

*The New Zealand*  
Internet  
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b><i>This issue's cover</i></b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b><i>Editorial</i></b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b><i>Feedback</i></b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b><i>News item: Spraying and plant damage</i></b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b><i>Preparing your Orchids for a show</i></b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b><i>Have you ever tried to find out the name of that Orchid?</i></b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b><i>Two rare New Zealand Native Orchids found again</i></b> ...	<b>9</b>
<b><i>My Orchid of the Season - Laelia purpurata</i></b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b><i>North Shore Orchid Society – Sarcochilus and Other Genera Show</i></b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b><i>Bottom Heat for Baby Orchids</i></b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b><i>Wider Worlds: Pteris argyrea (Silver brake, Striped brake)</i></b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b><i>The Four Vanda Leaf Types</i></b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b><i>Pest Control with Neem</i></b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b><i>Internet gleanings</i></b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b><i>Some Chloraea Orchids from Chile</i></b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b><i>Publication Details and Charges</i></b> .....	<b>23</b>
<b><i>Society Notices</i></b> .....	<b>25</b>
<b><i>Classified advertisements</i></b> .....	<b>30</b>
<b><i>Advertising Section</i></b> .....	<b>31</b>

### **This issue's cover**

*Laelia purpurata* is in flower at this time of the year. Here is the clone *L. purpurata* var 'Telh', as a well-grown and flowered plant. For more on this species, see Franz Zumbuhl's article in this issue. Grower and photographer Franz Zumbuhl.

### **Editorial: Wider Worlds**

The editors recently hosted a local orchid society to their garden. The orchids, frankly, were looking fairly scrubby (we believe acidic rainwater lies behind some of the problems, but that's another tale). However our visitors seemed happy touring the garden and a number went home with cuttings of various plants. That old-fashioned favourite (with gardeners and tuis) *Abutilon* (often called Chinese Lantern although it comes from Chile) attracted particular attention and requests for propagating material. Which brings us to the point that we shouldn't be too narrow-minded when it comes to choosing which plants to grow. We like orchids very much, but our plant houses also contain ferns, begonias, gesneriads, hoyas, bromeliads... They generally co-exist happily, although ferns and gesneriads will colonise an orchid pot if they think no-one

is watching! Hence our occasional column 'Wider Worlds' which emphasises these other genera. In the days when the magazine 'Subtropicals' was being published, lovers of these various plants were well catered for, but those days are past. So if any of our readers wish to send us articles about the genera listed above, or other unusual subtropical plants, or growing orchids in the garden in association with other plants, we are happy to publish your material.

**On page 26 of this issue is a registration form for the Taranaki summer orchid display. If you wish to attend, just print this off (select 'current page' from your printer options) and send it off.**

## Feedback

Thanks, Nick and Elizabeth;

I found an article in the previous edition with particularly valuable information on the use of shell/dolomite in orchid-growing substrates. I ran into grave difficulties when I switched to rain water a year ago (I grow mostly cacti, and very few of those weeds called bromeliads :-)) - very poor root growth, leaf-tip dieback on some orchids; cacti growth simply stopped dead...

Incorporating shell available from Palmers for \$11 a bag in new mix has made a huge difference, but the problem with magnesium still exists - I want to avoid arbitrary doses of Epsom Salts - for the plants, of course. I might try throwing a handful of dolomite into each rain water storage drum and let it dissolve in its own time.

I'd suggest that Paphiopedilums are not the only plants which respond well to optimum amounts of calcium and magnesium, particularly when solely rain water is used.

Regards,  
Dave Kirk (esprit@slingshot.co.nz)

And an answer

Hi Dave

What sort of roof is your rainwater collected from? We had a problem years ago with zinc toxicity - the Zn was leaching through a paint coat (fairly old) from the galvanised roofing iron below. We found high levels of Zn in the orchid tissue and a significant amount in the water. Odonts, masdevallias and bromeliads were the most affected. The increasing acidity of rainwater, world-wide, was the apparent culprit, plus the local(ish) geothermal activity didn't help.

Hope this helps  
Nick Miller

Dear Nick and Elizabeth,  
Thank you for another very informative Newsletter.

One piece that caught my eye was the Editorial re "Garden Visits".

When I joined the Taranaki Orchid Society in 1982 we had "Shed Visits" every second month. Two or three orchid growers within a neighbourhood opened their glasshouses on a Sunday afternoon between 1.30 - 4.00. One just ambled in and out to have a chat and a look, learning how other folk handled their precious 'babies': all very, very informal. Then this routine was changed: to have just one place to visit, again on Sunday, but doing afternoon tea. This did not last very long, and for quite a while nothing similar happened.

With a dwindling membership in mind, the Midweek or "Day Meeting" was born to encourage new/younger members. Included in that session, 9 to Midday, are morning tea and a raffle, so it's a real social occasion, which seems to attract as many if not more members than the regular night meeting. But, there is a big **but** : If we try to sign up people under the retirement age to keep our great hobby going, these folk have to go to work on a weekday morning! And another thing, the second meeting is in danger of splitting the society in two. Some attend either the night meeting or the Thursday morning one.

It is hard/impossible to please everyone, I suppose.

Frank Zumbuhl (franzanda@xtra.co.nz)

## **News item: Spraying and plant damage**

Sent by Allan Watson (aj.watson@xtra.co.nz)

### **Orchid grower dumps crop in protest**

**4:00AM** Tuesday Sep 22, 2009

By [Isaac Davison](#)

An orchid grower driven to desperation after losing his entire crop and income to a new spray dumped thousands of his flowers in a public protest at the devastation the insecticide has caused. Tauranga grower Paul Hulshof poured a truckload of affected cymbidium orchids on the doorstep of Bayer Crop Science's Glenfield headquarters yesterday. Mr Hulshof said the insecticide Oberon, distributed in New Zealand by Horticulture, had totally destroyed his crop and severely affected at least 30 other orchid growers. Twenty-one months since he applied the insecticide he was still seeing deformities in his plants.

He said he was appealing to the company to compensate him so he could return to his livelihood. "I have become desperate. All I want to do is hide in a greenhouse and produce some beautiful flowers." Oberon, manufactured by German crop science and pharmaceutical conglomerate Bayer AG, was withdrawn from the market by its New Zealand subsidiary in May last year.

It went on sale again the next month, but as a treatment for tomatoes and capsicums, not for ornamental flowers. Mr Hulshof was also concerned that the insecticide interfered with the reproductive system of insects, and was being used in crops grown for human consumption.

New Zealand Export Growers Association chairman John van der Linden said orchid exports were worth \$20 million a year. Forty per cent of New Zealand orchids had been sprayed with Oberon, and 20 per cent had been lost. "It has not destroyed the industry, but I don't think it will recover because the key members are leaving, and growers are pretty dispirited." He said Bayer had been quick to compensate growers for lost cashflow.

Bayer Crop Science country manager John Neal said the company had not admitted liability, but had settled 14 of 45 cases with growers, and would have half the claims settled by next month. Mr Hulshof said it took him 14 years to develop mature and unique flowers, which enabled him to make a profit. "It takes so long to build up the plants, we don't have the years to do this again. I am 55. To grow my plants again to their 2007 standard I will be in my 70s."

Mr Neal said long-term losses were factored into growers' claims by Bayer's loss adjusters. Growers did not blame crop destruction on the insecticide itself, but on poor labelling and instructions. It is understood they were not told the spray should only be used in cool months and should be sprayed only lightly. Those who used the product in summer months suffered the worst damage.

Densely sprayed crops were destroyed, and others produced deformed flower heads and other abnormalities. Mr Hulshof said local growers' reputations were undermined in their major export regions - United States, Japan, and the Middle East - when they were forced to export substandard flowers to mitigate their losses.

## **Preparing your Orchids for a show.**

Andrew Foster (gfos1111@bigpond.net.au),  
Narre Warren, Vic. Australia.

These guidelines are mainly applicable to Cymbidiums, but are equally relevant to other species. There are 6 main areas that judges look at when assessing an orchid for judging.

- 1. Shape.** The flowers should be symmetrical, circular in outline, and the lip should be wide and fully displayed, with the sepals and petals free from furling and distortion.
- 2. Colour and attractiveness.** Colours should be clear, glistening and fresh, not blurred. All markings and shadings should be well defined. Credit should be given for colours that are unusual or have beauty and appeal.
- 3. Size of the flower.** The larger the flower, the higher the point score relative to what is expected for that species/genus.
- 4. Substance and texture .** The flower should be of good substance and texture, firm, fresh, lustrous and without blemish.
- 5. Habit and arrangement.** The stem should be strong enough to support the inflorescence unaided. It may be straight, arched or pendulous. The flowers should be evenly distributed, well displayed without turning, overlapping or bunching.
- 6. Floriferousness.** With Cymbidiums, no less than 7 open flowers; other species relevant to the normal expectations.

The points allocated for the above 6 areas are 30-30-10-10-10-10, but please realize that judges are only human, and what is really important to one, is not so important to another. An example is three orchids tabled by me at our normal club meeting. The two cymbidiums were not awarded a prize, but the Lycaste won first prize. At our Club Show, one week later, the two cymbidiums won a prize, but the Lycaste didn't! So don't give up!

### **Staking of flowers.**

Stake and train your flowers as they appear.

In Australia, we have spring-loaded yoyos that are hooked onto the flower spike to keep the blooms upright. If you are a fly fisher, they are like the spring loaded clips used to hold floatant. I use hat elastic, available from milliners and a clothes peg to add tension to the blooms.

When you table your orchids, make sure that the stakes are trimmed below the top flower. Use twist ties (like lunch bag ties) to support the flowers.

Make sure that the pot is clean, and that your orchids name tag is prominent and legible!

Please remember the reasons you are growing orchids! Hopefully it is for pleasure!

## Have you ever tried to find out the name of that Orchid?

Allan Watson (aj.watson@xtra.co.nz) :

*With thanks to Cyril Whittaker for the fun generated in finding the name.*



This story is true and the names have not been changed as we both enjoyed the experience. It all started when Cyril Whittaker said to me come around and look at this and when Cyril says that to you, it is certainly worth the look. There was this plant less the flower spike as shown in the picture (above) but what was it? In fact there were a couple.

The labels were almost unreadable and I stress that Cyril had been given the plant. So with the combined power of x-ray vision (both Cyril's and mine) we tried to decipher the name. Most of us tend to look at the plant and think "it looks like a..." and go from there. But this plant looked different, the bulbs were at least 6 inches or 150mm high and they had the look of a giant *Coelogyne* or *Stanhopea* bulb along with leaves to match.

The labels were full-size Venetian Blind. So we started letter by letter. There were three words. The first word looked like **voatium** and that threw us. The second word

came out as **Honalulu** and the third word came out as **wentwothianium** and for those of you that are saying the spelling is wrong well you had to be there because that's how it was spelt. So after that exercise we were none the wiser.

“What's next” I said to Cyril. “Do we consult the ‘Fuller’ encyclopaedia?” For those of you who know George Fuller you will understand. We both thought we needed to find this out ourselves - that way we both learn. So it was into the books. “What orchid is that?” turned up nothing and neither did “Orchid species of the world” so we tried “Orchid Wiz” and still drew a blank. It was time to re-read the label. The second word was easy: it had to be ‘Honolulu’. We felt the third word was ‘wentworthianum’ and the first word still remained a mystery.

Then the penny dropped, when in doubt try “Google” and ask the question. I simply typed in “Orchid with name wentworthianum Honolulu” because by this time I had a hunch that Honolulu was the bridal name, then on the [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oncidium\\_wentworthianum](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oncidium_wentworthianum) site came the picture above.

Bingo, the orchid name was found. Yes that's what the plant is. At one of our society meetings George Fuller enlightened us as to the importance of an orchid label. He is so right. Thanks George; without a label a plant is a plant amongst others but with a label then it becomes that plant.

Look up those books, ask others, try data bases or just Google it. That name will be out there somewhere. It becomes a lot more difficult, however, if all you have is a flower as I overheard George say there are over 1000 hybrid cymbidiums with a white flower.

Labels need to be clear and well maintained. This means you may have to re-write them every couple of years. To find out more about labels type in “Orchid Naming standards” in Google and you will be amazed.

## Two rare New Zealand Native Orchids found again.

by Peter Arthur, Touchwood Books (touchwood@touchwoodbooks.co.nz)

In November 1884 David Balfour, manager of Glenross Station, up the Taihape Road west of Hastings, had his sheep shearing held up by rain so he went for a walk on a part of the Station he called Conical Hill. Here he discovered two native orchids in flower which he sent to William Colenso, missionary, printer and one of NZ's leading botanists, who was living in Napier at the time.

The two orchids, *Pterostylis patens* and *Nematoceras papilosum* were not to be seen again in this area until November 15 this year when NZ native orchid expert Dr Ian St George, of Wellington, went hunting on what he thinks is Conical Hill.

Speaking with Ian St George, I discovered he has just published two new books. One is "Colour Field Guide to the Native Orchids of New Zealand", an 82 page paperback with 213 colour photos of the plants in flower, plus a description, date of discovery and location. This guide, written in conjunction with Eric Scanlen is ideal for identification. \$45.00.

Ian St George has also just finished a huge 412 page, A4 sized paperback "Colenso's Collections", which lists all the plants discovered by Colenso between 1836-1852 and 1879-1899, plus letters, extracts from diaries and other notes he sent with plants to W.J Hooker and then J.D. Hooker at Kew. An amazing amount of research has gone into this new book which has an accompanying CD-ROM. \$65.00

Ian said the obsession with native orchids has turned into an obsession with Colenso and he is now working on a two-volume book covering everything Colenso published in English. He is also compiling another book of everything by or about Colenso which was published in newspapers.

I enjoyed his wry remark about his new obsession--"My wife keeps telling me that Colenso is dead, but that she is still alive."

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## My Orchid of the Season - *Laelia purpurata* Lindley

Franz Zumbuhl ([franlanda@xtra.co.nz](mailto:franlanda@xtra.co.nz)) All plants grown and photographed by author

When searching for literature/information about this beautiful orchid, one gets overwhelmed by the multitude of synonyms for it. But that is not all. There are plenty of named varieties, probably over 300. BUT, that is not all! In the South of Brazil there are societies and shows devoted solely to the species *L. purpurata*. The passionate/fanatical(?) members are totally caught up in the fever. But from a botanical point one has to step back and try to differentiate between a documented “variety” and a horticultural, man-made “variant”.

There are numerous synonyms, at my last count 17. From Lindley 1852-3 to Van Den Berg + M. W. Chase’s 2000 *Sophronitis purpurata* (????), and 2002 *Hadrolaelia purpurata*. I am still sticking to *L. purpurata*.



Back to our *L. purpurata*; the species occurs over a wide area from Rio de Janeiro South to Rio Grande do Sul in coastal regions and on offshore islands. This fact would suggest the plants would demand hot to warm conditions, but *L. purpurata* grows and flowers well in New Plymouth in an unheated glasshouse in fairly bright light, shaded only by frost cloth during winter and 30% shade cloth from end of Sept. to April/May.

All members of this species are potted in No.4 bark in plastic pots. Because of limited space, I re-pot and/or divide perhaps every three years. Back-cutting of the rhizome a year before that usually results in throwing a new growth, therefore filling up the pot right around, and/or giving you a new division. Watering and feeding (weekly and weakly) is done manually, as for the Brazilian cousins of the rupicolous section and Mexican laelias in the same shed.

. The specimens in my place get quite tall, with the club-shaped pseudobulbs 30cm tall, topped by a fleshy, leathery upright leaf 40x7cm. The flower stem, 25cm tall, usually bears 2-5 blooms. These are up to 15 to 25 cm broad. They can be of very poor shape in some cultivars, while others produce wide, flat segments. The trumpet-shaped lip is in most *L. purpurata* the only coloured part of the flower, and so provides the focal point, and is the reason for the name of the variety, the “**semi-alba**” types. But there is more to it than that, as some clones are sporting colour on sepals and/or petals,





*L. purpurata* var. *oculata*

some stripes (**striata**), flares (**flammea**). Other varieties show different designs inside the labellum, i.e. “eyes” (**oculata**) -coloured lines only on the sides of the lip.

So: The name of the variety of a certain plant is not determined by the colour of the labellum only. The position/shape of the markings on the lip, and/or petals have something to do with it as well.

But to most Kiwis, the main difference of named varieties is in the colour of the lip. Probably the best known two varieties here are the variety “**carnea**” the fleshy pinkish lip and “**werkhaeuserii**”, a steely-blue striped lip, both with white sepals/petals. Russell Hutton used to sell a reliable variety he called “Ruby”, a semi-alba with a vinicolor labellum, which always guaranteed a Christmas

flowering.

Years ago, tempted by “youthful noseyness”(curiosity), I wrote to the Alvim Seidel nursery in Brazil requesting their catalogue. Their listed number of *L. purpurata* varieties for sale came to just under one hundred, and their prices, US\$ 7.- for “just” *purpurata* to US\$ 3000 (!) for something



*L. purpurata* var. *sanguinea*

called *L. purpurata* var. Comendador Alvim Seidel, sent my head spinning! But I ordered seed of a few varieties, and Jim Gilchrist sowed them for me. Most of the offspring turned out to be quite presentable, and the display they produce around Christmas time is very pleasing. Just a shame that most are finished by the time of our Taranaki Summer Orchid Show in the second half of January.

If you are in the market for something a bit flamboyant, *L. purpurata* could be your orchid. The plant is not too fussy and is fairly forgiving should you miss the odd watering. Go and get one and treat yourself to a real gem!

## **North Shore Orchid Society – Sarcochilus and Other Genera Show**

Rodney Draper, President NSOS, (draperfam@xtra.co.nz)

After the amalgamation of ANOSNZ in 2008, NSOS decided to hold a show later in the year to accommodate those Aussie natives which flowered then, with specific focus on the genus *Sarcochilus*. We also thought we would see some of the pendulous cymbidiums (*C. devonianum* et al) but this did not eventuate. It was decided to also try a new venue and we hired the St Anne's Hall in Browns Bay for the weekend of 7-8 November to bring orchids to a different area of the North Shore.

The orchids were displayed on long tables in the hall and by prior arrangement Grahame Leafberg had at the end of the hall a fabulous display of mainly *Sarcochilus* but some other genera as well.



***Sarcochilus* (Melba x Sharon)**



***Masdevallia* (coccinea x Carousel)**

The hall was a colourful display of many orchids, some not often seen at shows. The display featured a total of 270 plants of which 110 or 40% were *Sarcochilus*. Interestingly the next largest genus represented was *Masdevallia*, which produced the champion orchid of the show. Other genera that had good numbers were *Cattleya*, *Oncidinae*, *Phalaenopsis* & *Dendrobium*. There was a reasonable

number of people through the door on the Saturday but the Sunday attendance was disappointing. I would like to thank Roy Neale and the Waitakere Orchid Society for their encouragement and support of the show and the Hibiscus Coast Orchid Society and its president Lex Sharp for the loan of staging materials to create a second tier level on the benches. A special thanks to Jenny Walsh (the Walsh Cup is presented to the Champion *Sarcochilus*) for making another trip (she came for our Spring Show as well) together with Bernie all the way from Waitara to support our show and her orchids are simply fantastic. Thanks also to all the NSOS members who helped with the preparation including Wolf Grausch, for encouraging (some would say nagging) us to get things done and arranging the table hire, Ron Reeves for the signs, Annette Gillan for organising the hall and together with John Scott 'manning' the trading table, Chris Hubbert for all



***Sarcochilus* Melba 'Grahame'**

the show administration and Heather Parsons for teas and eats. If I have forgotten to mention your name please accept my humble apologies.

The main awards were:

Champion Orchid of the Show - \$50 -*Masdevallia (coccinea* x Carousel) – Ken Morse

Reserve Champion Orchid of the Show - \$30 – *Sarcochilus* (Melba x Sharon) – Annette Gillan

Champion *Sarcochilus* - **Walsh Cup** - *Sarcochilus* (Melba x Sharon) – Annette Gillan

Reserve Champion *Sarcochilus* –**ANOZNZ Cup** - *Sarcochilus* Rosalie ‘Browns Bay – Jenny Walsh

Most Spectacular *Sarcochilus* – **Leafberg Trophy** - *Sarcochilus* Melba ‘Grahame’ - Grahame Leafberg

Best First Flowering *Sarcochilus* – **Collis Cup** – *Sarcochilus* (Dove x Tin Yin Lara) – Grahame Leafberg

Finally as NSOS wish to establish the venue and event as a regular in the year’s calendar we have already booked the hall for the 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend in November 2010. So if you missed it this year why not put the date in your diary now as I’m sure you will not see a larger display of flowering *Sarcochilus* anywhere else in NZ. On behalf of the members of NSOS, I wish all our friends and fellow orchid enthusiasts a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year.



*Dendrobium Kuniko*

## Bottom Heat for Baby Orchids

By Tony Connelly, revised Oct. 2009. (aredc@xtra.co.nz)

Have you ever asked yourself, “Why is it taking me so long to grow my baby plants to flowering size”? It could be the growing media, but most likely it is the lack of warmth, during the initial growth period.

We often peruse the latest lists and catalogues from orchid nurseries and occasionally select a flask or two at considerable cost, without making proper provision to grow them on. After de-flasking, the first goal is to provide a warm environment, so that the plants may continue to grow without receiving any significant check. The ambient temperature in my growing house fluctuates from 1 deg.C in winter, to 28 deg.C+, in summer. In order to constantly deliver warmth around the root zone of baby plants, regardless of the air temperature, I have finally arrived at a solution that delivers a minimum of 15 deg.C.

My solution is a soil heating cable, complete with thermostat, set in a bed of crusher dust on top of a sturdy growing bench. The cable is plugged into the mains power, via

an isolating transformer. There is danger when using bottom heat that the plants will suffer from low humidity and dry out too quickly. This is where I have gone wrong in the past, using a heat board. To overcome this problem I have devised a system that can be easily set up, with minimal cost.

Polystyrene boxes 600 mm x 400 mm can be acquired from the local supermarket or fish supply, and they make an ideal growing environment. Three of these fit perfectly on a 1200mm long heating pad. Because of the insulating properties of polystyrene, the bottom of the box is removed. The remaining surround, cut to a minimum of 130mm, helps create a warm enclosed environment. A second surround can be placed on top, with a clear cover to create a separate 'Igloo type' climate zone.

On the surface of the bench, position a plastic drip-tray perfectly level, so that water will spill evenly over the sides. An open mesh base is set inside, rising 5 mm above the sides of the tray for the plants to sit on. An average temperature of 20 deg.C around the root zone can be attained and regulated by means of a thermostat, regardless of the surrounding air temperature.

Plants grown by this method have constant warmth, moisture, air, humidity and a clean environment in which to grow. Each box will take 60 plants growing in 50 mm pots. When tightly packed in this manner, there are no gaps and all the heat and moisture rising from the water below, gathers as condensation on the outside of the pots and permeates through the root zone.

The growth rate and health of seedlings taken from a flask, is seamless, and I find *Sarcochilus* planted directly into 50 mm pots need to be sized up to 70 mm pots within 12 to 18 months.



Many Classical type *Sarcochilus* grown in this manner will develop flower spikes in 50 mm pots and need to be shifted to a cooler growing area to develop further. Whatever orchids you choose to grow by this method, the time from flask to flowering could well be halved, or at least reduced by a number of years.

As an alternative to a soil-heating cable, a wood fibre or plastic heating panel can be used to great effect using the same method described, with some modification. To allow air to circulate, the heat pad should be raised on 20 mm thick strips, and placed

on a level bench. To act as a moisture barrier, the board should be covered with a plastic sheet, to keep it dry. The polystyrene surround can then be put in place, the tray filled with water and the plants placed on the mesh, 5 mm clear of the water. Whenever the plants are watered from above, the excess water simply flows over the sides and away.

Most heating panels are not fitted with a thermostat and the surface temperature stays around 24 deg.C. An easy way to manage the temperature, is to connect it to a time switch. Heating panels come “double insulated”, however to be absolutely safe, use an R C D isolating transformer on all electrical appliances in the growing house.

Once you have set up a heated area, you will find it very useful for germinating seeds and propagating cuttings. The cost of electricity to operate a 600 x 1200 mm board is minimal; in the region of 1 cent per night.

## **Wider Worlds: *Pteris argyrea* (Silver brake, Striped brake)**

Barbara Parris (bsparris@igrin.co.nz)

*Pteris argyrea* is a native of Sri Lanka, southern India and Java, where it grows in shaded situations in montane forest. It is a “painted fern”, with a white band down the centre of the pinnae and, although it resembles horticultural selections, it is actually a genuine true-breeding wild species. It is an ideal fern for those who find plain green foliage boring and want some subtle colour. It used to be widely available in the house plants section of garden centres and supermarkets, but is not seen so much nowadays.



A well-grown plant will reach a metre in height, with slightly less sideways spread. The fronds are pinnate, with the pinnae divided almost to their mid-ribs into parallel-sided pinnules, apart from the basal pinnae, which have one pair of pinnules that resemble pinnae. It is fast-growing (as are all *Pteris* species) and a well-grown clump will have several crowns of fronds. Brave

gardeners may care to split the clumps up to get more plants – this is best done in spring, when growth is just starting.

Like many ferns, it prefers filtered light to deep shade and will even handle direct midday midsummer sun for a short period. The green part of the fronds will yellow in too much light, however, and spoil the attractive contrast with the silver banding. Moist, but not wet, conditions are ideal, with good air circulation, although dry spells

are not fatal. Passion vine hoppers can be a pest particularly on plants grown in less than ideal conditions. Keeping the plant tidy and open by removing dead fronds and preventing other plants from shading it too deeply, together with keeping it well-fed and well-watered, will encourage new frond growth throughout the season. Protection from frost is desirable, but very light frosts seem to have no effect, with ice-glazed fronds showing no tissue damage.

At present my plants are grown in the open ground, although in the past I have grown them in pots and found them to be undemanding. *Pteris argyraea* is an attractive easy-care fern that should be grown more widely. I recommend it highly.

## The Four Vanda Leaf Types.

Eric Beltrame (eric.beltrame@westnet.com.au)

*Eric lives in Ingham in North Queensland. He writes, as an introduction : “ I am retired and grow orchids as a hobby. I have been growing orchids since 1980 and am a member of our local orchid society and the orchid society of S. E. Asia. I grow tropicals as I’m in the tropics but from time to time have ventured to try and grow some of the cooler types, having success with the odd one but they have died in the heat after a couple of years. My main interests are firstly *Bulbophyllum* (350 sp), *Spathoglottis* (terrestrial), *Aerides*, *Vanda* and a mixture of a lot of others.”*



Terete-leaved

### Terete vandas/ Papilionanthe

Terete leaf vandas have cylindrical leaves about the thickness of a pencil in adult plants. The leaves attain a length of 4 to 6 inches depending the species and are either sharp or blunt tipped with the base of the leaf encircling the stem of the plant, ( This can be seen in the accompanying photo). This type of vanda will take full sun in the tropics. Flower spikes appear from the opposite side to the leaf.

Examples of terete leaf vandas include the species *Vanda hookeriana*, *V. teres* and the hybrids Miss Joaquim, PoePoe, Ruby Prince.

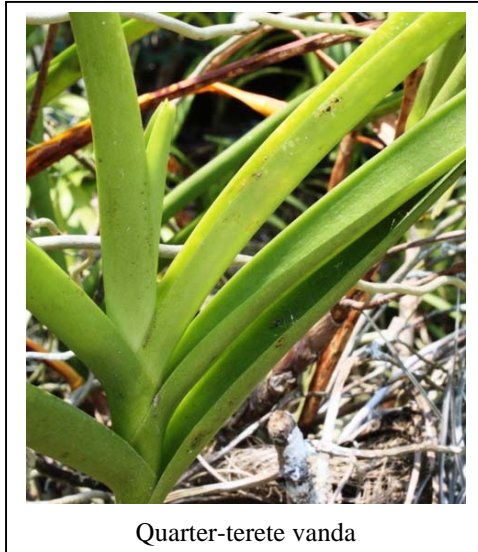
### Semi-terete vandas

A semi-terete vanda is the resulting hybrid between a strap-leaf and a terete-leaf vanda. These vandas require bright light in most areas and can be grown in full sun, so are ideal for landscaping . I live in the tropics but inland from the coast and have had up to 14 frosts in one year – not sure what the temperature went down to but the frosts last until about 7.30 am. . I grow my semi-teretes in full sun together with my terete vandas and the cold never affected any one of them. The leaves are deeply channelled to being almost closed as per the photo. An example of a semi-terete vanda is the hybrid Madam Dinger.



Semi-terete

## Quarter-terete vandas



A quarter-terete vanda is the result when you have a semi-terete in the parentage of a recent vanda hybrid, for example if *V. Miss Joaquim* (terete) was a grand-parent then the grandson/daughter would be a quarter-terete. The leaves are deeply grooved but wider at the top than the semi-terete, as shown in the photo. Also a quarter-terete can be made by crossing a semi-terete directly with a strap leaf vanda which is the next and last form of vanda leaf. This form of vanda will take some full sun depending where you live and whether it's in the morning or afternoon. As I said, I live in the tropics and I give my quarter-teretes a bit of late afternoon sun. I do have 70% cloth over the top mainly for our summer. By

doing this I am sacrificing flowers during the winter but am saving them from burning in the midday heat of summer. Some examples are Hilo Blue, Merv L Velthius, Reverend Masao Yamada or hybrids with the following in the parentage: Clara Shipman Fisher, Josephine van Brero, T. M. A.



## Strap-leaf vandas

Strap-leaf vandas have long curved leaves of uniform width growing close together, alternating on the right-hand side and the left-hand side. Flower spikes also alternate from left and right. These plants are shade loving and will burn in full sun to the point that they could die. Examples of strap-leaf vandas include the species *Vanda*

*coerulea*, *V. sanderiana* (*Euanthe sanderiana*), *V. denisoniana*, *V. dearei*, *V. tricolor* and many hybrids such as Fuchs Delight.

All photographs by Eric Beltrane.

## Pest Control with Neem

Tony Connelly (aredc@xtra.co.nz), revised Oct. 2009.

“We should endeavour to work together in harmony with nature, rather than try to wage a ceaseless chemical war against her.”

Some years ago after spraying orchids with Malathion and oil, a red itchy rash appeared on the back of my hands and lower arms, and the skin later peeled away.

This was a serious warning, and I thought about the many toxic insecticides, fungicides and sprays I had used for many years (see the newspaper excerpt at the bottom of this article).

In a Garden Centre I found information about neem as a safe alternative to control plant pests. I read an article in the American Orchid Society Magazine which reported very good results with neem, and on the internet, found sites posted by the Neem Foundation of India and by the Neem Association in the U.S.A. The weight of positive evidence concerning the health of people, animals, soils and plants convinced me that the answer to all my pest problems could well lie with the Neem Tree (*Azadirachta indica*), a native of East Asia. Three compounds found in all parts of the neem tree have antiseptic, antiviral, antipyretic, anti-inflammatory, anti-ulcer and antifungal properties.

**Azadirachtin** is a plant-derived chemical or botanical insecticide that inhibits growth and development of any insect that sucks, chews, or comes in contact with it, on the leaves or sap of treated plants. It may not kill immediately, and affected insects may still be visible for a period, but it will repel them and stop all further growth or development. Two other chemicals, **Salannin** and **Meliantriol** also act as powerful antifeedants, (insects will either be repelled or cease to feed and fail to develop) and other compounds found, have antiviral and fungicidal properties.

The properties of neem are absorbed systemically into the sap of treated plants, and are effective as a control on all insects that chew or feed on the sap.

It took about six months of regular spraying every two weeks, for the plants to become thoroughly saturated, and for me to observe a noticeable decrease in the number of aphids, scale, slaters, millipedes, mites and also the absence of *Botrytis*.

I now use neem products in place of all the toxic chemicals I once used to control insects and *Botrytis*. The only exception is to have some Pyrethrum on hand, to treat any invading aphids.

**Neem Oil** is a natural product extracted from the neem tree nut. For over 4,500 years, all parts of the tree have been used by ancient civilisations to treat many medical conditions. It is safe for humans to use, although it is always prudent to cover up when spraying.

It is important to use warm water in the spray mix, and discard any unused mix after 24 hours. Neem Oil becomes solid in the bottle, but can be made liquid again by simply placing the container in a jug of hot water for a short while. The spray solution should be kept warm while using in cold conditions, to avoid the sprayer nozzle from clogging.

Initially, neem should be used every two weeks, at a rate of 10 mls per litre with 1ml of Raingard, to aid penetration. Once control has been achieved, a routine spraying every four months should keep plants clean, and in good growing condition. To be effective it is important to have a spraying routine every four months, and aim for total coverage, under and over the foliage and around the top of the pot, avoiding any open flowers.

Developing flower spikes are safe while they are in tight bud, but spray should never be applied during hot weather, above 29 °C, or in direct sunlight, as the oil may separate and cause blistering. The foliage of *Phalaenopsis* orchids is particularly sensitive to spray in hot weather, and it should only be used on overcast days, or late afternoon.

An additional means of applying neem is to include it in the watering system, every second week during the growing season. A mix of 100 mls of Neem Oil to 20 litres of water makes a colloidal solution ready to be injected into the hose line, by the siphon proportioner.

**Neem Granules** are the crushed husks and kernels of the neem nut after the oil has been extracted, and are used to control many insects when applied to soil, lawns or container plants. It is also useful as a fertiliser as it contains all the major elements, including nitrogen.

For container plants, sprinkle a dusting of granules on the surface yearly, or when repotting. Granules scattered amongst the pseudo-bulbs of mature Cymbidiums will cause no harm, and often it is the only way to get good coverage. The granules will commence to break down immediately they come in contact with moisture. This is evident by a most unusual smell and a furry growth on the surface of the containers for a short period.

Neem seems to be harmless to all insects that do not feed directly on the sap of plants, including worms, ants, centipedes, and most insect eaters such as spiders, praying mantis and ladybirds. Irregular one-off applications of neem are not effective, and a regular seasonal programme must be adhered to, to maintain a protective shield of potent neem chemicals in the sap system.

#### **Seasonal treatment programme**

**January** Sprinkle Neem Granules around all the plants, once a year.  
Spray with Neem Oil plus Raingard on all plants and surfaces, avoiding open flowers.  
(Dilution rate; Neem Oil 10 mls, Raingard 1 ml per litre)

**May** Repeat spraying.

**September** Repeat spraying.

A CHRISTCHURCH PRESS report.

Monday, 4 February 2008, Massey University Health Research Unit

#### **Jobs Linked to Higher Cancer Risk**

For Hairdressers the issue is hair dye, for **Horticultural** workers it is **chemicals**.

Occupational cancers, account for between 300 and 400 deaths yearly.

Research by Massey University's Centre for Public Health Research Unit, into bladder cancer and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, confirms this. The non-Hodgkin's findings conclude that workers in **Plant Nurseries** are four times more likely to develop the disease and Apple and Pear growers have a five-fold risk.

Non-Hodgkin's lymphoma is understood to account for about 90% of all cancer cases in N.Z.

## Internet gleanings– an orchid weed

**From Orchid Digest Vol 2 No. 314**

Date: Tue, 03 Nov 2009 11:00:15 -0500

From: [viateur.boutot@videotron.ca](mailto:viateur.boutot@videotron.ca)

Subject: invasive Disa (Australia)

"Despite high hopes for containing and eliminating the South African monadenia orchid, *Disa bracteata*, to the area where it was first discovered on Kangaroo Island [KI], four populations have been found spread across almost 20 km.

The original population of this dangerous[??] invasive weed... is still present and outbreaks have been found. The orchid is flowering at present and is easily recognisable.

Authorised officers are currently removing plants at all locations... report them ... remove the plants by digging them out. Each plant has two bulbs and both must be removed for control.

Monadenia is tolerant of a range of soil types and prefers sites where there is soil disturbance. It is a successful weed because it produces millions of dust-like seeds that are readily spread by wind, water, soil movement and machinery. Car movements can also spread the seed, which remains viable for up to seven years.

Monadenia orchids establish high density populations quickly, and can out-compete and exclude native flora such as orchids and grasses. The population on KI is still relatively small and could be controlled if a strong effort is made by everyone now."

URL :

<http://www.theislanderonline.com.au/news/local/news/general/dangerous-orchid-still-at-large/1663072.aspx>

## Some *Chloraea* Orchids from Chile

Ron Maunder (paradisearchids@paradise.net.nz)

While holidaying in Chile with family recently I was in my element roaming around taking every opportunity to photograph any orchid plants in the parks. I knew not to look above ground level as there are none or practically no epiphytic orchids there. I'd done a quick bit of research before I left and hoped to find some of their very attractive terrestrial orchids in flower. The most numerous orchid genus in Chile by far belongs to *Chloraea* with 28 species.

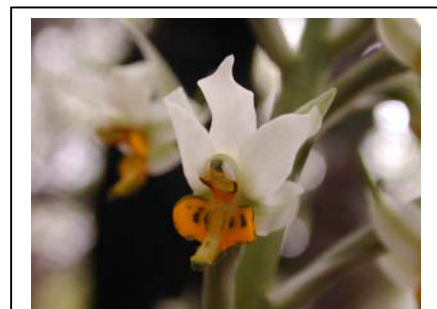


A *Chloraea* for sure!

Some 20 years or so ago I had tried growing orchid seed from Chile but didn't even get germination. Whether the seed was too old or not I don't know. Maybe it needed a fungus to get it growing? I've never ever seen any of their orchids offered in flask. Maybe the two species currently on the Biosecurity List here were the ones I imported (*Chloraea blettioides* and *chrysantha*)? I can't remember for sure. Anyway I have a copy of a paper given to the Manawatu or Wellington OS by a Chilean scientist then working at Massey or Victoria University. It is entitled "Preliminary Checklist of the Orchids of Chile" by C.A. Lehnebach, of the University Austral de Chile, at Valdivia on the southern coast. The copy was probably sent to me by our NZ terrestrial "terrier" or "terror", Dave McConachie!

I was very hopeful of finding some *Chloraea* orchids in flower. Near a campsite in one national park where we stayed a day or two I came across a number of plants with terrestrial orchid-like leaves growing out in bright conditions in fairly open forest. At first I found some with spikes coming then eventually found several with many flowers open.

The plants were growing in quite open forest near or above streams or rivers where there must have been a little more humidity in the air. In November the bush seemed quite dry. I was surprised at just how much light the plants could handle. The leaves were quite wide and fleshy and about a hand span long. The flower spikes were up to knee height and some even waist height. The soil was hard and dry and I imagined some sort of tuber below but did not investigate!



Close-up of a white *Chloraea*



Yellow and green *Chloraea*

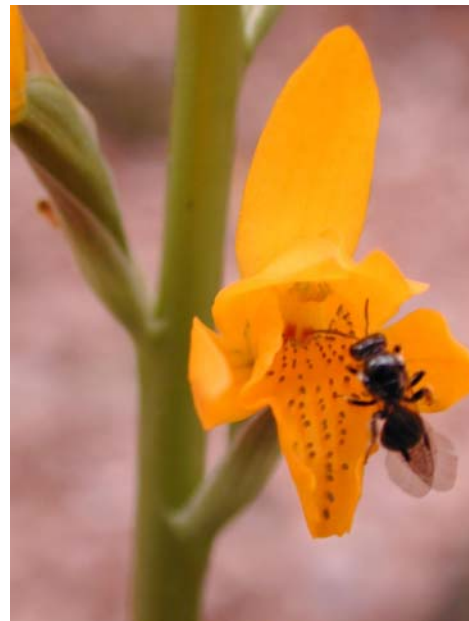
Most of the flowers I encountered were yellow shades. There appeared to be about three different species but obviously we were there fairly early in their flowering season. The flowers were certainly attractive and often had nearly twenty 30 mm flowers on a stem. They did not open widely but were a very interesting shape.

See some excellent *Chloraea* photos on Jay Pfahl's IOSPE <http://www.orchidspecies.com/indexcattleyo.htm> - striking white or green striped white or yellow flowers.

Or try Googling the word *Chloraea*. Better still try <http://gallery.terrorchid.org/thumbnails.php?album=56>

We encountered scattered flowering *Chloraea* plants in several of the Chilean national parks we visited and even found them on the Argentinean/Patagonian side of the Andes above a forested lake near the "Swiss" tourist town of Bariloche.

I don't know whether the editor has much room left for articles or photos in this issue. The cut off is midnight tonight he tells me! I have attached several photos but it's really hard to put specific names to them. Don't ask me for seed or flasks. I have none but if you get some I'd sure be a starter!



Golden *Chloraea* flower and bee

## **Publication Details and Charges**

The *New Zealand Internet Orchid Review* is published on a quarterly basis, with publication in March, June, September and December.

The email subscription rate is **zero**. We would like to eventually publish a printed version (which would attract a charge), but there would need to be sufficient demand to make it practical. To date that demand has not been sufficient for us to follow it up.

### **Deadlines for copy**

All written copy for articles must be emailed to the Editors no later than one week before publication date. A reminder will be emailed to all regular contributors two weeks before each deadline. Society notices and classified advertising must be emailed to the Editors no later than one week before publication date. If you are running late, please email the editors ([ncmiller@orcon.net.nz](mailto:ncmiller@orcon.net.nz)). We expect the next issue to go out on Friday 19 March 2010.

A reminder notice will go to all subscribers and Society contacts shortly before each publication deadline.

### **Advertising**

If you are interested in advertising in this publication, please email the editors for an information sheet. Our advertising rates are extremely reasonable, being set at \$10 for a page, part pages on a pro-rata basis. Graphics and photos incur no extra charge, provided that you supply them.

### **Classified advertisements, Society notices**

These are published free of charge, maximum of 30 words for a classified ad please.

### **Letters**

Feel free to write letters to the editor. As long as they are not anonymous, obscene, time-wasting or libellous we will publish them!

### **Question and answer section**

If you have any questions relating to any aspect of the growing of orchids or companion plants, we will solicit replies from our panel of experts. Any responses received will be emailed to the questioner, and the question and answers will be published in the next issue. This way you can receive a prompt response to your question but other readers can subsequently benefit as well.

### **Spread the word**

If you have any friends who grow orchids or 'companion plants', let them know of this publication. All they have to do to subscribe is to send an email. If they haven't joined the computer age and/or would be interested in subscribing to a print version, ask them to contact the editors by mail or telephone or else send an email on their behalf. So far only a handful of requests for a printed version have been received.

### **Please write for us**

All submissions are welcome – long or short. If you're not too fluent with the written word, we are happy to edit your copy. Without writers there will be no magazine.

**File formats**

We prefer to receive copy as a Word document. If you have a very recent version of Word, please ensure that you save your document and send it to us as a .doc file (preferred), or a .docx file. We also prefer not to receive Acrobat (.pdf) files – we actually assemble the magazine in Word and don't convert it to Acrobat until we're ready to send it out. So .pdf files have to be converted to Word – a tiresome business. We are also happy to receive shorter documents as a simple email message. If you are sending us a Word document with photos in it, please shrink the photo file size (to, say, 100 to 300 KB) **before** you insert the photo in the document. We can't shrink the photos from inside your document, without going through a complex procedure. If we fill the magazine with 2 or 3 MB photos then, even after we have converted it all to an Acrobat file, those readers with dial-up access will get very grumpy!

**That address again**

ncmiller@orcon.net.nz

**Please note:** If you change your email address and you don't advise us, you won't receive your magazine! Typically, every time we send out an issue, 8 to 12 bounce due to invalid email addresses.

## Society Notices

The Orchid Council of NZ has a web site that lists all the shows around the country.  
The URL is:

[http://www.orchidcouncil.co.nz/show\\_dates.html](http://www.orchidcouncil.co.nz/show_dates.html)

**Bay of Islands Orchid Society.** During the winter months of June, July and August the Society meets on the THIRD Sunday of the month in the St James Church Hall, Stone Store Hill, Kerikeri at 1.30 pm. Visitors are always welcome. Any queries, please phone - Lorna Sinton 09 407 3424.

**Tauranga Orchid Society** monthly meetings 3rd Tuesday evenings Feb - Nov, 7.30pm at The Wesley Church Hall, 13th Avenue. Day meetings 1st Wed of month, 10.00am, location varies each month.  
Enquiries phone Natalie, 07 5430847.

### **Capital City Orchid Society**

Meet on the third Monday of each month except December at 8.00 PM  
Venue: Johnsonville Uniting Church, Dr Taylor Terrace, Johnsonville  
Contact: Secretary: Lenaire Witham  
Phone: 09-972-7519 evenings and weekends  
Email: [lenairew@paradise.net.nz](mailto:lenairew@paradise.net.nz)

### **Hibiscus Coast Orchid Society**

The Society meets on the 2nd Sunday of each month in the Masonic Lodge, Centreway Road Orewa. The meeting starts at 1.30pm, trading table open from 1pm. Visitors welcome. Enquiries: Judy 09-424 1968 (a/h), Barbara 09-424 3199

**Orchid Society secretaries** – if you would like a permanent notice of when and where your society holds its meetings, we can publish one (as above) for no charge in each issue.



## **Taranaki Orchid Society Summer display - details**

### **Venue**

The Highlands Intermediate School is at 260A Coronation Avenue.

**For those coming from the North**, follow State Highway 3 to New Plymouth. When in New Plymouth, follow SH3 to Hawera, i.e. – when on the one-way system, turn left into Elliot St (Macdonald's corner). At the top of the rise, Eliot Street becomes Coronation Avenue on the flat. Continue a further 1.5 km on the flat, past a block of shops on the left and a pedestrian crossing; turn right (blue sign indicating a right turn to (1) Vogeltown etc) into the continuation of Coronation Avenue (road centre is marked for a right turn). Highlands Intermediate is 200 metres on the right.

**For those coming from the South** on State Highway 3, on approaching New Plymouth, after the 50km sign take the first turn left (100 metres and at the top of the hill) into Coronation Avenue and turn right at about 200 metres along into Highlands Intermediate School.

### **Car Parking**

There is car parking for approximately 100 cars on the school grounds in two car parks. The Car Boot sale will be held in the hall car park. Only those vehicles showing a *Boot Sale indicator* will be permitted into the hall car park on Saturday morning. There is plenty of parking around the back of the hall and in the tennis court area.

### **Car Boot Sale**

The car boot sale will start at 11.00am. **In order to be fair to all participants, sellers are requested not to start trading before 11.00am**, but you may close your stall at any time during the afternoon if you have other things you wish to do. There is a flat rate per car boot /stand of \$15 each. All 'boots' must display an *indicator* obtainable from the registration or information desk where the fee will be collected. Do not forget an umbrella stand or some other type of shade for you and your orchids.

### **Specialist meetings**

Traditionally the four original specialist groups have and will continue to cycle time slots. The CSA group meeting time has remained static. This ensures that a given overlap is not repetitive in successive years. A small entry donation may apply at specialist group meetings to help defray costs.

### **Judging**

All orchid judges are welcome to attend the judging on Saturday morning at 8.00am. Some clashing with a group meeting is unavoidable.

### **Saturday Evening Meal**

This will be held in the Highlands Intermediate School Hall amongst the displays. There will be plenty of seating, but some tables and seats will be available for those who prefer to sit at a table for their dinner. Some beverages are inclusive with the evening meal cost; wine, beer, fruit punch and juice. However, you are welcome to BYO. Your support for the raffles will be appreciated.

### **Pukekura Park, Illuminations.**

A guided tour of the Festival of Lights will take place on Saturday night after the evening meal. Walking shoes are recommended as the tour will enter the park by the

Brooklands Road entrance and proceed through to the Illuminations, returning on completion of the tour to Brooklands Road. A small part of this walk is not normally lit as part of the Festival and you are requested to bring your own personal torch particularly for the return passage.

**Pukekura Park, Display Houses**

Open 9.00am to 4.00pm Saturday and Sunday. Do not miss seeing these display glasshouses.

**Private Visits**

A list of private gardens, glasshouses and orchid collections that will be open on Sunday morning will be available from the Information Desk.



## **8th to 12th September 2010 Arena Manawatu Palmerston North**

Hosted by the Orchid Council of New Zealand this will be a fully judged show featuring world class orchids in magnificent displays; lectures by international speakers; orchid plants and products for sale; incorporating the 2010 National Daffodil Show

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## Classified advertisements

I am looking for a plant of *Cymbidium ensifolium*.  
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## ANOTHER SHOW

Evening guys,

Thought I should pass this on to you and please pass on to your folks as well.

The **10th Asia Pacific Orchid Conference** is scheduled to start on **20th March 2010** in **Chongqing City, China** (in the centre of China within Sichuan Province where my father and I came from),. This is the first time China hosts such conference. The show committee has extended their warm welcome to our NZ Orchid Societies. There will be trading area, on site Phytosanitary Certificate, CITES issuance, etc. Preferential treatment for foreign participants (no details yet). Apart from domestic participants/visitors, there will be other overseas participants/visitors from US, Europe, Japan, Taiwan, etc. My understanding is that there will be 2 shows happening at the same time, one on Asian orchids, one on international orchids.

If you are interested, please let me know your club/society details, names of people want to go, etc., so I can tell them to send you a formal invitation letter. The official website is not ready yet, hopefully soon. If you need further info, please feel free to contact me.

Philip Zhou (philipzhouzhang@gmail.com),

## Advertising Section

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