

# MAROONDAH ORCHID SOCIETY

## INCORPORATED

# MONTHLY NEWS LETTER

Lycastes are orchids of the  
New World Tropics and Subtropics



Lycaste Club Emblem

Volume : 45 - Issue : 4

**Next Meeting: Friday – 20 May 2022. 8:00PM**

**Venue: St. Timothy's Catholic  
Community School Hall  
21 Stevens Road, Vermont.  
(Melway, Map 62 Ref.G3)**

**ITEM OF THE EVENING: VOOTY 2021 Awards.**

**Topical Chat:** Autumn jobs. Bring in your plant for discussion that you have done/worked on following on from what/how to do was discussed at April topical chat.

**Supper:** Please bring a plate

**Special Effort:** Tickets at door \$1.00 or 3 for \$2.00

**Sales Table:** Pots, stakes, labels and hangers – C. Luth

**Bench Competition:** Bench Commentary – D. Weise

## President's Report

A much better attendance of 30 members and visitors at our April Club Meeting. Those present enjoyed John Varigos' talk, with accompanying photos, on his visit to the Malay border and Cameron Highlands. One point of note was that, at several nurseries, the growers suspend the pots of plants from above allowing air to flow all around the pots and providing good drainage. Gee whiz, the photos of the plates of food for his meals really touched the tastebuds and made one's mouth water!

The Topical Chat about repotting, potting on or dividing plants was informative, generated discussion and gave those present a 'kit bag' of ideas for Autumn jobs with our orchids. Spikes are beginning to show on Cymbidium plants and one must insert stakes in preparation for tying up the spikes as soon as they are of sufficient length.

For members who have not been in the best of health over recent months I wish you a speedy recovery and look forward to meeting with you at our Club Meetings soon. Our next Club Meeting will be held Friday 20 May 2022 at the same place and time.

*Regards*

Ron Coleman

### **REMINDER: Membership Renewal**

The committee has decided that membership fees for financial year 2022/2023 will remain at the same level it has been for many years.

Fees are due 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022.

Adult (single) \$16.00, Family \$20.00, Junior (16 years and under) \$5.00

Please note – to enter or sell plants at the Spring Show a member must be a financial member no later than the Members' Meeting (16 September 2021).

You can pay in person to Edith Yu-Chan

Or you can pay via direct debit to the following bank account –

**BSB: 063167 Account number: 10107735**

Please remember to fill in the reference field with your name.

Thank you!

Thank you!

### **SALES TABLE - Cheryl Luth**

**To buy** – Check out the very good range of slimline, squat and basket pots, hangers, stakes and labels at very competitive prices for members.

**To sell** – Members are welcome to bring orchids or orchid related goods to sell on the Sales Table.

The club receives 15% commission on sales. Please fill out the appropriate sales document and make sure you put a price tag/sticker on the plant or goods.

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

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

#### **Current M.O.S. Inc. Committee:**

**President** Ron Coleman (M) 0477 311 188

**Vice Presidents:** David Cannon (M) 0418 394 282  
Vacant

**Secretary:** Leo Orland (M) 0419 884 492.  
email: [leoorland@totalfundraising.com.au](mailto:leoorland@totalfundraising.com.au)

**Treasurer:** Graeme Moffat (H) 9726 5793  
**Committee** Leanne Le (M) 0416 818 290  
Daniel Tung  
Jim Foster-Johnson (M) 0412 366 686  
Edith Yu-Chan (M) 0411 378 096  
Heather Coleman  
Claudia Ng

**Membership Secretary:** Edith Yu-Chan





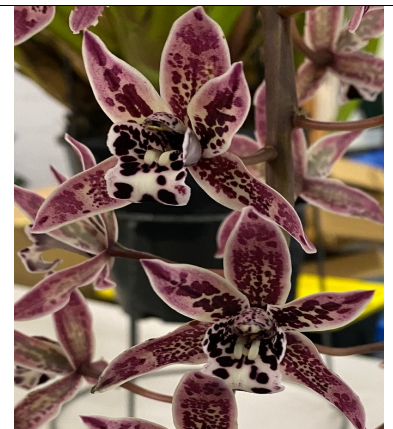




**Newsletter:** Leo Orland

### **Storage Space Needed**

Maroondah Orchid Society needs to store various items that are needed for our spring show and other MOS activities. If you have or know someone who may have space available, 3 metres x 3 metres approx., please contact Ron on 0477 311 188. Thank you.



## Interesting Plants From the April Meeting

		
<p>J. Foster-Johnson's Onc. (Nona x Flexuosum) x Endervinum</p>	<p>E &amp; T Stiles's Dendrobium Hibiki</p>	<p>G. McCully's Dendrobium Mega</p>
		
<p>Tu Le's Dendrochilum uncatum</p>	<p>D. Cannon's Cymbidium Hugh Gordon 'Freckles' x canaliculatum 'Esk'</p>	<p>G &amp; M Moffat's Cym. Last Chance</p>
		
<p>S. Kappl's Sarc. Velvet 'Chocolate'</p>	<p>J. Foster-Johnson's Paph. Leyburnense Magnifica</p>	<p>C. Luth's 1<sup>st</sup> Onc. trulliform</p>

## BENCH COMPETITION - March – 2022

<b>JUDGES VOTE</b>	Onc. (Nona x Flexuosum) x Endervinum	c	J. Foster-Johnson
<b>POPULAR VOTE</b>	Dendrobium Hibiki	c	E & T Stiles
<b>BEST IN SECTION</b>			
<b>Open</b>	Onc. (Nona x Flexuosum) x Endervinum	c	J. Foster-Johnson
<b>Intermediate</b>	Dendrobium Mega	c	G. McCully
<b>Novice</b>	Dendrochilum uncatum	c	Tu Le
	<b>Open Section</b>		
<b>Miltonia</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Milt. Guanaburra	c	J. Foster-Johnson
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Milt. Guanaburra	c	L. Orland
<b>Australian Native Dendrobium Hybrid</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Den. Graeme Banks	c	D. Cannon
<b>Australian Native – Sarcophilus Species</b>	1st Sarc. pallipallidus	c	J. Foster-Johnson
<b>Australian Native – Sarcophilus Hybrid</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> . Sarc. Velvet Chocolate	C	S. Kappl
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sarc. Evening Star	C	J. Foster-Johnson
<b>Laeliinae Large</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> SLC Mari's Beat	c	J. Foster-Johnson
<b>Laeliinae Intermediate</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Cat. Mini Purple 'Tamami'	c	J. Foster-Johnson
	2 <sup>nd</sup> SLC Mari's Beat	c	C. Luth
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Cat. Iced Beau	C	J. Foster-Johnson
<b>Laeliinae Cluster &amp; Novelty</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Cat. Cherry Bee x Gaudebec	C	C. Luth
<b>Any Other Hybrid</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Porterara Blue Boy	c	J. Foster-Johnson
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Prosthechea Edith Arakawa 'Sophie'	c	L. Orland
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Prosthechea Edith Arakawa 'Sophie'	c	L. Orland
<b>Species Any Genera – The America's</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Onc. trulliform	C	C. Luth
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Ornithophora radiconc	c	J. Foster-Johnson
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Gomesa radicans	c	E & T Stiles

<b>Species Any Genera – Asia</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Cym. elegans	c	J. Foster-Johnson
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Dendrochilum latifolium	c	E & T Stiles
<b>Species Any Other Genera – Other</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Angrecum distinchum	C	E & T Stiles
<b>Intermediate Cymbidium</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Last Chance	c	G & M Moffat
<b>Miniature Cymbidium</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> April Showers	c	J. Foster-Johnson
<b>Masdevallia Hybrid</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Copper Fire x (Triangularis x Macura)	c	J. Foster-Johnson
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Harlequinette ‘Beenak’	c	E & T Stiles
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Alpha Sunrise ‘Beenak’	c	E & T Stiles
<b>Masdevallia Species</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> sanctae - inesae	c	E & T Stiles
	2 <sup>nd</sup> exquisita	c	E & T Stiles
	3 <sup>rd</sup> paivaea	c	S. Kappl
<b>Dendrobium</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Hibiki	c	E & T Stiles
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Mingles Sapphire	c	C. Luth
<b>Paphiopedilum</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Leyburnense Magnifica	c	J. Foster-Johnson
<b>Oncidiinae Medium</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Onc. (Nona x Flexuosum) x Endervinum	c	J. Foster-Johnson
<b>Oncidiinae Small</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Sydney	c	J. Foster-Johnson
	<b>Intermediate Section</b>		
<b>Australian Native – Dendrobium Hybrid</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Den. Mega	c	G. McCully
<b>Oncidiinae Medium</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Miltonia Guanabara	c	L. Walker-Smith
	<b>Novice Section</b>		
<b>Species Any Genera - Asia</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Dendrochilum uncatum	c	Tu Le
<b>Oncidiinae Medium</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Miltonia Unknown	c	J. Wong
<b>Seedling Flowering For The First Time</b>			
<b>Open</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Cymbidium Hugh Gordon ‘Freckles’ x canaliculatum ‘Esk’	c	D. Cannon
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sarc. Velvet x Amelia	c	S. Kappl

## ORCHID SHOWS 2022

Show	Date/Time	Venue
Goulburn Valley	Sat 14 May 9-4, Sun 15 May 10-3	Shepparton Harness Racing Track Hall, Melbourne Rd, Kialla
Melbourne Eastern Orchid Society	Sat 11 June 9-4, Sun 12 12-4	Burwood Heights Uniting Church, 347 Blackburn Rd, Burwood East
Geelong	Sat 25 June 10-4, Sun 26 June 10-4	Christ Church Hall, Cnr. Moorabool and McKillop Streets
Country Challenge	Sat 2 July 12.00-4, Sun 3 July 9-3	Laidlaw Park 78 Patrick Street Stawell
Bayside	24-Jul-22 Shopping Centre hours	Endeavour Hills Shopping Centre, Cnr Matthew Flinders Av & Heatherton Rd, Endeavour Hills
Gippsland	19 Aug -20 Aug Centre hours	Mid-Valley Shopping Centre, Princes Highway
OSCOV	Fri 26 Aug -Sun 28 Aug 9am-4pm	'KCC Park', 655 Western Port Highway, Skye,
Sale & District	Sat 3 Sept 9-4, Sun 4 Sept 10-3	VRI Hall, Pettit Drive (Opposite the Sale Railway Station)
South Gippsland	Fri 09, 9.30 -4.30, Sat 10, 9.30-4	Wonthaggi Workmen's Club, 75 Graham Street, Wonthaggi
Cymbidium Orchid Society	Sat 10 Sept 9-4, Sun 11 Sept 9-4	Mt Waverley Community Centre. Miller Crescent Mt Waverley
Bairnsdale	Sat 17 Sept 9-4, Sun 18 Sept 9-3	Dalsens Building, 11 Dalmahoy Street, Bairnsdale
Southern Suburbs	Sat 17 Sept 10-4, Sun 18 Sept 10-4	Snr. City. Hall, 964 Nepean Hwy. (Cnr. Exley Dr.)
Mid-Murray	Sat 17 Sept 10-4, Sun 18 Sept 10-3.30	Kerang Basketball Stadium Maxwell Street Kerang
West Gippsland	Sat 17 Sept 9-4, Sun 18 Sept 9-4	Anglican Church Hall, Cnr. Princes Way & Francis Ave, Drouin.
NEMOS	Sat 17 Sep, 9-4 Sun 18 Sep 10-4	Bulleen Heights Secondary School 221 Manningham Rd Lower Templestow
Geelong	Sat 17 Sept 10-4, Sun 18 Sept 10-4	Christ Church Hall, Cnr. Moorabool and McKillop Streets
Goulburn Valley	Sat 24 Sep, 9-4 Sun 25 Sep 10-3	Shepparton Harness Racing Track, Melbourne Rd, Kialla
Berwick	Sat 24 Sept 9-4, Sun 25 Sept 9-4	Senior Citizens' Hall, 112 High Street Berwick
Maroondah	Sat 24 Sep, 9-5 Sun 25 Sep 9-4	St. Timothy's Catholic School, 21 Stevens Rd Vermont
ANOS (Vic)	Sat 24 Sept 9-4, Sun 25 Sept 9-4	Mt Waverley Community Centre
Stawell	Fri 30 Sep 10-5 Sat 01 Oct, 10-4 Sun 02 Oct 10-3	Stawell Entertainment Centre, Town Hall, 117 Main St Stawell

Warrnambool	Sat 1 Oct 9 -4, Sun 2 Oct 9 - 3	Our Lady Help of Christian Hall , 28 Selby Rd, Warrnambool
Gippsland	30 Sept - 01 Oct Centre hours	Mid-Valley Shopping Centre, Princes Highway
MEOS	Sat 1 Oct, 9-4, Sun 2 Oct, 12-4	Burwood Heights Uniting Church, 347 Blackburn Rd, Burwood East
Ringwood	Sat 1 Oct 9.00-4, Sun 2 Oct 9.00-4	Keystone Hall 20 Civic Square Croydon 3136
Bendigo	Fri 7 Oct 1-4 Sat 8 Oct, 10-4 Sun 9 Oct 10-1	Eaglehawk Soccer Club, 5 Murdock St, California Gully
Colac	Sat 08 Oct 9-4, Sun 09 Oct 10-4	Colac Show Grounds Cnr. Bruce St & Princess Hwy
St Arnaud	Sat 08 Oct 9-5, Sun 09 Oct 10-4	Town Hall Napier St, St Arnaud
Cobden	Sat 15 Oct 9.30-4, Sun 16 Oct 10-3.30	Civic Hall, Victoria Street
Yarra Valley Orchid Society	Sat 15 Oct 9- 4, Sun 16 Oct 9-3	Public Hall, 590 Warburton Highway Seville
Ballarat	Fri 21 Oct 12-5, Sat 22-Sun 23 10-3	Federation University, Cnr. Gillies and Gregory Streets
Bayside	Sat 22 Oct 9 - 5 Sun 23 Oct 9 - 4	Cranbourne Public Hall, 166-168 South Gippsland Hwy.
Stawell/(Halls Gap)	Sat 29 Oct 9.30- 4 Sun 30 Oct 9.30 - 4	Centenary Hall, 115 Grampians Road Halls Gap
Ringwood / Yarra Valley Orchid Society	Sat 29 Oct 9-4, Sun 30 Oct 9-4	Keystone Hall, Keystone Hall Civic Square, Croydon
CGOC Sarc Show	Sat 12 Nov 1-4, Sun 13 Nov 9-3	Dahlsens Building, 11 Dalmahoy Street, Bairnsdale

## PREPARING AND SHOWING ORCHID PLANTS

by Alan Hope

I'm sometimes asked "How many plants will I need to set up a display?" Many Spring Show schedules provides for mini-stands (maximum of ten plants) as well as the more traditional larger displays. Obviously each will require a different number of plants but half a dozen plants would probably be adequate for a mini-stand. You need to check the area allocated for mini-stands and then practise your set-up at home. You'll be amazed at how attractive a small group of orchids can look and the satisfaction that building a display will provide! I can clearly remember my first stand as a novice. It comprised a mere nine cymbidiums plus the beautiful Australian native species *Dendrobium falcorostrum*. My stand didn't win but I gained experience and a desire to do better next time.

**Preparing Your Plants.** A well groomed and presented plant is an excellent start to winning the hearts of the judges. Cleaning and tidying-up is rather time-consuming but it is absolutely necessary. It is probably best to start with the raceme (flower spike), which should have all brown sheaths removed. In most cases the stake and ties will already be in place and you will



have only to trim the ends of any ties that protrude. If the raceme requires a stake, remember to allow the raceme to follow its natural inclination. Pulling an arching or pendulous raceme upright when the flowers are partially or fully open will look unnatural, and may also cause damage.

Use a solution of detergent or Cleansel® and a small sponge or cloth to clean the leaves and the pot. But take care not to pull out the central leaves of any new growths or to damage the flowers. Any scale found on the leaves can be removed by wiping them with cotton wool soaked in methylated spirits. Remove dry husks and dead leaves by splitting them apart and then pulling each section away from the bulb separately. If any leaves have black tips or unsightly damage, you can trim them to a natural leaf-tip shape. Ensure that you sterilise any scissors or secateurs used, especially if you intend to use them on more than one plant. It's a good idea to have several pairs soaking in a sterilising solution, such as a strong solution of Tricleanium®, so as to avoid cross-infection as you move from one plant to the next. At this stage your plant should be looking great. Note its best position for viewing and insert a removable label to help you place the pot in the best orientation at set-up time.

**Labels.** You will need to label your plants according to the instructions in the show schedule. Use stiff card of the required size. White card is often used but if there are many labels, the mass of white cards is distracting. A neutral colour, such as leaf-green, results in a better overall appearance. Correct spelling and the use of large print is important, as the card should be legible when viewed from a distance of 2 m. Blu-Tac® can be used to fasten the label either to the foliage or to a stake, or you can use a piece of thin, straight wire which has a double loop at its top to hold the card.

**The Stand.** You are usually required to build your own stand, so you may need to obtain some foam boxes or to devise other structural materials. You will also need some black or green covering to hide the boxes and perhaps to disguise the pots. If the Society provides a pre-fabricated stand your job will be made a lot easier. Put your best orchid in a position where it can be clearly seen – probably in the centre at eye level. If you have a plant with pendulous spikes that extend below the base of the pot, it can be better displayed by placing the pot in a stack of pots of the same size. Alternatively, you can place the pot on top of another up-turned pot. However, in this case you will need to tape the pots together to avoid the possibility of the plant falling if its pot is bumped or moved during judging.

**Transporting Plants.** The aim is to arrive at the show venue with the flowers undamaged. Place the pots in a foam box or in a protected position in your car and ensure they can't move or topple over if you have to brake suddenly. Be careful that the racemes don't become entangled, because many a plant has been ruined when a flower is caught up as the plant is being removed from the car. Last, but not least, don't forget to check in your plants with the show marshal on arrival and receive registration numbers.

# History of Cool Growing Australian Native Epiphytic Orchid Hybridizing

By David Cannon

In mid to late 1800's Dendrobium plants taken back to England. Plants included Den. kingianum and Den. speciosum.

The first recorded was Den. kingianum that was sent to England in 1843 by John Garne Bidwell (then Government Botanist and Director of the Sydney Botanical Gardens). John Bidwell named the orchid after his friend Captain P. King RN and it was originally called Captain King's Dendrobium.

The earliest illustration I have located was of a Den. kingianum var Album that was published as part of a series of books called The Orchid Album in 1888.

1882. First hybrid registered by Mr. Lawrence in England as Den. Specio-kingianum. As we now know subsequently natural hybrids were found and given the name Den. x delicatum

The first recorded original natural hybrid plant found was on Spring Bluff just outside of Toowoomba in 1884 and was validated by Alick Dockrill and parts are still in cultivation as divisions were sold in the 1960's in Sydney as Den. x delicatum 'Dockrill type form'. I still have divisions growing today and they grow very easily and flowers every year. Just an ordinary orchid but part of our orchid history.



Den. x delicatum 'Dockrill type form natural'

In 1920-30's numerous clones were found on Allum Mountain, NSW by a Dr. Kesteven and were given the name of Den. kestevenii by Rev Rupp. One particular clone was called Den. kestervenii 'Buff' which was first described in the Proceedings of The Linnean Society of NSW for the Year 1931. It was featured in John Bisset's, a Sydney nursery's, 1935-36 catalogue and with the selling price of 5/- shillings.



Den. kestervanii 'Buff'

Noel Jupp, Riverdene Nursery, listed Den. Kestevenii as a parent in his catalogues in 1970's. Many more clones were collected in the 1930's and 1940's.

In 1935 a natural clone that was called Den.delicatum 'Apple Blossom' due to its colour was found on Mt.Lindsay, NSW. This has proved over many years to be a very vigorous grower and flowerer and is still in many collections today as plants were sold by Bert Overall in Sydney in the 1960's.



Den. delicatum 'Apple Blossom'

Another natural hybrid was up on the mid Queensland coast and was called Den.nitidum. Den.nitidum is now known as a variety of the natural hybrid Den.delicatum.



Den.nitidum

Den.kestervanii is now known as varieties of the natural hybrid, Den.delicatum. Den. X delicatum has been man made many times by a large number of people which has resulted in a vast variety of shapes and colour's.

1928. Second hybrid registered was by a German Wool buyer in Sydney, Dr.Schmidth. The hybrid is Den.Ellen, a cross between D.kingianum and Den. tetragonum. The particular variety of Den.kingianum was known as 'Schmidts' variety and was sold in Sydney well into the 1950's-1960's and can still be found today as it is a low growing variety.

1935. Earliest catalogue I have been able to locate where a number of Native Species are listed for sale including the Den. kestervanii mentioned before is from John Bisset in Sydney.

1961. Next registration. Den. Bardo Rose by Bert Overall in Newport,Sydney. Bert lived in Bardo Road and his wife's name was Rose, so hence the name Den.Bardo Rose. This was a result of a crossing between Den.kingianum and Den. falcorostrum. Bert had a small listing of plants that he sold. Again Den.Bardo Rose has been re made many times.



Den. Bardo Rose

1960's During the 1960's Ira Butler from Sydney began hybridizing with both Dendrobiums and Sarcochilus and is considered by many to be the father of hybridizing.

Late 1960's Wayside Nursery in Port Macquarie were raising Ira's seed and selling his crosses through their numerous catalogues. Roger Bedford in Sydney was also a friend of Ira and Roger was selling Ira hybrids from late 60's through early 80's.

During this period of time another man in Sydney, Reg Leaney was doing a small number of hybrids. From this period of time many nurseries started to release catalogue's with a varied range of Native Hybrids.

Following were some of them;

Late 60's early 1970's onwards.

Noel Jupp of East Gresford , NSW Riverdene nursery.Noel was a foundation member of ANOS Newcastle and recently attended their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations.

Sunny Bank in QLD.

Neil Finch, Original Down Under Native Orchid nursery'. Newcastle

Deans in Sydney

Dos Peblos, Sydney.

Phil Spence, Sydney.

Ted & Barbara Gregory, Mt.Tambourine.Qld

I started hybridizing in late 1960's through to the early 90's and included albino gene breeding. Started hybridizing again in 2007.

Izzy Klein in Melbourne made some great hybrids in 1990's.

Wayne Turville, Australian Orchid Nursery, from 1990's until now was the largest producer of Native hybrids

Other noted Nurseries that have a good range of Native Hybrids currently are Ray Clement of Tinonee Orchid Nursery, Tinonee NSW and Lloyd Edwards, Earth to Joy, Lorne NSW.

With regard to our Australian Native Cymbidiums, the American Nurseries saw their potential very early and started to use our Cymbidium specie for breeding in the 1960's. Greenoakes nursery registered 2 of the first being Cym. Cricket (madidium x devonianum) in 1964.



Cymbidium Cricket

They followed on in 1967 with Cym. Abundance, being (Lyoth x canaliculatum). 1966 saw Cym. Little Black Sambo registered being (madidium x canaliculatum)



Cym. Little Black Sambo

1972 saw Greenoakes again with Cym. Kuranda being (madidium x suave)

1972, Stewart's Nursery, California registered Cym. Sunshine Falls being (King Arthur x madidum). Stewarts 1979 catalogue listed a 3 bulb plant of Sunshine Falls at US\$75.00. I still have a piece from that plant as I imported the plant at that time.

1980, Cym. Giselle being (Korintji x madidium) was registered by Stewarts.

1982 saw my registration of Cym. Sweet Devon being from (suave x devonianum) from a December, 1977 pollination.



Cym. Sweet Devon

From 1960's onwards intergeneric hybrids have been made using our *Sarcochilus* as parents,  
Mid 1960's Wayside Nurseries made a number of hybrids using *Sarcochilus* and *Phalenopsis* and they are named *Sarconopsis*.

During 1980's a number of hybridist's made additional *Sarconopsis* hybrids. They are mostly warm growing but one particular hybrid made by Ken Russell being *Sarconopsis* Noelene Russell grows in a cold glasshouse for me. Wally Upton made a very good hybrid called *Porterara* Blue Boy which also grows well in a cold glasshouse in Melbourne.

From this time onwards we have seen many new hybrids using our Native *Cymbidiums* as the interest has grown for smaller, compact plants and with some of them being pendulous. One of the most interesting I believe is *Cym. Aussie Trio* being (*Kuranda* x *canaliculatum*) registered by Kevin Weston from Adelaide in 2003.

## WHAT SIZE POT SHOULD I USE?

by Brian Milligan

It probably depends to some extent on the genus you plan to repot but in general one should use a pot large enough to accommodate one or two year's extra growth but no more. I fully agree with Alfred Smollet, who in 1927 wrote in *The Orchid Review* "I am a great believer in small pots. A common error with beginners is using pots unreasonably large. All beginners in Orchid growing are optimists, and the large pot is the outward and visible sign of this optimism". One of the main problems in using overly large pots is that the potting mix tends to remain wet for too long after watering, especially in winter.

The choice of pot size is largely a matter of common sense. When the orchid is knocked from its pot, cursory examination will show that, in most cases, the majority of its roots run around the circumference of the pot in preference to filling the pot completely. And if you examine their condition you will generally find that those growing around the perimeter are in a much healthier state than those in the centre of the mix. Dome® pots are designed with a dome in their bottom to eliminate the area most prone to root decay. An alternative is to



place a small, inverted pot in the base of a larger one before repotting. Cymbidiums roots of a healthy plant generally fill the entire pot and remain in good condition for a couple of years. But thereafter, as the bark begins to decay, the roots in the centre of the pot are usually the first to deteriorate.

It's also important when repotting to ensure that the drainage holes in the pot are unblocked. Plastic pots made using old dies (moulds) sometimes have the drainage holes partly or fully blocked with plastic. It's important to open the drainage holes fully, using a lino knife or similar sharp implement. Sometimes I enlarge the holes at the same time to provide extra drainage. Some growers use an electric drill or hot soldering iron to make extra drainage holes in their cymbidium pots and swear that it results in faster growth.

Pots are produced in a variety of shapes and heights, some with far more drainage holes than others. Best of all, in my opinion, are Port Pots®, which have an extensive network of drainage holes in their bottom. In general, shallow pots seem to suit Australian native dendrobiums best. Net pots, designed to provide excellent drainage, certainly do that but they dry out quickly and therefore need to be watered twice as often as pots with fewer drainage holes. Oncidium seedlings do well for me in them but the roots tend to grow in and out through the mesh holes. This leads to problems at repotting time – either one cuts off the offending roots or one simply puts the whole pot into a larger one and tops up with new mix; each procedure has its disadvantages.

The above discussion refers to plastic pots, by far the most common in general use. But the older pots made of baked clay (terra cotta) are useful in certain cases. Because they are porous, water evaporates from their exterior, producing a cooling effect, which can be beneficial in hot weather. However, this is a disadvantage in winter, when it's better to keep the roots warm. Some growers prefer clay pots or saucers for temperamental orchids, such as *Dendrobium cuthbertsonii* and *Sarcochilus ceciliae*, which need a reliable supply of water but hate 'wet feet'. But in general I believe that black plastic pots are better, especially in winter when they help to warm the roots whenever the sun shines on them.

#### **LAST THOUGHT:**

A newly wed couple were talking about their new home.

Husband says "How about some flowers?"

The wife slyly mentions "Or Kids to help liven the place"

The Husband smiles and replies good idea.

The next day, the husband brings home orchids

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

## NEWSLETTER



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

### DISCLAIMER

Maroondah Orchid Society Incorporated, Executive and Committee will not take any responsibility for the results of any action taken on advice given or views expressed by any member or invited speaker at any meeting or show. Views and opinions in this Newsletter by authors of articles do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of Maroondah Orchid Society Incorporated or its Executive or Committee.