Bulletin of the Orchid Society of Canberra, Inc.

PO Box 221, Deakin West, ACT, 2600, Australia
www.canberraorchids.org ***Email: orcsoc@yahoo.com***
ABN 34 762 780 850

Caladenia fuscata

Volume 31, Number 3 **May - Jun 2016**

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

4th May: Various speakers – glasshouse management

1st June: AGM
Scott Mann – Orchids of the Port Moresby area

Upcoming Events

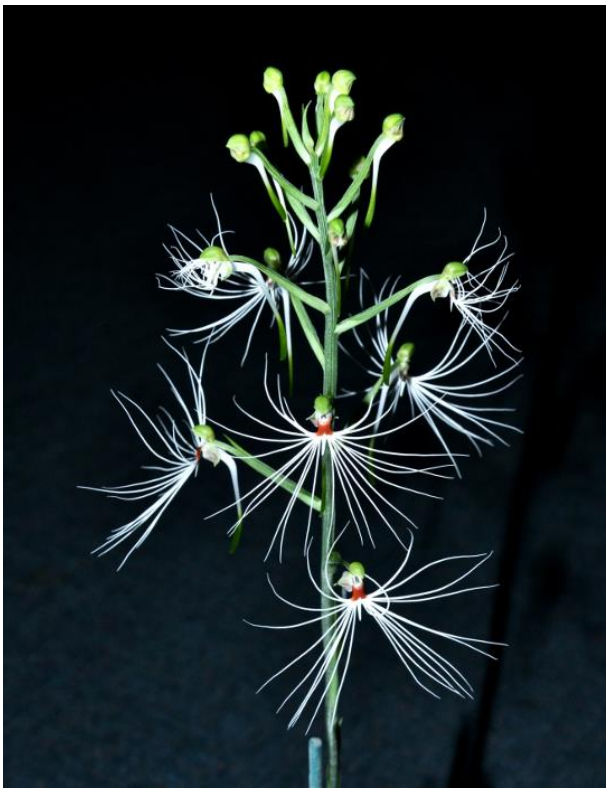
Orchids Out West: 13-15 May; Fri/Sat 9am - 4pm, Sun 9am - 3pm; Hawkesbury Race Club, Clarendon

Mingara Orchid Fair: 25 - 26 June; Sat 9am - 5pm, Sun 9am - 3pm; Mingara Recreation Club, Mingara Drive, Tumbi Umbi

Shoalhaven Orchid Society Winter Show: 2 - 3 July; Sat 11:30am - 4pm, Sun 8am - 3pm; Pavilion, Berry Showground

Eurobodalla Orchid Club Winter Show: 8 - 9 July; Fri 9am - 4pm, Sat 9am - 2pm; CWA Hall, Queen St, Moruya

April Orchid of the Night: *Maxillaria schunkeana*, grown by Karen Groeneveld



March Orchid of the Night: *Habenaria medusa* 'Delicate Viper', grown by Jane Wright

Committee Members

President:	Bill Ferris	6297 5635
Vice President:	Karen Groeneveld	6299 7080
Treasurer:	Bob Forrester	6231 0203
Secretary:		
Committee:	Mark Clements	0417 471 917
	Zoe Groeneveld	6299 7080
	Peter Coyne	6251 7660

Disclaimer
© 2014 The Orchid Society of Canberra. The Orchid Society of Canberra disclaims liability for any loss, financial or otherwise caused as a result of the contents of this Bulletin

President's Comments

Well done to the Sapphire Coast Orchid society in their running of the Orchid Workshop at Merimbula on 19/20 March. Also a thank you to the speakers who were informative and entertaining. These workshops provide an ideal opportunity to network with other orchidophiles and to get the latest advice and tap the knowledge of the commercial growers. A few notes from the workshop are in this Bulletin.

The Canberra Society will be hosting the 2017 Workshop. Jane Wright will have prime carriage for arrangements, including finding a venue and speakers. Current thinking is to find a club with suitable facilities and food available to reduce the workload on members. Any thoughts on venue and speakers can be raised with Jane.

Now that the cooler weather is here it is important to be careful with watering and maintain heaters in working order. The mild weather continuing to mid-April has been enjoyed by kingianums and terrestrials. I am eagerly watching cymbidiums for signs of spikes.

We have now entered a new financial year for the club – how time flies. A subtle reminder that membership fees for 2016-17 are due if not already paid. Also, nominations are open for office bearers and positions on the Committee and should reach the acting secretary of the Society, Peter Coyne, by 26 May. Serving on the committee is an opportunity to become more involved in orchid growing and determining the directions of the club. We currently have a vacancy on the committee. Please feel free to contact me or any current committee member if you would like to know more.

March Judges' Choice Species

The May meeting will be a discussion of greenhouse management in the Canberra climate, with an emphasis on keeping plants alive through winter while containing heating costs. The session is designed to be helpful to newer members, but even longer-term members may pick up a useful tip or two. Several members will give short presentations on their greenhouse setups and experiences – contributions from other members are also welcome. Please contact Jane Wright if you would like to share your views and experiences.

Merimbula Workshop

The speakers at the Workshop were Ray Clements (Tinonee Orchids), David Banks (Hills District Orchids) and David Gynn (Sequoia Cymbidiums). The following are just a few of the many tips I picked up which may be of interest to members.

A popular growing mix for orchids is bark, coco husk chips and perlite, typically in the ratio 40:40:20. The coco husk chips are hydroscopic (attract water) and helps to keep the moisture more uniform through the pot, whereas bark only tends to dry out in the top of the pot and stay wet in the bottom.

Easy Orchids and Tinonee are no longer importing coco husk chips. A major hydroponics and greenhouse manufacturer is expected to take over the importation of this product.

Sequoia Cymbidiums is located at Pheasants Nest (roughly half way to Sydney). With a climate similar to Canberra, the cymbidiums tend to be later flowering than those in the coastal fringe. When de-flasked the cymbidiums are placed on heat benches at 24˚C for 4 months. The aim is to keep the temperature in greenhouses under 38˚C in the warmer months. Old leafless bulbs are covered in potting mix which encourages new growth and reduces the incidence of dead centres.

David Banks commented that soft cane dendrobiums flower on the previous year's growth and need lots of light in winter. These plants also need a dry atmosphere in winter but some watering when not grown in a glasshouse.

Ray Clements noted that slow release fertiliser start releasing nutrients at 21˚C and then the rate accelerates, being quadruple when the temperature reaches 40˚C. It was designed to be mixed into the potting mix. He suggested that Condy's Crystals (Potassium permanganate) is very effective in driving worms out of the potting mix.

David Gynn is doing a lot of breeding and hybridising with native cymbidiums. For natives he uses larger sized bark, coco husk chips and perlite. Cymbidium canaliculatum is grown under 30% shade and kept close to the polycarbonate roofing. The other natives are grown under 50% shade. The native cymbidiums are not watered in winter unless there is a spell of hot weather. Fertiliser with N:P:K of 6:18:36 is used on natives and hybrids and applied through the watering system.

Ray Clements stressed the need to read the labels of sprays carefully. Lime water can help control fungus but is not as effective as commercial products such as Mancozeb. Also avoid watering in the heat of the day as fungus breeds quickly in warm water that may rest on the plants. It was reported that Aerogard will kill oxalis.

The Library

The upcoming May meeting will feature greenhouse management. To complement this presentation, the library has the following books specifically about greenhouses:

- *Greenhouses*
- *Greenhouses: planning, installing and using greenhouses*
- *How to Build Your Own Greenhouse*
- *Solar Greenhouse Book*

Greenhouses are also discussed in other books, such as David Banks's book "Orchids" which has sections on growing orchids indoors, in shade houses, and in glasshouses. Some periodicals held by the library also have articles on greenhouse management.
A categorised list of the library's holdings is attached with the electronic version of this bulletin.

March Judges' Choice Specimen: *Epidendrum porpax*, grown by Karen Groeneveld

General Meeting Minutes
2 March 2016

Members Present: 35
Apologies: 5
Visitors: 3

President Bill opened the meeting reporting apologies and welcoming the visitors. He invited nominations from anyone interested in filling the vacancy arising from Geoff Dyne's present inability to continue as a committee member and Secretary. Bill hoped one of the newer members would be interested. Jane reinforced the personal value of involvement on the committee, as she found it very rewarding when she became secretary as a new member.

Bill congratulated Dr Mark Clements on his award of the Westonbirt Orchid Medal by the Royal Horticultural Society in London. The medal is awarded to individuals for scientific, literary or any other outstanding personal achievement in connection with orchids. In the 1980s Mark saved the lady's slipper orchid (*Cypripedium calceolus*) from extinction in England. For more than thirty years just one plant had remained in England. By developing a way to propagate it from seed, Mark produced large numbers of seedlings. Now there are about 15 colonies of the species in the wild in England. Society members are more familiar with Mark's work in Australia. Jane explained the basis for the award, saying Mark had really kick-started orchid conservation in the UK.

Speaker: Dr Noushka Reiter delivered a fascinating talk on orchid conservation. Noushka runs the Orchid Conservation Program for the Victorian Royal Botanic Gardens at Cranbourne. The program propagates threatened orchids from seed for re-introduction into the wild. Australia has more than 1700 orchid species. Victoria has more than 400 species, a large proportion of which are threatened. There is a legislative obligation to conserve orchids under both Commonwealth and state legislation. The Orchid Conservation Program has many partners — government bodies, universities, large companies and non-government organisations. The Australian Native Orchid Society has been a backbone of the program, and community volunteers are an essential part, particularly in monitoring orchid and pollinator populations.

The aim of the program is to collect a great diversity of both seed and mycorrhizal fungi, and to propagate threatened species from seed for re-introduction into their natural habitat. Success or failure is dependent on many factors:

Orchids have a complex relationship with mycorrhizal fungi, so the correct fungus for each species must be

isolated. The fungal cultures are short-lived and need to be replaced annually. Orchid seed needs to be inoculated with the appropriate mycorrhizae in order to germinate, and the appropriate mycorrhizae must be present in the environment for introduced seedlings to establish and thrive.

Orchids also have a complex relationship with pollinators, on which they depend for long-term success in the wild. Some, such as wasps, depend on specific prey species, which may be absent in the environment. No wasps = no orchid seed set and a non-viable re-introduction. Scientists must observe and understand the specific relationships between each orchid species and their pollinators, not an easy task. For example, ninety-one thynnid wasp species have been collected from 12 *Caladenia* species.

Reintroducing orchids into the wild is a complex process, requiring many approvals (such as landholder approvals; and permits for seed collection, propagation and research), consultation and planning. Ecological research (e.g., soil and vegetation profiling, ensuring the specific pollinators and fungi are present and that the site is free of pathogens), site preparation (e.g., weeding, fencing, ensuring water supply etc.) and implementing a monitoring regime are also essential. Pollinating wasp species have been found to be absent at many otherwise promising sites. Noushka gave examples of the process involved with the reintroductions of three species: Yellow-lip Spider Orchid (*Caladenia xanthochila*), Metallic Sun Orchid (*Thelymitra epipactoides*) and Red Cross Spider Orchid (*C. cruciformis*).

The Yellow-lip Spider Orchid is extinct in South Australia, and in Victoria there is just one population plus two other isolated plants. The plan is to reintroduce 3000 plants to the wild, of which 100 have been planted out so far.

The Metallic Sun Orchid was once common in south-eastern Australia but is now extinct in New South Wales, reduced to only 200 plants in South Australia, and Victoria has about 1000 plants. Some 3000 seedlings have been potted up and significant numbers planted out at five sites.

The Red Cross Spider Orchid is confined to a few small populations in central Victoria, the largest on private land. The aim is to establish two new populations in Victoria. Plants which have been planted out are being pollinated and are reproducing in these sites.

Between 2012 and 2015, the project propagated 24 federally threatened species from 30 sites across SE Australia; isolated mycorrhizal fungi from each site; and handled over 20,000 seedlings for re-introduction. To date, there have been 27 reintroductions of 17 federally listed species, the majority of which have been successful.

The techniques for reintroduction are now proven, cost-effective and scalable. Collaboration has been a huge factor in the success of the program, which now has permanent facilities at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne, and many volunteers. The group will be working to reintroduce a further 22 species in coming years, and Noushka invited Society members to get involved. Much of the work for volunteers will be on-site in Victoria but baiting for thynnid wasps in Canberra could be helpful. Baiting kits will be sent out in August.

Dr Noushka Reiter can be contacted on 03 5990 2229 or noushka.reiter@rbg.vic.gov.au
For more information, see www.chuffed.org/project/save-our-threatened-orchids

Mark Clements thanked Noushka for her presentation, remarking that he had mentored Noushka and she had progressed considerably from where he had reached in this area of research.

Treasurer's report: The bank balance is $12,209.53 plus two fixed term deposits of $5146 and $11,236. Bob encouraged members to read the magazines coming in as he is about to renew subscriptions to two of them.

Other matters: Bill reported that we have been trying to get an earlier Sunday commencement time for the show, but that has proven impossible so the mid-day start time will remain.

Bill reminded members about the workshop at Merimbula on 19–20 March.

After the popular vote Mark Clements commented on the *Bulbophyllum grandiflorum*, which he had collected in 1996 as a seed capsule on New Hanover Island, just west of New Ireland, New Guinea. He noted that a few interesting Bulbophyllums were on display tonight including a *Cirrhopetalum,* with an umbel of flowers, and several with single flowers.

Next meetings:
6 April — Alan Stephenson, Conservation Director for the Australian Orchid Council will talk on Orchid Conservation
4 May — Jane Wright and others to talk about glasshouse management, particularly temperature control
1 June — Scott Mann on Orchids in PNG.

Raffle Prizes: Wendy Robinson, Rob Rough, Jane Wright, Bob Forrester, Heather Macgregor, Trish Stewart-Richardson, Christine Small
Lucky door prize: Wendy Robinson

General Meeting Minutes
6 April 2016

Members present: 25
Visitors: 3
Apologies: 9

President Bill opened the meeting, welcoming the visitors and noting the apologies. He then introduced the speaker, Alan Stephenson.

Speaker: Alan has been Conservation Director for the Australian Orchid Council (AOC) since 2002 and has a passion for his work. He has many achievements in this area, including: writing submissions, one of which saw a planned shopping centre relocated; and the rediscovery and identification of rare orchids. Alan currently collects orchid specimens for the ANBG, works closely with local national parks and the Shoalhaven City Council environment section, assists the Botanic Gardens at Mt Annan regarding their seed collection of endangered orchids and works with the Office of Environment and Heritage at Wollongong with locations and surveys of threatened species in the Save Our Species program. He has appeared before various planning bodies following submissions pertinent to developments. Alan has assisted the Office of Environment and Heritage at Queanbeyan with monitoring of three endangered species. He prepares a conservation report in the AOC annual reports. In 2015 he was awarded the Australian Orchid Foundation Award of Honour, a prestigious award also held by Mark Clements.

Alan delivered an excellent collection of photographs of rare and endangered orchid species with some interesting associated stories. He found a population of *Prasophyllum affine* and one of only 29 known plants of *Calochilus pulchellus* on a site in Vincentia which Stockland was intending to develop. The discovery led to the development being located elsewhere and Stockland donated the land with the orchids for conservation. All 29 known plants of *Calochilus pulchellus* occur in the Shoalhaven.

Alan found *Arachnorchis tessellata*, a species which had not been seen for many years, near the Braidwood Road 55 km west of Nowra. He found *Acianthella amplexicaulis* 220 km outside its known range. He showed us photos of *Corunastylis superba*, a species known from only three sites. At Sassafras Hill between Nowra and Braidwood, he found *Petalochilus mentiens*, a species otherwise known only from the ACT. Another extraordinary discovery was *Oligochaetochilus aciculiformis* 25 metres from the water at St Georges Basin — it is otherwise known from Bungonia at about 600 m elevation. Alan found one of the four known locations of *Diplodium pulchellum*. He found 26 previously unknown plants of the critically endangered *Speculantha ventricosa*. Only 200 plants of *Diuris aequalis* are known.

Some of the stories had unfortunate outcomes. A shed was built over a population of *Corunastylis plumosa* at Tallong despite prior knowledge of the orchids. A significant population of *Corunastylis vernosa* is threatened by land clearing under statutory exemption from normal protection under the guise of "private forestry operations".

The meeting adjourned for the tea break, after which Bill presided over the normal business of the meeting.

March Judges' Choice Hybrid

Treasurer's report: Bob reported the bank balance is $12,172.05. With term deposits ($16,483.05) the total amounts to $28,655.10.

Library: Peter Coyne discussed the library which is a valuable resource but little used. In the seven months up to this meeting only two books had been borrowed and the computer with Orchidwiz had been borrowed only once. None of the periodicals had been borrowed. It would be good to see the library better used, even though a lot of information is available on the internet. There are many good books themed for beginners or advanced growers, by taxonomic groups or by geographic regions. A classified list was circulated with the November–December bulletin but will be circulated again. If members are not interested in using the library the value of maintaining it will need to be reconsidered. Rob Rough kindly offered, if the library is closed, to lend books in his personal library to members if they want them.

Regional workshop: Bill reported on the regional workshop at Merimbula, where he gained a number of useful tips including:

- Strong preference for a potting mix comprising bark, coco husk chips and perlite, in a ratio of 40:40:20. The coco husk helps to slow the drying out especially in the top of the pot.
- Hang any cymbidiums that have the native *Cymbidium canaliculatum* in their breeding, high in the greenhouse and keep quite dry in winter.
- Condy's crystal is good for convincing worms to leave the potting mix.

Canberra Orchid Society will be hosting the workshop in 2017. Jane Wright will be the coordinator. We have nominated the weekend of 18–19 March 2017 which avoids Canberra Day and the state judges meeting.

Awards: Bill presented David Judge with Awards of Merit from the Australian Orchid Council and Orchid Society of NSW for his *Paphiopedilum* Richard Ong 'Ken Judge'.

He presented Karen Groeneveld with the Lila Rose perpetual trophy for the Reserve Champion Orchid at the Horticultural Society of Canberra Show.

Bill also reported that, at the judges' March meeting at Batemans Bay, Jane Wright was awarded two Highly Commended Certificates for her *Habenaria medusa* 'Delicate Viper' and *Bulbophyllum fritillariflorum* 'Roger'.

Paphiopedilum Richard Ong 'Ken Judge'

Bulbophyllum grandiflorum 'Roger'

Habenaria medusa 'Delicate Viper'

Other matters: The popular vote was presented. No judges were at the meeting so there were no judges' choices.

Bill discussed the Australian Orchid Foundation's provision for memorials to people with significant contributions to orchid culture. The memorial is in the form of a photo and up to 250 words on the AOF web site. A memorial for Terry Turner has been suggested and Bill sought members' views. The meeting endorsed the proposal which will now be discussed with Terry's family.

Next meeting: a discussion on managing glasshouses, to involve several members with demonstrated expertise and focusing on economic heating and cooling.

The June meeting will be the Annual General Meeting, which usually takes only ten minutes, at which the committee for 2016-17 will be elected. Bill encouraged members to nominate for the committee to bring a fresh outlook and new ideas. The June general meeting immediately after the AGM will feature a talk by Scott Mann on orchids in Papua New Guinea.

Raffle: Don Chesher, Mark Clements, Therese Bourke, Alan Stephenson, Ben Walcott, Gael Walton (visitor) and Bob Forrester.
Door prize: Diana Herrald

(the Popular Vote for March as been temporarily misplaced and will be published in the next bulletin.)

Popular Vote – April 2016

Category	Plant	Owner
Laelia Alliance Hybrid	*Cattleya* Sanyang Ruby 'Kuan Long'	Rob Rough
Pleurothallis Alliance	*Pleurothallis prolifera*	Karen Groeneveld
Oncidium Alliance	*Miltassia* Aztec 'Toni'	Karen Groeneveld
Cypripedium Alliance	*Phragmipedium* x *sedenii* 'Candidum'	Karen Groeneveld
Coelogyne Alliance Species	*Pholidota imbricata*	Don Chesher
Any Other	*Maxillaria schunkeana*	Karen Groeneveld
Dendrobium Alliance	*Epigeneium amplum*	Mark Clements
Bulbophyllum Alliance	*Bulbophyllum appendiculatum*	Mark Clements
Australian Dendrobium Alliance	*Dockrillia bowmanii*	Bill Ferris
Orchid of the Night	*Maxillaria schunkeana*	Karen Groeneveld

Contributions to the Bulletin **Editor:** Zoe Groeneveld
You can get material to the editor by the following means:
In person: At meetings, or if I am not there to another member of the Committee
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

Orchid Society of Canberra
PO Box 221
Deakin West ACT 2600