering and no fertilising of various orchids, particularly the soft cane dendrobiums.

I am sure Mark Clements' presentation at the February meeting will encourage any members going to Europe during our winter to keep their eyes open for orchids. The European terrestrial orchids have a particular appeal. It was also interesting to hear how the Swiss manage their land by rotating livestock grazing areas and compensating farmers for not grazing those areas. This helps to maintain an environment favourable to their terrestrial orchids and other flora. Maybe we could learn something from this.

Mark has also suggested it could be worth a trip to Western Australia in the spring (not during our show of course), particularly the areas badly affected by the recent bushfires. While we sympathise with people who have lost property in the fires, such fires have been occurring for millennia and it is well known that some of our terrestrial orchids only appear after bushfire. Typically these fires occur in the hot dry summer, not spring and autumn when controlled burns are undertaken. Tubers can lie dormant in the ground for many years in the absence of major fire. This is also why it is near impossible to domesticate some of these species, although wouldn't it be fun to try if only one could easily get material legally and sustainably.

This Bulletin includes an article by Mark Fraser on de-flasking which hopefully will be of interest to novice growers and a note from Lance Sanders on his experience with flasks and compots. I admit I have had similar experiences to Lance.

Also included is the orchid schedule for the Canberra Horticultural Society show on 7-8 March. Members are encouraged to enter any plants they have in flower.

Advance notice: Membership Fees

An early reminder that our 2015-16 financial year starts on 1 May and the AGM is on 3 June. Membership fees for next year are the same as this year, except that full time student membership is the same as for juniors, i.e.

Single membership is \$25, Joint membership is \$30, juniors and full-time students \$5.

Payments may be made by direct deposit to the society account:

Name: Orchid Society of Canberra Inc

BSB: 062913

Number: 28036165

or at a meeting or posting a cheque or postal note. If by direct deposit, please clearly identify your name.

Connect and Participate Expo

The Canberra Orchid Society will again be operating a stall at this year's Connect and Participate Expo to be held on Saturday 28 March 11am – 4pm at the Old Bus Depot Markets, Kingston. This is an opportunity to show off our society to the public and perhaps invite new members to join. We will need members willing to man the stall on the day and answer questions – anyone who wishes to volunteer some of their time (even an hour or two), please contact Jacque Bannerman on 6154 7178.



February Judges' Choice Specimen: *Gongora galeata*,
grown by Bill Ferris

De-flasking for Beginners

De-flasking orchid seedlings or mericlones from the sterile agar medium is a straightforward process. Most growers, with a few simple preparations, can successfully extract the plantlets: growing them on may be a little more demanding, but the de-flasking process is very easy.

You should be aware of the cultural demands of the seedlings you are buying! This is particularly the case where you are dealing with terrestrials and deciduous orchids (such as *Catasetums*), which often have clearly defined growth and dormancy cycles. Failure to be conscious of these cycles can jeopardize the success of the de-flasking operation, so it is best to do some background research first.

If you have the opportunity to examine the flasks before purchase, make sure that the seedlings are in active growth, and with actively developing root tips. Seedlings that have exhausted the nutrient supply of their medium are considerably harder to establish, as are seedlings that are elongated and leggy from insufficient light. Another thing to watch out for is fungal disease: any flask showing the presence of fungal infection or mould should be rejected.

If you are buying your flask from a mail order vendor, use a reputable company. If you are uncertain, ask other more experienced members of the Society who will be able to advise and assist you. Your flask(s) can be temporarily stored in the home in a shaded position with a stable temperature regime. We have found near an East facing window works well. In some cases the plantlets may need to grow on inside the flask for some time, in others they may be ready (or even overdue) for immediate de-flasking.

Necessary Equipment

To go about deflasking you will need:

Newspaper

A hammer

Pliers (optional)

A bowl of lukewarm water

Paper Towel

A bowl of Envy® or similar anti-transpirant polymer (see notes below)

Pots

Sphagnum moss

Tags and marker pen

Once you have assembled all these basics you are ready to proceed!

Breaking the flask

There are a number of ways of doing this. My preferred method is to wrap the flask in a couple of sheets of newspaper and the gently tap the flask with a hammer, against a solid wooden or concrete surface, increasing in pressure until the flask cracks. This process is much easier with laboratory grade glassware, rather than the whiskey bottles and jars favoured by some laboratories. When breaking a flask with irregular wall thickness greater care needs to be taken to avoid damaging the plantlets.

Having broken the flask, remove the plantlets in their agar medium, and wash them in lukewarm water to remove all traces of the agar, and disentangle them. Once the plantlets are clean and disentangled lay them out on paper towel to dry. Discard the plantlets that have barely progressed beyond the protocorm stage. As a general rule I will discard about half of the fully formed seedlings, disposing of those with the weakest body growth and/or root growth. Whilst it is possible to nurse these along, it is often not worth it, especially if they prove to have some form of genetic damage.

An alternative method, where a wide mouthed container has been used, is to use lukewarm water to gently wash the seedlings out of the agar medium. This can be quite an effective system if the mouth of the container is wide enough to avoid damaging the roots and leaves of the plantlets. The plantlets can then be rinsed in warm water, and dried on paper towel.

(Optional step)

Where you are de-flasking cooler growing *Oncidiinae*, soft leaved *Dendrobiinae*, *Pleurothallidinae* or other soft leaved species or hybrids it may be best to treat the plantlets with an anti-transpirant polymer such as Envy® or a similar product. This seems to help some of these more fragile species settle. Dissolve the liquid in a suitable bowl or bucket, and dip the plantlets (foliage only) in the liquid. Do not allow the liquid to come into contact with the roots. After dipping the plantlets allow them to dry on fresh paper towel.

When the plantlets have dried, sort them in order of size. If the largest are of sufficient size you may want to pot them up individually into small tubes, using fresh sphagnum moss. The other seedlings can be placed into community pots (multiple seedlings per pot), making sure space is maintained between the seedling roots and foliage. Remember to tag and label your pots.

During the initial stages care will need to be taken in ensuring even watering, however, if the seedlings are in good condition they should rapidly adapt to their

new environment, and be ready for re-potting in a few months.

I have found this system to work well for a variety of orchids, including *Dendrobium aggregatum*, the *Huntleya* alliance, *Lepanthes saltatrix*, *Phalaenopsis* hybrids, *Renantherella hepatica*, *Trichopilia tortilis*, as well as *Vanda* species and hybrids.

Where the hybrids are very complex, or as a result of crossing relatively unrelated parents, the seedlings may be more fragile. I had very little success with a flask of *Vandaenopsis* (*Vanda* x *Phalaenopsis*). I have also found that in general plantlets with harder or succulent foliage seem easier to manage than softer or fleshy leafed plants.

Mark Fraser
February 2015

Cattleya and Dendrobium seedlings culture **– a cooperative effort**

At our February 2015 meeting, Mark Fraser brought along some *Cattleya* and *Dendrobium* seedlings in community pots, and provided a demonstration of dividing and repotting. After repotting, members were invited to take a plant as a gift from the Society. The history of this activity goes back to June 2013 when my daughter brought back some *Cattleya* and *Dendrobium* flasks from Denmark when she and her husband visited Australia. After getting cultural advice from Jane Wright, I de-flasked the plants and set up community pots. I had intended to donate the plants to the Society once they had grown out a bit, but Jane suggested that perhaps some members with experience in growing these genera might be happy to look after some of the pots, as some protection against loss of all of them if I had a major calamity. Several members kindly agreed to help, and I distributed the compots at our September meeting. Jane's suggestion to spread the pots around was brilliant; other members were very successful, I was very unsuccessful. In addition to thanking Jane for her stroke of genius, I also want to thank those members who generously took pots to nurture over the last 18 months or so; Don Cheshire, Mark Clements, Mark Fraser, Karen Groeneveld, Jane Wright and Robert Rough. Thank you everyone.

Now we wait to see what the flowers look like.

Lance Sanders
11 February 2015

To Divide or NOT?

This is a question we all encounter. When an orchid has grown to the point where there is no space between the pseudobulbs and the pot edge or, in the case of plastic pots, the pot is being pushed out of shape, the initial reaction is to say "this plant needs dividing/re-potting". But is that necessarily the case? I suggest there are at least two considerations:

- What orchid is it, and
- Do you want to (and have room to) grow the plant into a specimen.

Some orchids cannot be contained to the pot or mount for any extended length of time and there is often little option other than divide/re-pot (or re-mount). This is typically the case with *Bulbophyllums*, *Laelias*, *Calanthe* and other orchids that like to escape the pot.

Other orchids can be left in the same pot for many years. The pseudobulbs will fill the pot then grow on top of existing bulbs, with their roots growing between the older bulbs to get to the potting mix or even growing in any spent bulbs. In growing a plant to specimen standard you need to be aware that the potting mix will probably collapse or be used up over the years. There is then a need to fertilise more heavily and appropriately, for example be careful not to fertilise soft-cane dendrobiums in late summer through to spring until flowers are beginning to appear.

While specimen plants will produce a spectacular flower display, there is the problem that some breeds will become large and very heavy, especially the speciosums. It becomes quite an effort to get these plants to club meetings and shows.

The *Gongora galeata* that was Specimen of the Night in February (see photo) has been in the same pot for about eight years. Some of the pseudobulbs are about 5 deep but it still flowers well.

Bill Ferris
February 2015



February Judges' Choice Hybrid: *Oncidium* Speckled Spire 'Wisp', grown by Bill Ferris

General Meeting Minutes 4 February 2015

Members Present: 31
Apologies: 5
Visitors: none

President Bill opened the meeting with an outline of the program for the evening.

Speaker: Mark Clements delivered a talk on European Orchids illustrated not just with photos of a diversity of orchid species but also with superb scenic shots which complemented those of Karen Groeneveld at last year's February meeting. On the basis of their photos the UK and Europe look a highly desirable destination. Mark's trip began with visits to Hatfield House and Whitby, followed by the Scarborough cliffs with seabird breeding colonies including puffins. Then growing beside a road he found the common spotted orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* and the bee orchid *Ophrys apifera*, while the pyramidal orchid *Anacamptis pyramidalis* was growing on banks beside a railway bridge. The common twayblade *Neottia ovata* was growing beside Hadrian's Wall. He and Ann found more *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* in the Lakes District. Their visit to the Orkneys looked especially enticing with spectacular cliffs accommodating breeding seabirds including puffins, the World Heritage listed neolithic Ring of Brodgar and the Neolithic village Skara Brae. And the northern marsh orchid *Dactylorhiza purpurella*. The endemic *Primula scotica* was found near the Yesnaby cliffs. Back in mainland Scotland the west coast scenery was wonderful, and at Skye *D. fuchsii* was seen again.

In Switzerland some cantons adopt the effective management approach of paying landowners not to mow their meadows too frequently. Mark found seven species of orchids in one such meadow, including two species of *Epipactis*. Orchids seen in Switzerland were *Dactylorhiza maculata*, *D. viridis*, *Gymnadenia frivaldii*, *G. conopsea*, *G. nigra*, *Epipactis atrorubens*, *E. palustris*, *E. rubens*, *Pseudorchis albida*, *Neottia ovata*, *Traunsteinera globosa*, *Goodyera repens*, and *Corallorhiza trifida*. The wildflowers in the vicinity of the Matterhorn were fabulous, with spectacular scenery. Grindelwald and Jungfrau were other spectacular locations. Most European orchids grow only on limestone.

Secretary's Report: (since 1 Jan – most not read out)

Bulletins	Batemans Bay Orchid & Foliage Society newsletter – February
	Horticultural Society of Canberra bulletin – February to April
	Campbelltown and Districts Orchid Society newsletter – January
	Sapphire Coast Orchid Club newsletter – January
	Eurobodalla Orchid Club newsletter – February
	ANOS Council News – December
	ANOS Victoria Group bulletin – February
	OSNSW Orchid News – January
Magazines	Australian Orchid Review – February/March
Other mail	Burbank Orchid Nursery catalogue – January
	Bank statement
	Invoice from printer
	2015 AOC/TQOC Show Schedules: Orchids and foliage plants, registration form for the conference, newsletter, and request for sponsorship
	Milton-Ulladulla 2015 show dates – July and September
	Promo for Orchids Out West orchid fair in May
	Promos for open garden "Shirley" at Nimmitabel and ACT Plant Fair at Lanyon
	Notice of Manly Warringah Orchid Society Auction Sunday 29th March, 2015
	Request for speaker/demonstrator for Carey Gardens Aged Care Facility
	New book from National Library: Little Book of Australian Orchids for review
	Burbank Orchid Nursery January catalogue

Treasurer's report: Moved by Ben Walcott, seconded Jane Wright – adopted.

After supper Mark Fraser demonstrated potting up plants from community pots using *Cattleya* and *Dendrobium* plants generously donated by Lance

Sanders. Everyone received a freshly potted plant to take home.

Bill reminded members that the society will have a stand at the Connect and Participate Expo on 28 March. Volunteers will be needed and will be sought at the March meeting. Jacquie Bannerman is coordinating.

Raffle Prizes: Therese Bourke, Mark Clements, Trish Stewart-Richardson, Geoff Dyne

Lucky door prize: Heather McGregor

Sales Table (Members Only)

Pots Fertilizer Wire products	Bill Ferris	6297 5635
Shirts	Bob Forrester	6231 0203
25 th Anniversary glasses	Ben Walcott	6161 2742
Bark	David Judge	
Orchid Mate	Laurie Woods	0412 632 046 (or 6258 6187 after 8.00pm)

Orchids of Europe

For those who missed Mark's talk at the February meeting, here are some of the beautiful wild orchids he and Anne saw on their trip to Europe:



Dactylorhiza fuchsii, Cambria, UK



Dactylorhiza majalis, Grindelwald, Switzerland



Dactylorhiza viride, Zermatt, Switzerland



Epipactis atrorubens, Grindelwald, Switzerland



Gymnadenia (Nigratella) nigra, Zermatt, Switzerland



Gymnadenia conopsea, Zermatt, Switzerland

**Spring Exhibition & Rose Show
November 2014**

Class		Place	Plant	Owner
65	<i>Cymbidium</i>	1	<i>Cymbidium</i> Miss Muffet	Joan Powell
		2	<i>Cymbidium lowianum</i>	Bob Bush
67	Intermediate <i>Cattleya</i> alliance	1	<i>Cattleya</i> Iwanagara 'Apple Blossom'	Rob Rough
		2	<i>Laeliocattleya</i> Trick or Treat 'Orange Magic'	Bill Ferris
68	Miniature <i>Cattleya</i> alliance	1	<i>Laeliocattleya</i> Trick or Treat 'Orange Beauty'	Rob Rough
		2	<i>Epiphronitis</i> Veichii	Bob Bush
69	<i>Cattleya</i> alliance species	1	<i>Laelia milleri</i>	Bob Bush
		2	<i>Cattleya intermedia</i> 'Aranbeem'	Rob Rough
70	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> alliance species	1	<i>Paphiopedilum rothschildianum</i> '266' X <i>rothschildianum</i> 'Red'	David Judge
71	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> alliance hybrid	1	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> 'Susan Booth'	David Judge
		2	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> 'William Amber'	David Judge
73	<i>Oncidium</i> alliance	1	<i>Oncidium</i> Edwallii	Bob Bush
		2	<i>Colmanara</i> Wildcat	Rob Rough
74	Native orchid	1	<i>Sarcochilus olivaceous</i>	Bill Ferris
		2	<i>Peristerchilus</i> Olive Grace	Bill Ferris
76	Pleurothallid hybrid	1	<i>Masdevallia</i> Machu Pichu	Bob Bush
		2	<i>Masdevallia</i> Pichincha	Bob Bush
77	Any other orchid species	1	<i>Bulbophyllum plumatum</i>	Mark Fraser and Sandra Corbett
		2	<i>Epipactis gigantea</i>	Jane Wright
Champion Orchid			<i>Paphiopedilum</i> 'Susan Booth'	David Judge

Popular Vote February 2015

Origin	Category	Plant	Owner
America	Laeliinae	<i>Epidendrum porpax</i>	Karen Groeneveld
America	Oncidiinae	<i>Oncidium</i> Speckled Spire 'Wisp'	Bill Ferris
America	Pleurothallidinae	<i>Acianthus crinita</i>	Jane Wright
Asia	Paphiopedilum	<i>Paphiopedilum dianthum</i>	David Judge
Asia	Vandae species	<i>Angraecum magdalenae</i>	Bill Ferris
Asia	Vandae hybrid	<i>Vandachostylis</i> Prapawan 'Chao Praya'	Geoff Dyne
Asia	Stanhopeinae	<i>Gongora galeata</i>	Bill Ferris
Asia	Any other orchid	<i>Ceratostylis rubra</i>	Karen Groeneveld
Africa	Exotic terrestrial	<i>Stenoglottis woodii</i>	Jane Wright
	Orchid of the Night	<i>Paphiopedilum dianthum</i>	David Judge
	Judges' Choice - Hybrid	<i>Oncidium</i> Speckled Spire 'Wisp'	Bill Ferris
	Judges' Choice - Species	<i>Paphiopedilum dianthum</i>	David Judge
	Judges' Choice - Specimen	<i>Gongora galeata</i>	Bill Ferris

Contributions to the Bulletin

You can get material to the editor by the following means:

In person: At meetings, or if I am not there to either Robyn Noel or Bill Ferris.

By mail: 112 Tharwa Road, Karabar NSW, 2620. **NOT** the Orchid Society PO Box

By phone: (02) 6299 7080 (h)

By email: zoe.groeneveld@internode.on.net

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