

MAROONDAH ORCHID SOCIETY INCORPORATED

MONTHLY NEWS LETTER

Volume : 43 - Issue : 10

Lycastes are orchids of the
New World Tropics and Subtropics



Lycaste Club Emblem

Meetings cancelled until further notice.

M.O.S. Inc. Patron: David Cannon

Life Members: The late Frank Date, Jim Foster-Johnson, David Cannon, Alan & Nancy Cockram, Dieter Weise, Barry Robinson, Susanne Redpath, Max Bomford, Cheryl Luth, G Moffat.

Current M.O.S. Inc. Committee:

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Vacant
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leorland@totalfundraising.com.au
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MOS Website Address www.oscov.asn.au/mos
MOS Facebook Address www.facebook.com/maroondahorchidsociety

President's Report

As often said, what a difference a day makes.

November is normally our AGM and Sarcochilus Show. Well what a different 12 months we have had since our last AGM and Sarcochilus Show.

As mentioned previously our AGM will be held at our February meeting all being well. Unfortunately we will have to wait for another 12 months to have our Sarcochilus Show. Fortunately our orchids have continued to grow and flower and I trust your Sarcochilus are giving you your own personal show. My Sarcochilus are having probably the best flowering this year. A few photos are in the newsletter.

I trust that with the easing of restrictions you will be able to visit your family as we move towards Christmas.

We certainly are having varied weather this spring. Warm and windy days that will dry your plants out.

Keep the water up to your plants on the windy and warm days as new growths are starting to appear and will need to have plenty of moisture to mature the new growths. Watch out for creepy crawly nasties as they love new, soft, tender new growths. I trust you and your families are all well, and for those not feeling the best, take care of yourself.

Best regards,

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. Please send me your photos or article by Monday November 16.

With much thanks

Leo Orland

Can You Identify This Orchid?

There has been no suggestions for the name of John Wong's plant below.



Another Plant to Identify



The orchid normally only has 1 spike per bulb, but sometimes has twins(2 per spike).
Flowers are approx 10-12mm wide.

A Complete Guide to Native Orchids of Australia

Third Edition, 2020 - By David L Jones

This book is the most comprehensive book on Australian Orchids comprising photos and descriptions of every known species as at the time of publication. It is the final edition that will be produced by David and will become a collectors item to be cherished.

The publishers advise that the book will be released in December before Christmas. The retail price is \$220.00. The Australian Orchid Foundation (AOF) will be selling them at a discounted price of \$185.00.

A further EARLY BIRD DISCOUNTED PRICE of \$170.00 for prepaid orders received before the end of the year is on offer.

More details on the AOF website: <https://www.australianorchidfoundation.org.au/publications/>

David Cannon's Plants in Flower Now



Sarcochilus
Galaxy 'Golden Circle'



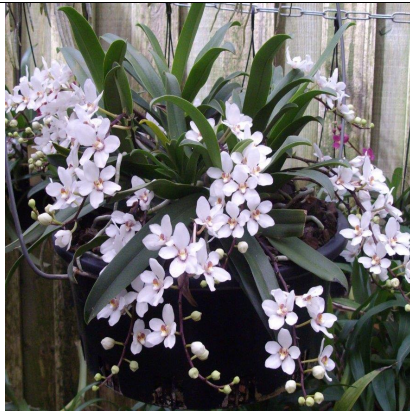
Sarcochilus
Fitzhart 'Magenta x
Heidi 'Red Chocolate'



Sarcochilus
fitzgeraldii 'Alstonville' Natural



Sarcochilus
fitzgeraldii AF x Wild Red



Sarcochilus
Melba 'Barry'



Sarcochilus
Kulnara Surprise x Kurumba



Cymbidium
Nut 'HR'
(a siense hybrid)



Cymbidium
Cricket
'Siamese Twins'



Cymbidium
Black Stump

Dieter Weise's Plants in Flower Now



Dendrobium
Gowans Tangelo



Masdevallia
peristeria



Maxillaria
neowidii (miniature)



Maxillaria
sanderiana



Oncidium
Mayfair



Dendrobium
fleckeri



Vanda
javieria



Paphiopedilum
Double Arrow



Oncidium
Specialty's Cameo

Leanne Le's Plants in Flower Now



Cymbidium
madidum x Borough Green



Dendrobium
Mild Yumi 'Special'



Cattleya
Lilly Marie



Dendrobium
Mousmee

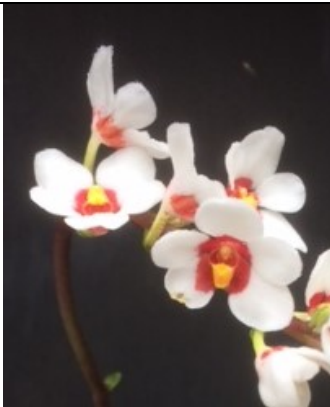


Dendrobium
Gorgeous Smile



Laelia Cattleya
Trick or Treat

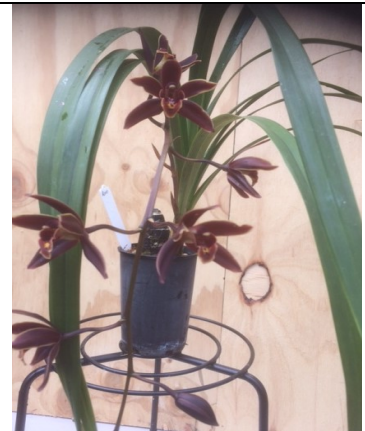
Other Members' Plants in Flower Now



Ron and Heather Coleman's
Sarcophilus
Heidi



Ron and Heather Coleman's
Cymbidium
Olive Street 'Dinh'



Ron and Heather Coleman's
Cymbidium Norma Stafford
Grown from a back bulb received
in October 2017.

K.I.S. ORCHIDS

K.I.S. KEEP YOUR ORCHID GROWING AS SIMPLE AS CAN BE. DO NOT MAKE IT COMPLICATED. GROW YOUR ORCHIDS IN THE ONE SAME BASIC ORCHID MIX. IF YOU USE DIFFERENT MIXES IT WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR WATERING CYCLE.

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING ABOUT YOUR ORCHID MIX IS THAT IT DRAINS FREELY.

USE POTS THAT HAVE SIMILAR DRAINAGE HOLES. UNDERSTAND ABOUT THE TYPE OF ORCHID YOU ARE GROWING AS THIS WILL HELP YOU DECIDE ON THE TYPE OF POT YOU USE. MOST EPHYTICLE ORCHIDS GROW VERY WELL IN SQUAT POTS. SQUAT POTS ALSO USE LESS MIX.

TRY AND USE ONLY 2 SIZES OF MIX. A SMALLER SIZE COMPONENTS FOR SEEDLINGS AND A LARGER COMPONENT MIX FOR BIGGER PLANTS. YOU CAN USE A SMALL PORTION OF LARGER MIX IN THE BOTTOM OF YOUR POTS BEFORE YOU USE THE SMALLER MIX. THIS HELPS WITH DRAINAGE.

K.I.S. KEEP YOUR ORCHIDS IN AS SMALL A POT AS POSSIBLE.

DO NOT OVER POT (PUT INTO A LARGE POT) YOUR ORCHID AS THIS WILL MAKE THE PLANTS ENERGY INTO MAKING A LOT OF ROOTS AND POSSIBLY LESS GROWTH. POT ON ONLY WHEN THE ORCHIDS HAS GROWN TO OR OVER THE EDGE OF THE POT. POSITION YOUR ORCHID IN THE POT SO THAT IT HAS MAXIMUM AREA FOR THE NEW GROWTH'S TO DEVELOP. AIM FOR AT LEAST 2/3 YEARS GROTH IN THE NEW POT. DO NOT DISTURB THE ROOTS UNLES THEY ARE DEAD. HEALTY ROOTS ARE WHITE AND SOLID. DEAD ROOTS ARE USUALLY BROWN AND VERY SOFT. CUT THEM OFF.

FERTILISING. PLACE A SMALL AMOUNT OF SLOW RELEASE FERTILISER IN THE BOTTOM OF THE POT. IF YOU WANT TO, YOU CAN SUPPLEMENT BY A WEAK LIQUID FERTILISER AT A SCHEDULE YOU LIKE.

WATERING. DEPENDING ON WHERE YOU GROW YOUR ORCHIDS WILL DEPEND ON HOW YOU WATER THEM. IF YOUR GROWING AREA HAS A SOLID ROOF YOUR PLANTS WILL REQUIRE MORE WATERING THAN IF UNDER SHADE CLOTH. AIM TO KEEP YOU MIX MOIST AT ALL TIME. BASICALLY IF IT IS HOT AND DRY, YOUR PLANTS WILL REQUIRE MORE WATERING THAN IF IT IS COOL/COLD.

IF YOUR GROWING AREA IS NOT SHADED BUT GETS LOTS OF SUNLIGHT THEN THEY WILL NEED MORE WATERING THAN IF YOUR PLANTS ARE IN A SHADY AREA.

K.I.S. BY TRYING YOUR PLANTS IN DIFFERENT POSITIONS, IF THEY ARE NOT HAVING GOOD NEW GROWTH. THAT IS HOW WE ALL LEAN TO GROWN.

REMEMBER YOUR ORCHIDS REQUIRE ENOUGH LIGHT TO GROW, WITHOUT BEING BURNT. THE 3 K.I.S REQUIREMENTS FOR YOUR ORCHIDS ARE WATER, LIGHT AND AIR. AIR MOVEMENT WILL KEEP YOU PLANTS HEALTY. TRY HANGING PLANTS AS WELL AS GROWING IN POTS OR ON SLABS.

HAPPY GROWING.

David Cannon

HOW TO GROW SARCOCHILUS

Most *Sarcochilus* (pronounced Sar-co-kyle-us) orchids are native to Australia; only one species is found overseas. The most widely grown species (*Sarcochilus hartmannii*, *S. fitzgeraldii* and *S. ceciliae*) grow on rocks in New South Wales or Queensland. However all three of these species grow happily in pots in Melbourne shade houses. Another species (*S. falcatus*) is found growing mostly on tree trunks, and is best grown on mounts, such as pieces of tree branch. Many hybrids have been made in recent years using the above four species, and also some of the other *sarcochilus* species that are less amenable to cultivation. In many instances these hybrids show hybrid vigour and are even easier to grow than their parent species.

POTTING

Sarcochilus are best re-potted during their most active growing season, which commences in March and continues into early winter, when the plants rest until they flower, mostly in mid- to late spring. *Sarcochilus ceciliae* and some of its hybrids flower a little later, usually during summer. Most *sarcochilus* species and their hybrids are best potted in a mixture of pine bark pieces (5-10 mm diameter) and river pebbles of similar size. Approximately two parts of bark to one of pebbles gives good results. Well-drained plastic 'squat' pots are ideal. In the case of *Sarcochilus ceciliae* (and to a lesser extent its hybrids) the plant should be placed high in its pot – it seems to do best if its roots are allowed to wander over the surface of the mix rather than penetrating into the mix.

LIGHT, TEMPERATURE and AIR

Sarcochilus orchids enjoy breezy, shaded, humid conditions and do best lower down in a shade house or fernery than other orchids, such as Australian native *dendrobiums*.

WATERING

These orchids require plenty of water when in active growth but during winter, when they cease growth, watering once each week is ample.

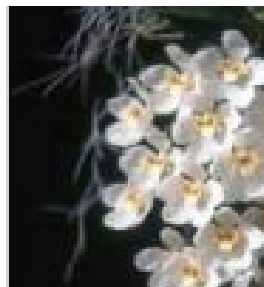
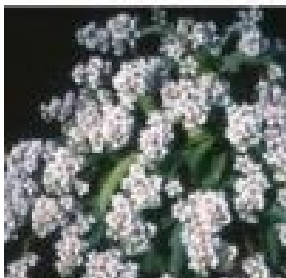
FERTILISING

Regular applications of liquid fertilisers at no more than half the concentration recommended by the manufacturer stimulate growth during summer and autumn. They should be used less often during spring and not at all in winter.

FLOWERING

Care should be taken not to wet the flowers when watering, especially in dull, still weather. *Sarcochilus* flowers tend to spot very readily due to the growth of *Botrytis* (Grey Mould), which is most prevalent in damp conditions.

These cultural notes are kindly provided by the North-East Melbourne Orchid Society.



Interview with David Cannon



David surrounded by his beautiful and abundant sarcs.

When did you become interested in orchids?

Over 60 years ago. I was 12-13 years of age and my grandfather grew Cymbidiums. He had a big fish pond in his backyard in Sydney ringed with *Den.speciosums*. He gave me my first orchids which were Cymbidiums in paint cans with holes in the bottom. Then I got pieces of his *Den. speciosums* as well. That's when it all started. Then I came south of the border 55/56 years ago to work. I bought some of my orchids down with me. I was a foundation member of ANOS in Sydney when I was 19 years old. I came to Melbourne two months shy of 20 years of age. Then became a foundation member of ANOS in Victoria. Then it continued from there.

When did you get really serious about growing orchids?

In the early to mid-sixties because I set up and was growing orchids in my back yard I. Got married two years after arriving in Melbourne and built a house in Ferntree Gully and built an orchid house and had a small mail order nursery. In the early 1970s I moved from Ferntree Gully to Mitcham/Donvale, where I built 5,000 square feet of glass houses and igloos . I had my own quarantine house there as well.

I used to import orchids from all around the world. I still have some of the plants I imported from America. I was doing a lot of hybridising. I started in 1968/69. In the early 1970s I was producing a roneoed catalogue to sell orchids from, 1969 I did my first hybrids. Alvin Bryant in Sydney did my first flasking for me. In 1971/1972 I started to make a lot more hybrids and that's when Nicky Zurcher in Adelaide started doing my flasking for me.. Then I got together with Keith Andrew in England to hybridise orchids with *Cym. devonianum* influence. I imported a lot of Cymbidiums and *Cym.devonianum* hybrids from Keith Andrews in England and mericloned a number of them and sent them back to England.

Maroondah had a special night, we sponsored Keith Andrew and his wife and Brian Rittershausen to come out, at Mitcham High School and produced a coloured flyer and released a range of *Cym.devonianum* hybrids and the first *Cym.bulbarrows* in Australia. I had a break from hybridising from 1990 because of work commitments. I started breeding/hybridising again in 2007

Why grow orchids?

Where I grew up in Sydney, on the other side of the street was The Royal National Park. As kids dad used to go rock fishing and we would be hiking through the park and seeing *Den.speciosums* growing on the rocks and flowering everywhere. I got an interest in them. I joined a fauna and flora protection society in Sydney near where I lived.

After I arrived in Melbourne a man in Mordialloc named Les Raines got the names of all the people in Victoria that were the members of ANOS Inc. and the late Bill Murdoch came down from Newcastle for the foundation inaugural meeting of ANOS Vic. in Melbourne which was held in the meeting rooms above Spencer Street railway station. Then there very few orchid clubs. There was Victorian Orchid Club and Melbourne Eastern and Mornington Peninsula.

What species of orchids do you concentrate on?

I have concentrated on Australian natives especially Dendrobiums and Sarcochilus, mostly Dendrobiums. But I did hybridise Cymbidium Sweet Devon (suave x devonianum) , because of the Cym.suave.I sent flasks to England for Keith Andrew because that's why I got together with him over Cym.devonianum influence. He actually flowered the first Cym.Sweet Devon and the RHS artist in London painted an original art of that plant in flower. I have the actual painting in my study.

In 1985 I was invited and went to the RHS Centenary Orchid Conference in London, and did a presentation on Australian Native Orchids cool growing hybridising.

Why do you choose Australian natives?

Because where I grew up in the bush I used to see them. I enjoyed the flowers and the perfume.

How many orchids do you have?

I would say about 2,000. I have a good collection of natural Dendrobium hybrids, some dating back to the 1940's when they were found. I spend a couple of days a week now. I didn't do any hybridising last year. Two years ago I planted out a lot of seedlings out of flasks. It is always great to see seedlings flowering for the first time. I have registered a number of Dendrobium hybrids when they flower for the first time. I've got automatic watering. I can turn it on and off and cycle it. I don't live out there but I spend time out there. I'm just about to look at repotting. I leave plants in pots as long as I can until they fill the pot and they're bursting before I pot them on. I find that I get better flowering that way. That's how I grow my Sarcochilus. I probably have the best flowering of Sarcochilus I've ever had, this year. I remade Sarcochilus Melba back in the 1980's and I still have one of those seedlings. It's in a 15 inch pot and it has 80-90 flowers on it. I leave some of my plants 4 to 5 years before I repot them.

What advice would give to those starting out growing orchids?

Relax! Don't stress over them. Be patient with your time. Read and understand the natural growth of your plants and where you are going to grow them. The cooler temperate orchids are hardier than most people give them credit for. More orchids are killed with kindness than anything else.

Keep It Simple (KIS). Keep it as simple as you possibly can and as small a pot as possible. The this minimises your work. If you use one basic mix you can grow 90% of what you want to grow. Plants like Sarcochilus you just add quartz chips to your basic mix then they will grow. Depending on the size of your plant you use a smaller component or if you are going to put a bigger plant in a bigger pot. Some of my Dendrobiums are 40 cms across so you use bigger components of your mix.

Keep is as simple and as small a pot as possible and you will maximise your flowering opportunities. If you could see my Sarcochilus they are hanging above head high you will see a sea of flowers and all the roots are hanging down in the air. That's what they do in nature. They run along tree trunks or rock faces. You don't have to keep them in a pot per se.

What changes have you seen in orchid growing over the years?

There are less people joining clubs. Hugh drop in numbers of people because yards are getting smaller. There are less people going to meetings. At Maroondah we were averaging 160 people to a meeting. Now if we get 40 attending we are shouting from the rafters. The biggest change I have seen are two things. Compact growing plants because people have less space. The pot plant trade has grown, like Phalanopsis in the supermarkets as a throw away. It used to be African violets, they realise they can force the Phalanopsis along and get them into flower. People will spend \$30 or \$40.

The biggest change is the reduced number of people growing orchids and are involved in orchid clubs. To be quite honest with you. I have hammered as hard as I can, I don't know what's going to happen in February with our club. No vice-president for a year. This is my third, third year term. Someone's got to stand up. VOC has closed, fallen over because of the same situation. Every club is going through it. Every volunteer organisation, it doesn't matter what it is, is finding it harder and harder to get people to have time to do honorary things.

When did you become part of OSCOV and the Maroondah Orchid Society?

I was a foundation member of Maroondah. My first presidency finished in 1982. This is my second stint as president since then. I was president of ANOS and treasurer of ANOS in Victoria for years. I am now a life member of ANOS in Victoria and patron of ANOS Incorporated, the national body. I have been a continuous financial member of ANOS Inc. for over 50 years.

Why are orchid clubs important?

They're important for two things, social interaction and sharing of knowledge of the huge range of genera of orchids that is in the world. The pleasure of growing orchids and sharing them with other people. Because when I first came to Victoria it was very different. The mature people in clubs were very shy in sharing their knowledge, but that's changed and that's wonderful.

My highlights were presenting at the 1985 RHS Conference in London. Prior to that was doing a presentation at the Santa Barbara conference in America, both on Australian Natives. In those days I did albino gene breeding just to test Mendel's colour law. I had a particular white form of Den. Ellen that I called 'Snow White' that appeared to not carry the Den. kingianum red gene. I used the Den. Ellen 'Snow White' with two or three different white Dendrobium hybrids and got a 100% white seedlings, some of which I still have growing today.

What is the impact of COVID on clubs?

It will be interesting to see when we open again how clubs people adapt to whatever the circumstance we are able to operate in. At this stage nobody knows what the regulations are going to be for communal gatherings. I just hope that we get to February we will have a meeting without restrictions. I think the first half of next year will be a wait and see situation.

Interviewer: Leo Orland

A LAST THOUGHT:

Why do scuba divers fall backwards into the water?

If they fell forwards they'd still be in the boat.

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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