

The New Zealand
Internet
Orchid Review

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Publication Details and Charges

It is intended to publish the *New Zealand Internet Orchid Review* on a quarterly basis, with publication in March, June, September and December.

The email subscription rate is **zero**. The print subscription rate (including postage) has yet to be determined, as the decision as to whether to provide printed copies depends upon demand. We would like to eventually publish a printed version, 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). We expect the next issue to go out on Friday 12 September 2008.

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.

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!

Editorial**The future of orchid societies**

Welcome to the fourth issue of the NZIOR. Our subscription list now exceeds 300, so we are obviously filling a demand. What a brilliant winter we have had so far in the Bay of Plenty – days of sunshine to warm the orchid house. A little rain would be nice though....

Many of our readers will have noticed that Orchid Societies (and, indeed, clubs in all fields of endeavour) have been falling on hard times in recent years. The number of members is dropping, with older stalwarts disappearing and very little in the way of younger recruits. In many areas attendance at orchid shows also seems to have fallen away. This is something that the committees of orchid clubs should be seriously concerned about. Our readers probably have a range of ideas on why this might be, from lifestyle changes and faster pace of life, to different gardening fashions.

At a time when orchids can be bought in the supermarkets and chain stores, societies should be gaining more members, not losing them. Is it a case of "familiarity breeds contempt" for orchids? Some societies are good at welcoming and looking after new members, young or old, others aren't. Most of the members of orchid societies are getting on in years, and may not adapt to the wishes and interests of younger people as well as might be desirable. Treat new members like orchid seedlings – a bit of TLC and they may be an asset some day.

There seem to be more flowering plants of the less common genera being sold at shows these days, but the numbers could always do with a boost. To be able to take home plants that are in flower can do wonders to excite the enthusiasm of new growers. Good raffle plants at meetings can be a draw card to new members and many experienced growers have been very generous over years, supplying raffle plants. If these donated plants are not available, maybe societies could consider purchasing attractive flowering plants to raffle.

Young people, in particular, could be attracted through the Internet, but information and opportunities to buy and sell are there for all to explore. An article in this issue discusses this aspect. How did readers learn to grow orchids? Was it through a club, or a relative or friend, or from books and other information? One enthusiast tells his story in this issue.

What are the advantages of a club or society? They are usually thought to be:

- A source of good and interesting plants
- A way to meet other growers and discuss plants and growing methods
- A place to learn from good speakers
- A place to show off your plants to an appreciative audience, perhaps at an annual show.

Is this still true of your local society? Is there room for a different, less formal meeting format? Would an informal 'drop-in centre' style make a change occasionally, or perhaps a group repotting day at a suitable site, with advice from experienced growers? Do competitive shows encourage or intimidate potential new members these days? How many potential show visitors are lost because the show is 'closed for judging' on a Saturday morning, when half the world is out and about?

If any of our readers have got success stories to pass on about attracting new members, we would love to include them in the magazine.

We have had specific requests for articles on the following two topics. Would any of our readers like to take up the challenge and set fingers to keyboard?

- An ongoing series of articles on basic culture of orchids, with specific reference to seasonal topics (e.g. orchid care in winter etc.)
- An up-to-date article on orchid pests and diseases, and their control. There have been many changes in the garden pesticides available to the public in recent years, and many old stand-bys are no longer available to the home gardener.

Happy gardening
Nick and Elizabeth Miller

This month's cover

The species *Cymbidium traceyanum* is not seen so much these days, but is well worth space in a collection. This nicely grown plant caught our eye at the 2007 Wanganui Orchid Show. If the owner contacts us, we will be happy to acknowledge him or her in our next issue.

Corrections

In the article on Sobralias (Issue 2, December 2007) the second plant shown of *Sobralia* Yellow Kiss was grown by Jenny Mair but photographed by Eldon Ormsby.

Tokyo Grand Prix Orchid Show 2008

G. Poffley (gpoffley@clear.net.nz)

In February this year my wife and I travelled to Japan with eleven other orchid growers from around NZ to see the Tokyo Dome Grand Prix Orchid Show. This trip was organized by OCNZ President Joy Wray and was the first time she has taken a group to this event, although she has been many times to both the country and show previously.

It's a long (10.5hr) flight so mastering the video control is the first priority. Luckily this time I didn't jam mine and have to ask the stewardess for assistance. It takes a while for me to get to grips with the technology these days. Manee (my wife) doesn't have a problem as she either reads a book or sleeps, which is just as well otherwise I'd spend most of my time sorting out her video control as well.

On the Friday night Joy had arranged tickets to the opening ceremony and preview so we were lucky to be able to see the show without the crush of the usual crowds which flock in during the public opening hours. At this, although we couldn't understand a word, the prizewinners were awarded beautiful gold trophies (a *Cattleya* leaf) and certificates. It was all very formal with lots of dignitaries, pomp and ceremony. First place winner received 1 million Yen, (I think) and the keys to a brand new Mercedes parked in the stadium. After the formalities we were free to look at the show. Well it was just 'Oohs and Aah's' all the way around the exhibits. The huge displays were stunning and the quality of flowers excellent.

Unfortunately there wasn't much English writing on the displays so for many we did not know where they came from or what the plants were, although the benched plants were all labelled in both Japanese and English. Superb lighting made everything stand out brilliantly and there was plenty of space to walk around the benches, which were tiered 3 high and arranged in a circular fashion. The grand prizewinner along with runner up and third was placed well out of reach in the middle of the stadium and words can't describe the size or quality of these orchids. I'm not sure how this show is judged but all 3 had everything" massive sized specimens, beautifully presented with stunning flowers and immaculate culture.

First place was a species *Eulophiella roempleriana* with flower canes like a bamboo bush reaching straight up over a metre above the already very tall foliage! I'm not familiar with this plant but some research shows it to be a very large orchid, one of approx. 5 species of this genus from Madagascar growing in the tops of *Pandanus* screw-pine. Second was another species, *Cattleya trianae* specimen with so many flowers you could hardly see any leaves (*see next page*). The flowers were all the same quality and not a blemish to be seen. Third was, without a doubt, the biggest and best Phalaenopsis hybrid I've ever seen. It had a minimum of 32 perfect white flowers to the stem all evenly spaced and had no less than 3 stems arching down. All three plants were truly magnificent and a credit to the growers.

The Dome is actually a baseball stadium so is very big. The roof is very high and from here permanent lighting aims in all directions making shadow minimal. Many of the exhibits were independently lit with foot lighting incorporated around the benches. The astro-turf floor had been covered with removable plastic interlocking pavers. Around the perimeter of the upper entry level are undercover food and drink shops but eating and drinking was not permitted in



Cattleya trianae 'YY' Photo G. Poffley

the display area. In the 'outfield' were some food and other stalls including wine, which allowed visitors to sample their products.

The floor area is so large I never found these until late and then most were closed unfortunately, so it was more confusion with the advanced technology in ordering and paying for a meal outside. This often entails communicating with a machine that has lots of buttons and only Japanese writing on it. Or if you were good at hand signals then lots of waving and pointing to a plastic replica meal was the final solution. A large area was set aside for orchid plant sales, souvenirs from the show and other sponsors' products. One my wife headed straight for was the Shiseido stall that was marketing a line of products with various orchid scented perfumes and toiletries. Cunningly I agreed to some purchases so that any flasks I fancied later wouldn't be frowned upon.

My usual priority is the plant sales but at this show I could not drag myself away from the displayed flowers and the opportunity to photograph without being pressed for time or by people. Mindful of my bad photographic techniques such as forgetting to alter settings after taking close ups or vice versa I decided more was better than not enough so I quickly did the rounds as best as I could at least twice and still failed miserably with some shots. Even though guest numbers were limited the VIP's and TV crews made viewing a bit haphazard as various sections were closed off from time to time. Luckily a Xmas present for my wife proved its worth as she took some really good photos with a fairly basic model digital camera after a few quick pointers on how to work it. There's something to be said for simplicity in these days of sophisticated technology.



C. walkeriana 'Aiko'. Photo G. Poffley

I suppose I'm a little biased but the Cattleyas just blew me away with the size, colour range and number of blooms. The variety exhibited was huge and many line-bred species impressed me more than the hybrids, especially the various *C. walkeriana* (see left). One of the other orchids we don't see so often here was Lycaste. Again size, number of flowers and colour range were just amazing (below left). So amazing in fact I went halves in a very expensive flask of these with a friend.



Lycaste Sunray. Photo G. Poffley

Phalaenopsis were in abundance especially on the displays as massed flowers. It seems bold harlequins have been superseded by subtle splash petal varieties, almost as if someone has taken a good white or pink and delicately brush stroked on some pastel shade water colours very evenly and symmetrically. Mind you there were some interesting very dark colours as well with touches of white making them stand out from the crowd.

If you like something a little more unusual then there were the *Calanthes* (below left). Mostly small flowers on upright stems, they

weren't easy to photograph as a glass screen was erected to protect them from prying hands.



Calanthe Yamato. Photo G. Poffley

I was asked on our return if there were any Chinese Cymbidiums. The short answer is 'YES' in fact dozens of them (next page). From what I've seen so far in NZ I haven't been a great fan of them but now, well you may have guessed after what we witnessed in Tokyo I will be after a few of the better ones if they ever become available here. All the attributes of the other genera are applicable to these and the exquisite pots they were growing in gave an added touch of class. What was very frustrating were the number and range for sale at some of the sales stalls but no flasks.

There were also hybrids of these with old style standard Cymbidiums giving some interesting results. It appears the dominant parent is the Chinese strain as most exhibited their characteristics more boldly rather than a 50/50 mix.

Not only were there flowers, displays and sales stalls but a mind boggling array of flower arrangements with both real and artificial flowers which were hard to tell from each other. You would have expected mainly the more simple and subtle Japanese styles rather than the European styles but here there was something for everyone.



Cymbidium Guru "Toshikan" Photo G. Poffley



Cymbidium lianpan 'Sinsinoin' Photo G. Poffley

of 5) at 2020m elevation.

Being winter it was cold but not unpleasantly so, except for one evening, which we had picked to go out on a night tour of the city. With a howling gale and sub zero temperatures we were glad to get back to the hotel. The north of Japan was buried in snow the next day but fortunately Mt Fuji was bypassed by the storm so on our group day trip there we had exceptionally clear views and were able to access station 4 (out

Kyoto was the next stop, which we accessed by the famous 'bullet train'. This was a great experience as it snowed heavily near Kyoto giving postcard scenes to the countryside. Luckily it was only sleet when we arrived and the weather cleared beautifully for the next day when we had a day trip around the city. Kyoto is famous for the temples, shrines, Emperor's Palace and many beautiful gardens surrounding these and other areas. The train is so fast it was amusing to see various members of the group trying to take photos through the window. Most ended up with good shots of walls, fences, power poles and tunnels, which suddenly entered the field of view before the camera could register the scene it was aimed at. (At the show I got a lovely shot of someone's camera, which suddenly appeared in front just as I pressed the shutter)!

It was our first time to Japan and we loved it. The friendly and helpful people, beautiful scenery, manicured gardens, spotlessly clean cities, excellent food, reasonable prices and efficient service all overcame the language barriers. We used the local train system, which is a dream, cheap and fast going to every part of the city. Road traffic wasn't a problem and many of the misconceptions about Japan are now a thing of the past. We did encounter the odd problem such as getting so much food and not what we ordered in a Tepanyaki restaurant, we had to frantically stop them bringing any more. Even so it still only cost \$40NZ for the 2 of us and was like a banquet. If you do make a mistake on the trains they will refund you and set you on the right track, although we did have to pay extra after one trip.

During our breaks from orchid watching and sight-seeing there was time for the group to concentrate on more mundane matters such as shopping, eating and looking for Geisha girls, or should I say 'we went on a wild geisha chase' such was the difficulty in tracking them

down. Joy had organized everything down to the last detail including phytosanitary certificates for the flasks, dealing with NZ MAF on our return and even somehow managed a bonus breakfast for 3 days at our hotel in Kyoto. We will certainly be keen to visit this show and delightful country again.

Climate change?

From the Howick Orchid Society newsletter, May 2008. Thanks to Glenn Poffley for permission to use this item. Are other readers, elsewhere, experiencing this effect?

Just when I told you last month to be wary of the cooler temperatures we continued to have beautiful warm weather through March and into April, although there seems to be a chill in the air now.

Cymbidiums are becoming a bit of an enigma as various local growers I've spoken to are just not getting anywhere near the number of inflorescences that would be expected in years gone by. The converse to this is our member in Taumarunui who specializes in these*, has over 100 showing spikes already. I have a theory (which will be difficult to prove) that this is due to the warmer temperatures we have been experiencing, especially at night. This has the effect of a reluctance to flower and they are more susceptible to bulb rot. Cymbidiums need cool nights around autumn to initiate flower inflorescences. Now I know some Auckland growers are still getting good results but it is possible they live in cooler areas or have misting systems, which switch on in the evening. We successfully flower a frangipani for 4 months of the year on the front deck and this stays outside (although dry) all year. I doubt whether this was possible 15 years ago. More palms are now being grown around Auckland many of which come from warmer climates. I'm not an advocate for 'global warming' but there are certainly cycles in the weather and some of us will remember these types of summers from their childhood. The good part to this is we should be able to grow other varieties of orchids better but it only takes another cool wet winter to put paid to all these theories..... and a mixed collection.

* See article on page 24. Ed.

Mystical Moonflowers – *Aerangis citrata*

Margaret Dunseath (marg.dunseath@orcon.net.nz)



Love at first sight, that was my reaction when I first saw a photo of this very prim and proper plant in flower. I hold it personally responsible for my addiction/obsession with these orchids. Accessing a plant proved to be difficult, but persistence paid off and I eventually found myself the very happy owner of one of these gems, which I then proceeded to kill.

'Easy to grow' say all the books. Not for me they weren't.

All the available information stated to grow them in pots, with bark as the growing medium as they have very slender roots which must not stay dry for too long. Success came when I decided that these plants would do better for me mounted on cork with a bit of sphagnum packed around the roots to give additional moisture and humidity. This proved successful given my conditions and watering habits.

Native to the eastern forests and central highlands of Madagascar, growing as an epiphyte, it needs cool to intermediate temperatures and a wet-dry cycle for the root system; wet to keep the foliage plump and drying briefly between watering or misting to maintain healthy roots. The root system must be dry by nightfall and less water given over the winter particularly if the plant is being grown under cool conditions but should still be enough to keep the leaves looking plump and healthy.

Water quality is also important as the root tips will very quickly turn black if they come in contact with something they don't like. Rain water appears to be the most acceptable option for a healthy root system, and irregular diluted fertilizer added occasionally during the growing season. I mist my plants several times a day in summer, particularly when it is hot, and usually once or twice a day in winter depending on weather conditions. Fans run continuously to provide a buoyant atmosphere.

It prefers a shady spot out of direct sunlight. Given the right growing conditions, it can flower twice a year.

Proposed Angraecoid group

I am very interested in trying to get an Angraecoid orchid group operating in NZ. The intention is to have contact with other people who grow these plants, so pollen can be exchanged as seed is needed to boost the plant population in NZ. Hopefully we would also be able to swap plants as divisions become available from some of the species. Wilma Fitzgibbons, Ron Maunder and I have been trying to pollinate a number of these plants in an effort to get more available, however there appear to be difficulties and more often than not, the pod is full of fluff. This indicates to me, that the gene pool has become too small. Both Wilma and I have plants from the same flasks and there appears to be a limit to the number of times pollen will be accepted. I am hoping, that with enough interested people who are happy to supply anyone who joins the group with a list of the plants they have and their email address, that we can swap pollen when plants are flowering and hopefully increase the number of plants available. Email addresses and plants lists would be circulated among those interested. Anyone interested in helping, please contact me.

Margaret Dunseath (marg.dunseath@orcon.net.nz)

Wider Worlds – some Gesneriads for greenhouse or shadehouse

Nick Miller (ncmiller@orcon.net.nz) Photos by author.

On being confronted with the title of this contribution, many of you will say “**What** for the greenhouse??” Gesneriads are a large and interesting plant family, named after Konrad Gesner, an 16th Century Swiss naturalist. They include such familiar plants as *Saintpaulia* (the African Violet), *Streptocarpus* and *Sinningia speciosa* (the Florists’ Gloxinia). The family is found in the tropics and subtropics of Asia, Africa, America and Australasia, with a few alpine representatives in Europe and Asia. Many of them have bell-shaped, pouched or slipper-shaped flowers. There are quite a number which show potential as garden plants in the warmer parts of New Zealand, as many of the subtropical or tropical species come from quite high altitudes. Some of these types are also well suited to the greenhouse or shadehouse. In Europe and North America, many gesneriads are very popular for growing under artificial lights, but we won’t get into that today! In New Zealand many of these plants are sold either unlabelled or incorrectly labelled, as the house plant nurseries are very careless with their labelling.



Streptocarpus ‘Black Magic’



Streptocarpus johannis ‘Falling Stars’

Streptocarpus is an exclusively African genus, and the hybrids are familiar house plants, sometimes known by the misleading name of Cape Primrose. There are a large number of species, few of which are seen much in New Zealand, but the hybrids are available (usually unnamed as to species or variety) at any garden centre in the house plant section. These do well for me here at Lake Rotoiti (300 metres altitude), producing their colourful flowers from Christmas through to May, in garden, shadehouse and greenhouse. Colours range through white, pink, red, blue, indigo to purple and near-black (*left*).

There is also a semi-shrubby sub-genus known as *Streptocarpella*, with smaller flowers in shades of blue and purple. I have yet to try these outside but I see no reason why they should not succeed. They are usually sold as *Streptocarpus* and (you guessed it) unnamed as to variety.

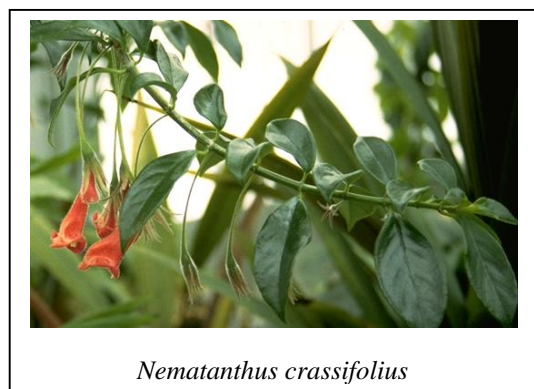
Sinningia is a large genus, exclusively from South and Central America. The most



Sinningia leucotricha

usually seen is *S. speciosa*, better known as the Gloxinia (although this is confusing – this name actually refers to another genus of gesneriads). *S. speciosa*, with its many colourful varieties, would probably grow outside, but there are a number of other species which would be more satisfactory. Virtually all of them produce a large tuber and die down over winter. One of the most handsome is *S. leucotricha*, which has elegant silvery leaves and orange red flowers in the spring. It likes good drainage, bright

light, comes from the Organ Mountains near Rio in Brazil, and is very durable. My original plant was bought at the Farmers' Plant Shop in Hobson Street, Auckland, in the late 1960s or early 1970s, and is still going strong. It is occasionally seen for sale. If you should come across any other *Sinningia* species or hybrids, they would be well worth trying outside also. Watch out for a new hybrid known as 'Texas Gift' which forms a dwarf shrub with deep crimson flowers.



Nemanthus crassifolius

Nemanthus is a genus from South America. These plants are usually small shrubs with colourful flowers in red, pink or yellow. We have a number in an unheated greenhouse and some are growing outside on a shaded crib wall. They come through the winter without problems, but are probably suffering from insufficient fertiliser and too much shade. We hope to try some in a better situation shortly. They are sometimes seen in

garden centres, labelled as *Nemanthus* or *Hypocyrtia* (an old name for them).



Chirita flavimaculata

Chirita is a little-known genus from China, with rosettes of leaves and colourful flowers, in shades of blue, white or yellow, on long stems. I have grown *C. flavimaculata* in my garden for several years now, and it flowers well every autumn (blue flowers with yellow throat). It does well in semi-shade and a well-drained soil. There are several other species and hybrids around, which should also be worth trying outdoors or in a shadehouse. Look for *C. longgangensis*, Diane Marie, and 'New York'.



Kohleria bogotensis



Rhabdothamnus 'Gold'

Kohleria is a genus from the Andes, with very colourful flowers in shades of red, orange and yellow. *Kohleria eriantha* has been in New Zealand for many years, and is relatively cold hardy. *Kohleria bogotensis* is another hardy species, and there are a number of hybrids in the country. Some of them grow to the size of small shrubs and are spectacular in bloom.

There are many other genera, not all of which are available in New Zealand. The house plant section of your garden centre is likely to reveal *Columnea* and *Aeschynanthus*, both of which would be worth trying in a shadehouse or greenhouse. They are sometimes seen as baby houseplants, unlabelled as to species or variety, and that would be a cheap way to experiment. Some of them are reasonably cold-hardy.

Rhabdothamnus solandrii is New Zealand's only native gesneriad. It occurs in coastal forest in the northern part of the country, usually growing in rocky places near water and forming a tangled shrub to 2 to 3 metres in height. Orange to tomato red flowers are produced during the warmer months of the year. It needs good drainage, but strongly resents drying out, so be warned. My best

plant is growing half way up a tree-fern retaining wall. Occasionally seen in better garden centres. There is a handsome pale orange form and a beautiful soft yellow form which seems more difficult to establish. A robust near-yellow, with some red pigments, is propagated by Naturally Native as *Rhabdothamnus* 'Gold'. These are fine garden plants, but are also an excellent shade-house plant. A green house would not be recommended, except perhaps in the far South of the country. Blue Mountain Nurseries (Otago) are propagating some good forms, as is Bill Clarkson (BILL.CLARKSON@xtra.co.nz) of New Plymouth.

Sources

To the best of my knowledge there are currently no nurseries specialising in this family in New Zealand. Hopefully this situation will change soon. However, there is one specialist society, the Wanganui African Violet and Gesneriad Club. They have a plant supply service to out-of-town members, and hold an annual autumn show in Wanganui. If you want named varieties of many genera, they are the only reliable source that I know of.

Their Secretary is:

J. Burkett, 24 Nile Street, Wanganui. Email E&JBurkett@xtra.co.nz

Wider Worlds - Variety in Hoyas

Jane Griffith (j.r.griffith@clear.net.nz). All photos by author.

Many orchid houses have one (or more) hoyas lurking in their depths. To show that there is more to life than H. carnososa, here is an article about some other species that are grown here in NZ. It initially appeared in the latest issue of Epiflora (see below). Ed.

Many members of our society are interested in, and grow, hoyas and over the years have accumulated a great deal of knowledge regarding their cultivation. Fascinating plants, hoyas are found from Sri Lanka eastwards through parts of India, Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Southern China, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, southern Japan, Taiwan. In Indonesia, especially Sumatra, Borneo, the Celebes, New Guinea and Malaysia and then south to northern Australia and some of the Pacific Islands.

Just like us human beings with our individual uniqueness but with some cultural similarities, hoya plants may look very different from one another in terms of leaf size, thickness and veining as well as different in terms of flower colour and shape but are all members of the Asclepiadaceae family.

It is these differences that I want to highlight and demonstrate with examples from our collection.

Firstly variety of leaf size, thickness and veining:

Hoya loyceandrewsiana – this hoya has by far the largest leaves of any in our collection – the largest leaf being 17 cm. in diameter. The leaves are thick and leathery and as Dale Kloppenburg notes in “*The World of Hoyas*” (1999) they are a deep green often with silver blotches on the upper surface. The origin of this hoya remains a mystery but its more recent history is fascinating and a reminder how individual people have played such an important part in growing and distributing hoyas around the world. This hoya was originally known as *Hoya* species *diversifolia* B when in the late 1960’s Ted Green, grower and collector in Hawaii, received a cutting from Loyce Andrews a long-time collector from Texas. Loyce was unable to tell Ted where she obtained her plant from nor did she know the



country of origin of it. From Ted’s substantial research and knowledge he has

suggested it may have originated from the monsoonal regions of northern Thailand. Writing in 1994 in *Fraterna* (the magazine of the International Hoya Association) he recommended that the plant be re-named *Hoya loyceandrewsiana* after the Texan who gave Ted his first cutting of the plant.

Although we keep our plant warm in winter it has not flowered for us – but maybe its summer location is a little too shady.



Hoya meredithii

Hoya meredithii – named after York Meredith *, an Australian, who discovered this plant in Sarawak on the island of Borneo. Growing at a low elevation it was found in calcareous soils in open forest. The fact that it was thriving in a limestone environment suggests that when we grow *H. meredithii* we should consider adding calcium carbonate to our soil mix.

The leaves of this hoya are fascinatingly different with generally a pale green colouring, although new leaves are initially bronze in colour. The leaves themselves are very thin, large and twist and turn. It is probably the veining that makes these leaves most distinctive as the darker green veins stand out.

Hoya bilobata – one of the smaller leaved hoyas it comes from the Philippines and was first described by a German botanist in 1906. *H. bilobata* has small oval to round leaves which are covered with soft hairs. The upper side of the leaf is a soft green with some leaves having a coppery colour edging and the undersides are a paler green. For us the plant is quite a vigorous grower in a small pot.



Hoya serpens

Hoya serpens – a species of hoya grown by many of our members, this hoyo originates from western India in the Himalayan region. Being a relatively cool area which is swept by monsoon winds it is understandable that it can be grown easily in our temperate climate.

The leaves of *H. serpens* are round, very small and a deep green colour. On both sides of the leaves are very short hairs.

This is a hoyo that happily grows on a piece of punga log or in a small pot and here in New

Zealand it flowers profusely.

Hoya shepherdii – another plant from the Himalayan region of India, it was first described in 1861. Its leaves have been likened to runner beans as they are long and narrow and have no veins showing. The leaves of this hoyo are similar in appearance to those of *H. longifolia*.. Both of these hoyas thrive in our New Zealand conditions.



Hoya erythrina

Hoya erythrina – a hoyo that comes from the Malaysian forests, growing at altitudes between 400-700 m, often along river banks. The leaves of this hoyo are particularly unusual in their colouring and quite hard to describe. A deep green shade with bronze colouring on the upper side of the leaves, the undersides of the leaves are often a dull maroon to pink shade. The leaves may have splotches on their surface. The leaves are quite rigid in texture.

H. erythrina is quite a slow growing plant initially and in our conditions took several years before it flowered. Dale Kloppenburg recommends that the plant is not over-potted or over-watered.

Secondly variety of flower colour and shape:



Hoya cinnamomifolia

Hoya cinnamomifolia – it is hard to go past this hoyo for the beauty and originality of its colour. This is a hoyo that grows very well in New Zealand although its native home is Java, a much warmer place than our temperate country. *H. cinnamomifolia* flowers have lime green petals and a centre of deep cranberry. If you do not already know this hoyo it is one that I would thoroughly recommend that you source from a member of the society.

Hoya macgillivrayi – you may have already heard me speak about this beauty from northern Queensland as we flowered it for the first time in November 2007. The flowers are a dark red with 3-7 pendant flowers on long slender pedicels. The flowers are glossy and waxy looking and have a very distinctive centre. Unfortunately this plant is not easy to grow and flower in New Zealand because of our cooler temperatures although those in warmer parts of the country might well like the challenge.

Hoya bilobata – mentioned previously because of its leaf shape and structure *H. bilobata* has a delightful very small flower in a pinky-salmon shade. Many clusters of these small flowers can be seen on this hanging plant.

Hoya cumingiana – is another favourite of mine for its flowers. *H. cumingiana* comes from the Philippines but grows very happily in our conditions in the plastic house where it flowers well and grows profusely. The flowers are a yellowy-green colour with a distinctive corona of darkish red.

Hoya acuta – found in parts of India and in the offshore island of Penang, Malaysia this is a hoya that is easy to grow and flowers profusely. We grow ours in the plastic house in a relatively shady position.

Hoya multiflora - when talking about unique flower shapes it is hard to go past *H. multiflora*. Often called “Shooting Star” this aptly describes the shape of the flower which has a yellow corolla and white pointed corona. Some members of our society find this a very easy hoya to grow showing that although it is native to Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines over the many years since it was discovered in 1823 it has adapted to more temperate conditions.

** The name York Meredith is one that is well known to an earlier generation of orchid growers also. Jane Griffith is on the committee of the Wellington Hoya and Epiphytic Plant Society, now the only such group in NZ. Some information on this group is detailed below. Ed.*

The Wellington Hoya and Epiphytic Plant Society has a modest membership here in Wellington - and also a number of other members who are scattered around NZ. We hold monthly meetings and some years have organised a two or three day trip (we have been to Taranaki a couple of times to visit Craigmyle Epiphyllums - and other places of interest - this year, however, we stayed "at home"). We publish a journal (Epiflora) four times a year; which has, over the years, contained good material on these plants and approaches to growing them. We have an excellent library - with copies of just about every book ever published on our plants - as well as copies of newsletters/journals from other societies - as we exchange journals with many of them. Some of our members have largish collections - and this provides a source of cuttings/plants for other members. One or two of our members have created new epi hybrids - and have formally registered them with the Epiphyllum Society of America - who maintain the international register of "Species and Hybrids".

The subscription for our society remains at \$12 per year for a NZ member and NZ\$24.00 (US\$12.00) for overseas members;.

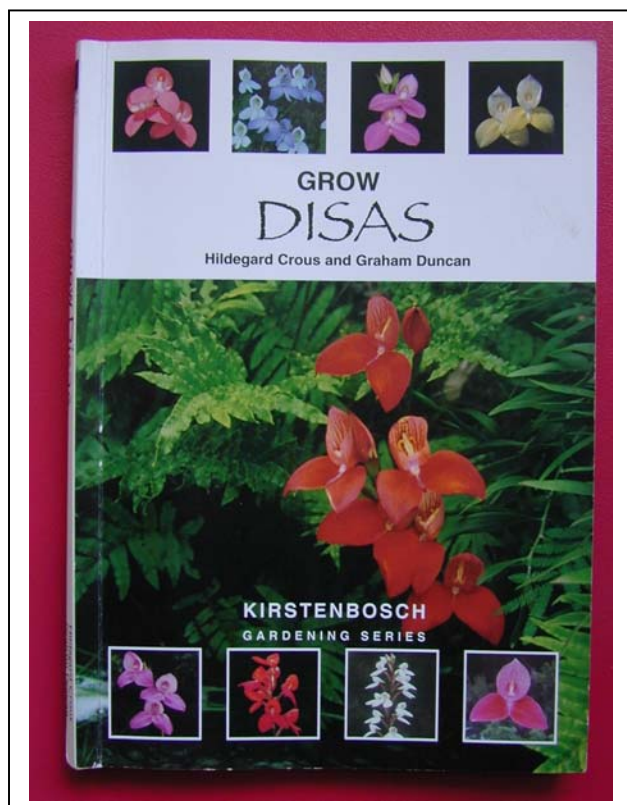
Our contact address is:

249 Te Moana Road, Waikanae. or griffith@globe.net.nz

Book Review

Grow Disas by Hildegard Crous and Graham Duncan ISBN: 1-919684-50-6

Reviewed by Ron Maunder (paradisearchids@paradise.net.nz)



This is an excellent and informative little guide book of 120 pages from the Kirstenbosch Gardening Series and published by the South African Biodiversity Institute at Kirstenbosch. Others in the series sound interesting also and include “Grow Clivias”, “Grow Cycads”, “Grow Nerines”, “Grow Proteas”, and “Grow Succulents”.

The editors are experts in the field of Disas and come from a background of training at Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens. Crous is notably in tissue culturing the once almost extinct yellow *D.uniflora*, while Duncan’s expertise is in bulbs and the deciduous Disas. Crous now runs her own tissue

culture lab and was recently involved in rescuing the endangered *Disa barbarta*.

The book is dedicated to the well respected “father” of Disa growing in South Africa – the late Dr Louis Vogelpoel. Fittingly a page on his background and achievements with a photo of him and Disas *in situ* is in the front.

The book has a mass of excellent Disa photographs throughout, mostly taken in their natural habitat. In fact the only two pages without a colour plate are the two index pages.

“Grow Disas” begins with a brief history of the discovery of *Disa uniflora* early in the 1700’s, then other species and various botanists and name changes, through to their popularity and hybridisation today. Next comes a chapter headed ‘General Information’ which covers taxonomy, structure of the Disa flower, growth cycle of the evergreen types – *uniflora*, *cardinalis* etc, then the winter-growing/summer-dormant and summer-growing/winter-dormant types. Distribution and habitat is covered, followed by a large section on their cultivation. It is interesting to read of the cultivation methods they have tried in South Africa plus some I have never encountered for some of the more difficult winter-growing, summer-dormant species. One method I mean to try is what they coin the “planter tube” method. Great for growing the blue species it says! Potting, feeding and artificial hybrids are also covered.

Halfway through the book the 'Propagation' chapter covers pollination method – including shots of the Mountain Pride butterfly getting stuck up with pollen. It reminded me of seeing a Monarch butterfly trapped in a NZ Disa grower's house and hardly able to fly with Disa pollen all over it! Photos and script cover seed germinating, pods being opened and the laboratory with flask-lined shelves. There's even a simple agar formula. Deflasking and hardening off is covered as is vegetative multiplication of the stolons. After years of calling the "tubers" by the wrong name, I stand corrected and will now call them tuberoids !

There follows a few pages on 'Pests and Diseases'. It seems their "bad guy" is the gall midge fly larvae which so far we seem to have escaped from here in NZ. The other bad guy – thrips, gets a mention but it doesn't sound like they have the *Chaetanaphothrips* that can be a scourge in North America and here in NZ. It distorts the meristem of the new growth and subsequent flower spike. Other common pests and diseases are covered though some of the chemicals are unfamiliar in NZ.

The book concludes with an excellent bibliography, a glossary and index, plus some contact addresses.

The photographs of the beautiful blue species and the masses of other colourful ones out in the fynbos and elsewhere make a Disa enthusiast's mouth water and wish that they were available here and easily grown. Unfortunately it seems very few of them are able to be or have been used in hybridising up to the present or can be grown in captivity without mycorrhizal root fungus in the mix.

One or two of the photos lack sparkle and could have come from old colour slides. The "satellite map" on P46/47 which shows the mountain ranges where the various *D. uniflora* forms come from is excellent but it would have been better near the front where it would lie open flat. It is impossible to see the main areas in the central fold.

I am puzzled about the beautiful single-flowered large pink Disa (bottom right on the cover and another much larger inside). To me it is the pink form of *D. uniflora* and not *D. Helmut Meyer* as stated in the book. Perhaps there was a slip in proof-reading which was only discovered after publication?

All in all "Grow Disas" is a great little book for any Disa enthusiast's Christmas present, Disa beginners and club libraries.

To procure your copy you could try your local specialist book store or you can contact Kirstenbosch - email: kbranch@botanicalsociety.org.za for price and shipping charges.

Available from Touchwood Books for \$30 plus \$5 postage and packing

Growing Sarcophilus Orchids

David and Patricia Hutchins (dphutchins@xtra.co.nz)

Photographs by the author

We started growing orchids about 1990, and started off with cymbidiums. We soon found that they took up too much room so made a change to growing a smaller orchid which suited our space.

Shadehouse(s)

Our first shadehouse (known as our 'den house') measures 3.0m long and 2.5m wide but this soon grew to 9.5m long and 5.5m wide. The peak of the roof around 3.0 m high is not in the middle as this shadehouse was modified (quite a bit) and was added to several times to its present size . It has clear Laser-lite roofing and 75% shade cloth on the sides



Our second shade house, known as the 'sarc house', use to be an aviary. It measures 9.5m long and 5.5m wide. The peak of the roof is around 3.0 m and comes off the shed as a lean to. Three sides are covered with 75% shade cloth and the roof is part clear Laser-lite and part cloudy Laser- lite. The south side where we get a lot of winds from has got Laser-lite for protection. During the hot summer months some of this Laser-lite side wall can be removed to allow a free flow of air. As the temperatures rise during the summer months

75 % shade cloth (approx) is secured inside both the shade houses under the clear roof. The temperatures, at the peak of the summer months, in our shade houses can exceed 40 degrees C.

Walkways are concrete pavers while under some of the benches grow ferns.

Benches are made of steel tube and steel mesh. I believe that there now a more cost effective material available which should be considered.

Air movement

Air movement is very important, plants must be spaced out giving plenty of room **around** each plant. We have a series of fans located in each shade house which are thermostatically controlled or controlled through a temperature controller (these are two different items but work basically in the same way).

The 'temperature controllers' are set during the summer months around 24 degrees centigrade so as the temperature rises to this preset temperature the fans will come on thereby providing plenty of air movement.

During the winter the controllers are set at 3 degrees centigrade and the same fans come on to help ward off the frosts when the temperature drops to that level.

The electrics are on residual current safety devices to prevent electric shock.

Watering

Sarcophilus do not have any pseudobulbs so cannot withstand long periods without water. Keep an eye on the leaves, look for any change.

Our watering system consists of a controller, wiring, between the controller and solenoids which are placed in the water lines.(For those who do not know what solenoids are, they



are like an electric light switch turning a light on and off). *They turn the water flow on and off.* Ed.

Watering in the past has been on an automatic system which entailed using 3 Hunter SRC 9 channel programmable controllers. These have a 24V ac output. (there will be other makes on the market). When the predetermined time appears on the clock then the selected channels will operate the 24vac valves one at a time for a

predetermined time until all have finished and the selected areas watered. (the time of each channel can be from one minute up to ninety nine minutes and each can be different, there may be an area which requires more water than another). Each channel will run for the period selected and on the days required. This is a good system when you go away on holiday or do not have much time.

In the summer water is applied (not in the heat of the day) about 3 times per week depending on the temperature and in the winter once every week or so depending on the temperature and climate at the time.

I am now using rain water on my disas or what's left of them (about 4 plants). Now that we are retired we have been watering by hand, they may not get as much water in one time as on the automatic system, but can be watered more often, plus we can keep a better eye on the plants.

pH of the water

I do not worry about it, maybe I should, the sarcochilus and dendrobiums seem to be doing ok- this is something for the experts to talk about.

Misting

We have overhead misters which are controlled by time clock (so that the mister is not working very late in the afternoon) and thermostat (so that the misters will come on when the temperature gets to a certain level). Some orchid growers have them under the benches.

Feeding

We feed the sarcs once or sometimes twice a week using Norm Porter's fertiliser to a conductivity (strength) of 7 CF. There are two lots, one is fed from Feb- Aug (N P K 16 3 27) while the other is fed from Sept – Jan (N P K 22 5 18). We make it up to a higher strength in a 20L bucket adding a tablespoonful of Maxicrop, some chelated iron and Epsom salts, (enough to cover a sixpence {5 cent piece} in each case) and then water down to the selected value.

Each month all the plants are flushed with water to clear the salts from the potting medium. There will be other fertilisers on the market – if yours works for you do not change it.

Heat

All of our plants are grown cold.

Potting Medium

We use clean bark suitable for the sarcophilus which is in between the fine bark and the bark used for cymbidiums.

Repotting

Put the plant in a pot to suit the size of plant – do **not** over-pot the plant . We use a mixture of one part of pumice or small stones and three parts of sarcophilus pine bark. It is worthwhile to soak the bark prior to potting on. Have you noticed how the water just runs through dry bark? Repot in the cool of the day so that the plant does not become stressed and do not forget to cut off all those dead roots. If the plant needs splitting, be gentle and do not forget the new label. Repotting or potting on tends to send out signals to the plant that a new period has arrived.

We use a variety of pots – plastic, wooden slatted baskets to terracotta pots – just make sure that the pot will drain. If your plant is just sitting there and does not seem to be growing , try repotting it, it may help. We repot all our seedlings each year, even if it is into the same pot, just the new mix can help them on their way.

Bait

We use slug pellets and ‘Slug Out’ for the plants just deflasked. We use a varied number of bait holders, one being a soft drink bottle with the shoulder and neck cut off and turned around to fit inside the bottle. This will stop the snails from getting out, but do not forget to put some slug bait in it.

Pests

We spray for green fly. mealy bug and scale using Orthene, or Conqueror Oil with water. Another is Confidor. There will be other products on the market just as good. We also hang pest strips from the roof.

Things which we forget

Now that we are retired we shall start feeding with dolomite lime and dried blood in March and October, and depending upon the size of pot we will use half a teaspoon around the top of the pot. The rafts will be soaked in a solution of lime and water.

Pots or Rafts

Some plants are best suited to rafts so research your plants. Rafts may take the form of natural cork, compressed cork, weathered hard wood, tea tree, jacaranda plus many others. You may have to try a plant on several different types of mounts before the plant is happy. Remember rafts normally dry out very quickly so may require more water. Some of our rafts consists of gutter guard made into a tube with a bottom and top. We have been filling them with wine corks. (HAS ANYONE GOT ANY USED SPARE CORKS OUT THERE PLEASE)?

Young Rafts

After one trip to Australia we placed under some of the benches some PVC spouting which we filled with water. Above this water we have strung a wire on which we hang our newly deflasked Dockrillas. It is cool and in the summer is relatively humid. This has helped most of the plants to get a head start with new roots coming away. A lot of this type of plants are suspended over creeks. Once they become established they are relocated.

Shadehouse Visits

When you visit someone's shadehouse look around to see how they grow their plants. Is it different to the way you grow yours? Can you improve on the way you attend to your plants? Is one of their plants growing better than yours, if so why? Check it out- it may get the sun at a different time of day. What plant is placed where to catch the sun, and how high up?

The Net

Surf the net sometime as there are plenty of sites out there which may help even if they are not the same genera.

Try this site for instance-

<http://capeorchids.itgo.com/growing/hints.htm>

Seedlings

We can flower some of our seedlings nine months out of the flask. We experiment with various medium mixes. At the moment we are using a mixture of very small bark and using a 20L plastic bucket which we fill with bark, soak, drain, add about ¼ volume of fine pumice plus the same as finely chopped sphagnum moss. Mix up well and you will find that the moss will take up the moisture making the total mix crumbly.

Sometimes if you have used just sphagnum you may have found that it stays really wet all the time and the plant in it does not move, it may be worth changing the medium.

Information

Share information because the time will come when you need to know something plus I believe it makes you feel happier.

Plants Kept

For us we keep the plants we like and they may not necessarily be show plants.

Orchid Clubs

If you do not belong to an orchid club then consider joining one, there is a wealth of information shared between the members.

Conclusion

Remember what suits us may not suit you, you may have to refresh your potting mix, relocate the plant to another location in the shade house maybe to get the morning sun. Sometimes growing any orchid is not easy, but can be made easier if you read up about your plant, observe the lush growing of that plant in someone else's shadehouse and see how they are growing it. Again if your plants are doing well do not change anything. Do not change everything at once!

Happy growing

David and Patricia

Growing Orchids in a cooler climate

John Cairns (johncairns@ihug.co.nz)

In June 1967 one Bert Hall came into my work place and mentioned that he had some pot plants for sale, as he was transferring with the N Z Railways to work in Manurewa. At that time I was keen on growing Begonias, fuchsias, ferns in fact all types of indoor plants. I believe even back then I could be labelled as a plantaholic. .

I arrived at Bert's home and he had a good selection of house plants, but two stood out above the rest. What are those two I enquired? They were new to me, and they were to change my life completely from that day on. "Cymbidium Orchids" was Bert's casual reply. I had not seen or heard of orchids before and could not get home fast enough to tell Penny about these exotic pot plants that were for sale for \$10 each. She indoors was not happy or excited about spending \$20 on two pot plants, I can tell you that there were a lot of promises, bribes like "No club for a month, No pig hunting every weekend, I'll even help with the house work". Well she eventually gave in and I was around to Bert's place latter that day with the \$20 and arrived home with two Cymbidiums.

One was a yellow called *C. Swallow* 'Daffodil', the other he called *C. Prince Charles*, an orange-brown with a bright red band lip. It wasn't until after 1980 that Andy Easton told me all of the *C. Prince Charles* were white. Some time latter he named the plant as *C. Maimey Kinsfort*. Not knowing anything about orchids I set about looking at gardening magazines and found the late Jim Rentoul's regular monthly article in the Australian Gardener. I found this valuable reading, and also plant lists from people such as the late Tom Henry, Sunnybanks Orchids and others.

I did not have any knowledge of Orchid clubs in New Zealand or any one that sold or grew orchids. I wrote to Sunnybank Orchids in Australia and asked if I could purchase some cymbidium plants and back bulbs from their catalogue I received a favourable reply from them and an OK from the Agricultural department in Hamilton as long as I could quarantine them in a different place to the two plants I had. I had my collection of two cymbidiums increased by 50 back bulbs and divisions. After the three months of quarantine was up a chap from the local Ag, Dept arrived to inspected the imported plants." What am I to look for?" he enquired. I replied "Bugs, any disease, that sort of thing." "Are there any?" he said. "No" I replied. "OK" he said and signed the paper. Oh, haven't they changed!

It wasn't until 1979 - 1980 when I met Alf Day who was at that time working in our town, that I realised that Orchid clubs existed. He introduced me to the N Z O S and a lot of the members. My early attempts at growing were at the best pretty bad. I live in a climate of wet cold frosty winters and hot dry summers.

I had by this time read quite a lot of books about orchids in general and thought a mix for my Cymbidiums should be reasonably damp so my first compost contained 50% pine bark from a local mill, which I broke up with a hammer, 25% todea fibre * and 25% peat. In the summer this mix was good, only watering one or two times per week. I continued to water into the winter at the same rate of water I used in the

summer, and did not find the damage the water was doing until too late. This was far too wet in our winters and the root loss was great. I first tried to remedy this by cutting out the todea fibre mainly because of the time it took to collect, plenty of it to get but always in the bottom steep wet gullies of our native bush. Today it is illegal to take any plants from our bush reserves.

I continued to have bark and the peat for the next two to three years with not a lot of success. I then heard of Beck's orchid mix from Ngatea and used this until Beck's stopped their supply. I have tried lots of combinations such as using polystyrene pieces, punga fibre, chopped up bracken fern, plus many more unusual time and money wasting concoctions.

Over the past 10 years I have refined my cymbidium mix to a very simple open one, 75% number 3 bark and 25% pumice pebbles, the pumice I purchase from the quarry on the bank of the Waikato River near Whakamaru.

This seems to suit my conditions, this very open mix requires watering from December to April just about every day, May and June twice per week, July and August which are the coldest months I only water when the plants look and feel dry.

I fertilise with a two pot mix I purchase from Goodwood Productions.

I start my fertiliser programme in September at strength of 4 on the C.F. Meter(Conductivity Meter *Ed.*), increasing to 6 in October. I continue at that strength of 6 until the end of January and increase the strength to 8 which I use until the end of May. No fertiliser is used in the months of June, July and August as I feel that the plants have stopped growing because of the cold weather sometimes as cold as 1.5 degrees in my greenhouse. In January I add 1% Magnesium Sulphate and in February 1% of dried blood to my fertiliser programme.

Over the past 10 years I have added 5% by liquid volume of cow manure and comfrey, at one watering a week nothing scientific about this. I believe this is working well on all plants from seedlings to flowering. I only use organic fertilisers on my vegetable garden. I think this can be successful with orchids as well. This coming year I will decrease the rate of the two pot fertiliser and increase the organic type on a group of plants.

I am of the opinion that my plants don't use the amount of fertiliser that I give them due to that long cold winter and spring, most days don't really get to a ground or growing temperature of 14 degrees until October. I don't use any heat except for seedlings out of flasks which I place on a heat bed.

My greenhouse is built on the side of a rise, to give you an idea the top right hand corner stud is 2.4 m high and the bottom left hand corner is 6m high.

My main orchid house is 15 x 20 m

I have a twin skin plastic cover which makes one big dome of a roof.

No vents in the roof which is a big problem in the hot months of January to March. I can open the east and west sides to let the air in when needed.

Because of the uneven nature of the floor my growing benches are at different heights which in turn makes automatic watering much harder than on a flat surface.

I still mainly grow cymbidiums plus a dozen or so Odontoglossums from Alf Day and some Aussie natives which are growing well for me.

I have thoughts of giving up most of my cymbidium collection of approximately 3000 so I could grow a bigger range of orchid and house plants in general but every year I make more crosses and get more cymbidiums. Yes it is a disease that Penny has over the years tried to cure me of, but the problem just gets bigger.

I live in one of the hottest and one of the coldest places of the North Island, we don't get snow but do get about 50 hard frosts from -1°C to -6°C per year. Our rainfall is low, with very little wind, lots of foggy low light days from June until September, no traffic lights, no queueing up for anything, too far away from orchids clubs. I say my home club is Waikato and I haven't been there for three years as I find it difficult to drive two hours at night back home after a monthly club meeting. Too far away from sea fishing grounds but all in all in all I think it is the best place to grow cymbidiums and to live in New Zealand.

I don't get many orchid people as visitors as we are thought to be off the beaten track, although in fact passing through our town is the quickest way from Auckland to Wellington, but orchid lovers are always welcome. Like most orchid growers I sell plants and my own flasks to keep my hobby going. I hardly ever purchase flasks from other growers now as I have been making my own crosses for the past 10 years, I believe I am getting reasonable results.

Yes orchid growers, I live in Taumarunui, the heart of the King Country.

** The earlier generation of growers will remember Todea fibre. It was the basal caudex ('trunk') of the NZ endemic fern Leptopteris (Todea) superba or Prince of Wales Feathers. It is regarded as one of the most beautiful ferns in the world, grows in cool, wet forests, and is difficult to grow. These days it is scarce in the North Island, but still occurs in central areas at higher altitudes, such as those around Taumarunui.*

What's on the Menu?

Ron Maunder (paradiseorchids@paradise.net.nz) *Photos by author.*



I've read about animals eating orchid bulbs but its usually squirrels, chipmunks or racoons in the Northern Hemisphere!

The other day I was annoyed to see that something was chewing the tips of the *Satyrium* new shoots as they started to emerge from their

dormancy (*see photo previous page*). In fact even the odd bulb was being dug up. I thought it was thrushes or blackbirds!



Then I went into another small glasshouse and found real devastation to a tray of what had been nice *Odm pulchellum* plants. Bulbs eaten away and leaves lying around going yellow! (*Photo to left*) Both houses are small ones I don't visit daily.

So out came the bucket of nail-on blue baits and some blocks of wood and I went to war replacing them until they stopped being eaten. For good measure I started putting them in the other houses too. I'd already been nailing them on the macadamia, the avocado tree, under the house and in the pump shed.

So be warned! With winter here, the rats and mice are getting into our warm and sheltered greenhouses and gorging on our orchid plants!

Buying Orchids Online

Rodney Draper (Draperfam@xtra.co.nz) (*Rodney is the newly elected president of the North Shore Orchid Society Ed.*)

When I arrived in New Zealand from Durban, South Africa I had only ever grown reed stem Epidendrums in my garden. I had always been a keen gardener but had never considered orchids although I now realise I could have easily grown warm growing orchids like Vandas etc. However on settling in Auckland I first started looking to replace my Epidendrums that I had had to leave in South Africa and found an Orchid Club selling plants in Glenfield Mall one Saturday and bought a couple. Then I bought a Cymbidium at the Plant Barn and to coin a phrase I was hooked. But I knew nobody in Auckland that grew orchids, didn't know if there was an orchid society, but in South Africa I had used Ebay to obtain items I collected so I thought I would see what was available on Trade Me or the internet.

At first (2003/4) I didn't find much on Trade Me although I found someone selling Epidendrums in Hillsborough and purchased some kiekies. Then I got some Cymbidiums, which I had to collect from Tauranga and I was on my way. Like all things, buying orchids on the net you need to follow a few rules and understand how Trade Me works and I'd like to share some from my experiences.

- Realise you can't see the actual plant but make sure the photo is of the plant that is being auctioned – some sellers show a mature plant and sell a seedling
- Some sellers use a Buy now option which is the price they'll take for the plant, no bidding required so you know what you'll get for a fixed price
- If the seller doesn't have a Buy Now but simply a starting bid, they might also have a reserve price below which the plant won't be considered sold

- If you submit a bid decide at the beginning what the maximum price is you are prepared to pay for the plant being offered – you can then make an ‘auto bid’ which means you enter the maximum price you’re prepared to pay and only if others bid will the system automatically bid on your behalf until your maximum is reached. Alternatively you can bid manually but be careful you don’t get caught in a bidding war and end up paying far more than you intended because you really want it and don’t want the other bidder to have it (I have been foolish like this a few times so beware)
- After some time you will start to know the reliable sellers and look out for them
- You can create a favourite search of either sellers or items and so can search daily for new listings of orchids or have them sent to you as an email

You can also search (Google) for New Zealand sellers and growers that have websites but not many New Zealand orchid growers have chosen to use the internet to sell orchids although I know of a few that use Trade Me to move excess stock and I have obtained a fair number of plants from them. I would guess around 50% of my collection of almost 500 plants has been obtained online so especially if you are starting out, find it difficult to get to Orchid Shows or live a distance from orchid growers why not try the internet and you may be surprised by what you will find.

Bubble wrap insulation

We received the following query which we thought might be of interest to our readers. The Editors’ response is also included, plus some further thoughts from Joe. If any of our readers has some thoughts or experience on this matter, we are happy to pass them on and they will also appear in the next issue. Ed.

I was thinking to install plastic bubble wrap into my unheated glasshouse in Hamilton, rural property. Should I put it outside or inside of glasshouse, what material I can use to glue it onto the glasshouse frame? Should the bubble wrap be as thick as possible? I have the lowest temperature recorded last few days as slightly below 0 degree although I have a frost cloth on the orchids.

Regards,
Joe (csjdy@hotmail.com)

And the Editors’ response:

Hi Joe

I would put it on the inside - it will last much longer, being protected from the UV light. At one time a weatherproof grade was available but I haven't heard of it for years - they built a tunnel house in Antarctica using it. I lined my 12' x 10' Eden glasshouse with bubble wrap - attached it to the grooves on the inside of the glazing bars with crop support clips - but that would only work with some glazing profiles. Double-sided tape might be a possibility, or all-weather tape. In earlier days, rumour had it that if you wetted the bubble wrap it would stick to the glass long-term, but I never found that to work. Make it as thick as you can find and afford.

More from Joe

I felt it was quite (a matter of) technique. There were many details required to think about. The budget is the biggest of the problems. I have thought of gluing and taping. Clipping may not be the option as there is no where I can clip the plastic onto the frame along all sides.

A friend gave me an idea about using velcro. I wondered whether it would last long, whether the material is designed as weather proof. Taping maybe a quick solution but how long it can tolerate the moisture?

I think most products are UV light tender. Even it is inside of the glasshouse, can the glass panel filter all harmful radiation? I have even thought to put another greenhouse plastic on the top of bubble sheet if the sheet is mounted on outside of glasshouse.

The thickness of bubble wrap is 3 mm in standard, I suppose. I have seen someone sell poly-bubble wrap in Trade Me. The trader said the sheet is about 10 to 12 mm. That is probably the thickest one I have found.

If you can put this into the newsletter, that will be great. I think some people will be interested to know and some may have some experience to share.

Thank you.

Regards,
Joe

Society Notices

South Auckland Orchid Society.

Our Show is 9am -4pm Saturday August 16th.held at the Senior Citizens hall, East St, Papakura. Our Charity Show will be held at the Botanical Gardens Manurewa 30th and 31st August. Opens on Saturday at 12 midday

Levin and Districts Orchid Society

The society's annual show will be on 23 and 24th August 2008. Celebrating our 25th Anniversary as a society. Brochure available - **SECRETARY** Bernie Townsend, 1 The Avenue, Paraparaumu Ph 04 -905 7129

Hawkes Bay Orchid Society

Winter Show Clive Hall, Main Road Clive, 12th July, 2008

Waikato OS Winter Show – 6th July a one day show. Venue Hamilton Gardens
Contact Secretary Diane Willson Ph 07-8496092 for details.

Tauranga Orchid Society Annual Display

12/13/14 September at the Racecourse, Cameron Road, Greerton.
Open 10.00am to 4.00pm daily. \$2.00 entry. Enquiries Phone Natalie 07 5430847.

The Wairarapa Orchid Show will be held on the 4th and 5th October 2008, in the Masterton Town Hall, Chapel Street, Masterton. All welcome. Display and plant sales. Enquiries to ph. 06 3089547 Wim.

Hibiscus Coast Orchid Society Spring Show to be held at the Orewa Community Centre Hall Orewa. Friday 12th.Sept 9-5, Saturday 9-3pm.Contact no. 09 425 7189.

North Shore Orchid Society

The Society meets on the LAST Sunday of each month in the Milford Senior Citizens Hall 141A Kitchener Road, Milford (behind New World, adjacent to Milford Shopping Centre carpark) at 12.30 pm. We would love to see you at our meetings which are relaxed and informative.

Any queries regarding meetings to Rodney Draper at draperfam@xtra.co.nz

New Zealand Clivia Club

Wednesday 30th July at the AHC rooms 990 Great North Road, Western Springs at 7.00pm. Diana Holt will be showing slides of her recent clivia visit to Japan.

Classified advertisements

3" Squat Pots - Brand New

Ideal for community pots and other plantings

4 cartons each containing 250 pots

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Offers wanted per carton lot

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Bay View.

NAPIER 4104.

Ph. 06 836 6735

Email: wflid@xtra.co.nz

18th Australian Orchid Council

Conference & Show 2009

Hosted by Maribyrnong Orchid Society and Affiliated Victorian Societies

8th – 13th Sept 2009

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www.mosorchid.org

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Ewen Perrott, 253 Tui Crescent, Te Awamutu.

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fomosana "Cairngorm" small dainty white, different with mauve markings on lip \$8
Shantung "Apricot Brandy" as named, yellow-scarlet lip. \$8
Shantung "Muriel Harbard" colour more intense than above, \$10
Shantung "Mikki" paler form of "Apricot Brandy", pink tones, vigorous. \$7-50.
Vesuvius, cerise-red, darker markings on lip. \$7-50
Vesuvius "Tigerfire" similar to above, but much more intense, \$7-50
Vesuvius "Phoenix" as above, but very different, possibly darker. \$7-50
Alishan "Tui" very shapely cerise-purple, *trophy winner*., \$8.
Alishan "Merlin" as above but with white tips to petals and sepals, \$10
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60 years.*

*As part of the celebrations
The following events have been
planned.*

Our Winter Show

18th to 20th July

Featuring

A Display of Orchids from Taiwan.

Our Spring Show and Seminar

19th to 21st September.

Featuring:

Fred Clarke from America

Phil Spence from Australia

Interested in attending ?

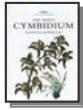
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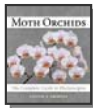
New and Forthcoming Orchid Titles from Touchwood Books



GENUS CYMBIDIUM by David Du Puy and Phillip Cribb. A Botanical magazine monograph. This attractive book provides full taxonomic accounts of all 52 species of Cymbidium, including distribution, maps, colour photographs, line drawings and colour paintings. There are chapters covering history, morphology, seed morphology, anatomy, cytology, pollination, uses and phylogeny. **In stock now.** 2007, hardback, 369 pages, 185 x 254mm, **\$220.00.**



MINIATURE ORCHIDS by Steven A Frowine. Steven Frowine profiles some 300 miniature orchids and lists another 200 by key characteristics, with information on the plant's geographic or hybrid origin; details about the flowers, bloom season, mature size and habit; ease of culture; light and temperature requirements; recommended potting medium; history; and tips for ensuring success. Superb photographs make identification easy. 338 colour photos. **In stock now.** 2007, hardback, 264 pages, 190 x 235mm, **\$70.00.**



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NEW ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ORCHIDS by Isobyl La Croix. More than 350 genera of cultivated orchids are included and 1500 species described, illustrated with approximately 1000 photographs. Recent developments in DNA analysis have led to some surprising findings with regard to the relationships between orchids, the author has undertaken an extensive effort to bring all orchid names up-to-date to reflect the latest scientific thinking and taxonomy. **Due July 2008,** hardback, 524 pages, 216 x 280mm, **\$115.00.**



WILD ORCHIDS IN MYANMAR VOL 1: LAST PARADISE OF WILD ORCHIDS by Yoshitaka Tanaka. A photographic presentation of Wild Orchids of Myanmar commonly known as Burma, mainly taken in situ. In this first volume Dr. Tanaka present some Vanda, Rhynchostylis, Retusa, Paphiopedilum, Dendrobium, Chiloschista, Coelogyne, Bulbophyllum, Ascocentrum, Micropera, Aeride, Thunia, Pholidota, Eria, Staurochilus and Cymbidium orchids. **Due June/July 2008,** hardback, 104 pages, 260 x 275mm, **\$80.00.**



WILD ORCHIDS IN MYANMAR VOL 2: A POEM OF WILD ORCHIDS by Yoshitaka Tanaka. The second in a series, this book focuses on orchids found in Burma's isolated Shan States. Presents 60 Myanmar Orchid Species. Among the epiphytic ones, Dendrobium, Vanda, and the relatives Bulbophyllum, Coelogyne and Eria species. For the terrestrial ones mainly Paphiopedilum and Cymbidium species, and 12 other species from different generas. Very impressive photographs. **Due June/July 2008,** hardback, 104 pages, 260 x 275mm, **\$80.00.**



WILD ORCHIDS IN MYANMAR VOL 3: SHANGRI-LA OF WILD ORCHIDS by Yoshitaka Tanaka. This book focuses on the wide variety of orchid species to be found at high altitudes on and in the vicinity of Victoria Mountain, in the Chin State, close to Burma's border with Bangladesh. While Dendrobium is perhaps the most frequently encountered family, a rich assortment of other species are illustrated and described, some of which still require further taxonomic research. **Due June/July 2008,** hardback, 108 pages, 260 x 275mm, **\$80.00.**



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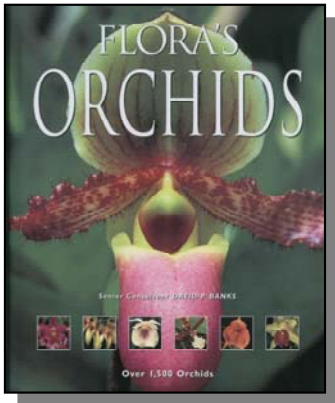
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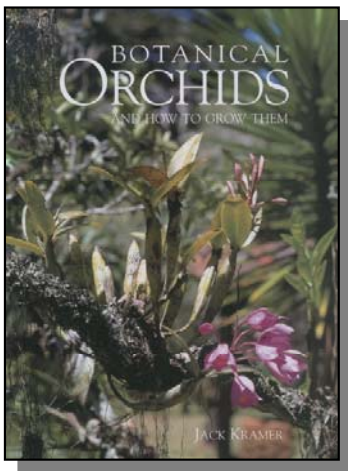
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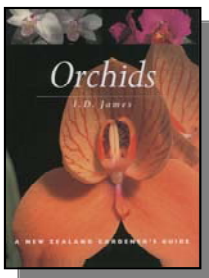


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