

MAROONDAH ORCHID SOCIETY

INCORPORATED

MONTHLY NEWS LETTER

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Lycastes are orchids of the
New World Tropics and Subtropics



Lycaste Club Emblem

Meetings cancelled until further notice.

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President's Report

Winter chill certainly has arrived. We have had very good rain for autumn and the year so far. Our orchids are still growing but we need to be careful with watering as new growths are still hardening and flower spikes are starting to appear. Make sure your plants are dry before night time.

Repotting and potting on can still be done with care being mindful of the new growths and any flower spikes. Not always when we divide a plant will it behave and start going forward. I have a *Den. speciosum* that I divided 2 years ago, completely sulk, no new growths or roots and the bulbs shrivelled to the stage that this year it was looking like the bin was getting a gift. Just when I had given up, Mother Nature showed how strong she is and suddenly 4 new growths poked their nose out of the mix, they have continued to grow and new roots are showing. WOW!! Photographs will be in next newsletter.

Alan Hope's article in the newsletter will give you many ideas about rejuvenating your orchids.

In this difficult time we certainly have had the opportunity to spend time with our orchids as this time is normally when we start thinking about plant preparation for our Spring Show. Your committee will be making a decision with regards to our Spring Show at the end of July, which will depend on Government guidelines re social requirements and will let you know as soon as possible, so keep working on your preparation.

Please continue to share your friendships by whatever means you can so that when we are able to meet again, lots of joy and orchid stories can be shared.

Cheers,

David.

Thank you to members who have contributed to pictures which are included in this newsletter. And remember please feel free to send me any images of your orchids in flower. Please include a close-up of the flower and make sure you include the name of the orchid. Also if you have an article you would like to share with members please send it to me.

With much thanks

Leo Orland
Editor



SEED CAPSULE MATURITY

Estimating the ripening time of a seed capsule is a difficult task. Many an amateur and professional hybridizers have had the disappointment of finding the seed capsule of that desired cross split and its contents scattered to the wind.

There are many factors that come into play regarding the ripening of a seed capsule e.g. time of the year, weather conditions during maturation of the capsule, the fertility of a cross etc.

After fertilization, seed development can be gauged by the swelling and ripening of the developing seed capsule which may take a few weeks or occasionally as long as a year or more, depending on the genus. As a seed capsule ripens it changes colour from green to yellow or brown then splits to release the seed into the air. It is recommended that when the seed capsule begins to yellow at one end, it is ripe for harvesting and sending to the seed bank.

If you are unsure of how much time is left before the capsule will split, try tying tissue paper or an empty tea bag over the capsule a few weeks beforehand and examine it from day to day.

Below is a list of the expected time for ripening of seed capsules. This is an *approximate guide only* and may be of assistance to new growers.

Genus	Approx. days for ripening	Genus	Approx. days for ripening	Genus	Approx. days for ripening
Ascocentrum	150-170 days	Laelia	140-160 days	Phalaenopsis	130-140 days
Bulbophyllum	80-120 days	Leptotes	120-140 days	Phragmipedium	180-190 days
Cattleya	160-180 days	Masdevallia	100-110 days	Pleurothallis	45-50 days
Cymbidium	250-30 days	Maxillaria	130-150 days	Renanthera	180-200 days
Dendrobium	160-180 days	Miltonia	145-160 days	Sarcochilus	200-210 days
Encyclia	160-180 days	Oncidium	100-130 days	Restrepia	50-80 days
Epidendrum	130-145 days	Paphiopedilum	150-170 days	Sophranitis	100-120 days

Members' Plants in Flower Now

		
Kong and Fun's <i>C. Hawaiian wedding song</i>	Christian Gunawan <i>Miltonia guanabara</i>	Kong and Fun's <i>Dracula bella x cordobae</i>
		
Rosalie Naylor's <i>Coelogyne morreana</i>	Leo Orland's <i>Oncidopsis Burrageara</i>	Kong and Fun's <i>Paph venustum</i>
		
Ron and Heather Coleman's <i>Dendrochilum filiforme</i>	Leo Orland's <i>Zygo. maculatum</i>	Leo Orland's <i>Coelogyne celebensis</i>

REJUVENATING ORCHIDS by Alan Hope

Orchid growers often need to attend to an orchid that is old, pot-bound or shows signs of decline. Previous re-potting may have been neglected or the plant, having been recently acquired at an orchid auction, nursery or as a gift, is in poor condition. Damage to the plant by frost, sunburn, insect bites or various rots and fungal attacks may also require remedial action. Signs that an orchid requires attention include weak and straggly growth, moss on the surface of the mix, dieback, rot and poor flowering.

Plants that have overgrown their pots may also need attention. However, first assess whether you wish to keep the plant, as space and resources are scarce and your effort may be better spent on other plants. Typically, friends and relatives may have unknowingly donated diseased plants, more often than not cymbidiums that have belonged to the family for some time. It is probably in the best interests of your collection to discard such family heirlooms. Re-potting requires the complete removal of the old orchid mix and replacement with new mix in a new or sterilized pot of an appropriate size. Any dead portions of plant should be removed with sterilized secateurs and the plant sprayed for pests such as scale. The re-potted plant should also have some long-life fertilizer scratched in around the edge of the pot, and then watered well and placed in a protected area off the ground to re-establish.

Highly valued plants that would be difficult and/or costly to replace present a greater challenge. In many cases only a small part of the plant may survive, perhaps a single pseudobulb, cane or growth. For cymbidiums and other orchids with bulbs, cleaning up the back-bulb and placing it with fresh sphagnum moss in an inflated plastic bag, offers a good chance of new growth being generated. Some genera, such as lycastes, will often produce a new growth only if two or more joined pseudobulbs are used. Orchids with bare canes (e.g. dendrobiums), a creeping growth habit (e.g. bulbophyllums) or ones with no roots (all genera) are best tackled during the growing season (spring-summer-early autumn). The best option is to find a piece of the plant with a leading growth, as this is the most vigorous. However leafless canes, as is the case with many dendrobiums, may be all that is left to work with. If so, the canes can be cleaned and cut into sections containing two or three nodes. Each section should then be placed horizontally on a bed of live sphagnum moss and pinned down with small pieces of bent wire. It may take some time for the nodes to produce new growths.

Orchids with a creeping growth habit, such as bulbophyllums and epidendrums, should be restarted by attachment to a mount. Placing fresh sphagnum moss around (but not under) the growth helps to retain moisture and allows the emerging roots to attach themselves to the mount. Both the growth and surrounding moss should be fastened firmly to the mount with twisty-tie, and the plant then regular misted, especially during hot, dry weather. Root loss is a serious problem and paphiopedilums are among those orchids that can lose all their roots. I have had best results re-planting these plants in fresh sphagnum moss in a small pot. Secure the plant with a small wooden skewer to avoid movement and place it in a sheltered, shady position to recover. Once again patience is required as it can take many months for some paphiopedilum plants to re-grow roots, if ever!

Finally, how do you rejuvenate plants devastated by rot or fungal attack? The rot may move so quickly that the whole plant is at risk and remedial action is required without delay. The affected section of plant should be removed with a sterilized knife, razor blade or scissors and appropriate fungicidal sprays or sealants then applied to minimize further outbreak.

ONE LAST THOUGHT:

Q. Why did the scarecrow win an award?
A. Because he was outstanding in his field.

If Undeliverable Return to:
The Hon. Secretary,
Maroondah Orchid Society Incorporated
P.O.Box 5076, Ringwood. Vic. 3134

NEWSLETTER



Smart Water Shop offers up to a 10% discount on our range of products excluding specials and installations.

Glenwood Orchids offer "Valued Customer" discounts on presentation of your current membership card.

Collectors Corner/Garden World - You can get 10% off some items within the store by showing either your membership badge or membership card.

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