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Printed by Taranaki Newspapers Limited, New Plymouth, N.Z. — 14797

ORCHIDS IN NEW ZEALAND



January-February, 1976

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Valley Orchids development programme is far ahead of others. Their quality is unsurpassed.

This season, 1975, they gained three awards for Cymbidiums—

29 June N.S.W.O.S. Winter Show . . . for Cym. Valley Song "Maureen"

- ★ HCC/NSW
- ★ Reserve Champion of the Show.
- ★ Best Cymbidium.
- ★ Best Export Cymbidium.

15 September. 4th Australian Orchid Conference—

- ★ AM/NSW for Pearl Balkis "Valley High."
- ★ Champion pure-colour Cymbidium—Pharoah "King of Kings."
- ★ Five first prizes for Cymbidiums:—
- ★ Best seedling - Best white pure-colour - Best yellow pure-colour - Best specimen - Best two pure-colour, and seven second prizes.

A total of 13 out of 38 total prizes for Cymbidiums.

This is over one third of the total prizes given at the Fourth Australian Orchid Conference and for orchids taken by road transport just 1000 miles from Valley Orchids Cymbidium farm.

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Cymbidiums are widely grown in Tasmania, New Zealand, Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales. It was falsely stated for many years, that Cymbidiums would not grow and flower successfully north of Newcastle. This false prediction has long since been exploded and Cymbidiums are thriving in Queensland. Cymbidiums are ideally suited for the cut flower export market, and a number of fine collections are being established in Queensland.

It was my pleasure to view, during 1974, a number of magnificent flowerings at the Southport-Ipswich-Toowoomba areas. Possibly the finest flowers of Vieux Rose "Dell Park" FCC/RHS, yet seen, was in a private collection at Tamborine Mountain, which would have held its place at any show throughout the world.

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Sizes: Cymbidiums range from the true Miniatures, with a petal spread of two to 2.5 cm, coming up through to the Hybrid Miniatures, which have a maximum of 6.5 cm petal spread, and going right through to the Standard size Cymbidiums, which range from nine cm across the petals, right up to the present-day Hybrids, which are averaging 13 cm; and finally to the largest of all Cymbidium genus, Clauboda "Goliath" FCC/RHS which has consistently flowered with us, at a petal width of 15 cm.

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**THE EDITOR
30B WAIWAKA TERRACE
NEW PLYMOUTH**

ORCHIDS IN NEW ZEALAND

Official publication of the Orchid Council of New Zealand.

Volume 1. No. 4.

Published bi-monthly.

January-February, 1976.

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Annual Subscriptions, including postage: New Zealand \$3.80, Australia \$N.Z.4.00, Great Britain \$NZ5.00, U.S.A. \$NZ4.50.

Advertising Rates: Full page \$25, Half-page \$14, Half-column \$8, Quarter column \$5.

All manuscripts, photographs, news items etc. to reach Editor six weeks prior to publication.

Views and opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Orchid Council of New Zealand.

The Orchid Council does not assume responsibility for any transaction between advertisers and readers.

EDITORIAL

Christmas has come and gone and no doubt the same applies to vast quantities of potting mix and fertilizer. When first starting to grow orchids one finds a lot of advice offered, most of it good but like all reference books, conflicting. The first question is always "What kind of mix and fertilizer do I use and how often do I water?" Assuming that you are a Cymbidium grower it appears that the mixes are many and varied, from coarse shingle to dirt. I have seen Cymbidiums flowering magnificently in a box of crumbly soil and then again one strapped to a ponga tree with roots buried in the fibre doing equally well. One must experiment a little, don't use a particular mix because Jim Smith states that it is the best, but try different ingredients. If you live in an area with high humidity perhaps a very coarse mix will suit, large pieces of pumice, charcoal, bark, rock etc. most of this can be scavenged from beaches and pockets of river debris. Untreated sawdust is used in some areas, if considered too fine some coarse additive can be mixed in.

Take half a dozen plants (or more if you have them) approximately the same size, put in pots of various mixtures two plants to the same mix and start off, water some lightly, others plentifully and take careful note of the growth rates. I think you be amazed with the results. From this rough and ready experiment you should be able to come up with a mixture that the plants really do well in. Having found a suitable mix further experiments can be carried out along the same lines for fertilizers, light requirement and the necessary amount of moving air. All these studies are fascinating and you will learn the exact requirements for your orchids in your situation. Summer is not too soon to start on such a programme.

Wishing you every success in the New Year with your orchids, may they all grow and bloom profusely. Happy New Year to All.

COVER PHOTO: Stanhopea platyceras A very handsome species with the more unusual feature of flowering below the pseudo bulbs. Basket culture for this species is essential. The specific name (broad, a horn) refers to the unusually broad horns of the mesochile, which with the curved and broad boat-like hypochile distinguishes the species. Photo by courtesy of Mr. G. Fuller.

POSTAL CHARGES

Most of our readers are aware that local postal charges are being increased as from 2 February 1976. The Council do not wish to increase the price of the magazine but charges of this nature cannot be absorbed and there is no way out of the situation other than altering postal rates. The magazine will remain at 50 cents per copy (\$3 per annum) but postage will now increase by 30 cents giving an annual subscription of \$3.80. Readers who have paid \$3.50 for the current year will not be called upon for additional postage but all new subscriptions starting with the March 1976 edition will be at the new rate. Overseas charges will be amended following official advice from the Post Office.

EMBLEM COMPETITION

Winner: Mr. H. Fryer, 39 Paynters Avenue, New Plymouth.

Highly Commended: Mrs. D. Cooper, 14 Avalon Crescent, Lower Hutt; Mrs. D. R. Alexander, Whitehead Avenue, Te Puke; Mr. P. Keiha, Kings Road, Gisborne.

The Orchid Council would like to take this opportunity to extend to all entrants their sincere appreciation for the many entries received and to congratulate the winner and those who were Highly Commended.

Our N.Z. native orchids proved to be the most popular choice and the Judging Panel were very impressed with the high quality of the designs forwarded.

The lucky winner will now receive orchids to the value of \$50.

ORCHIDS

The kings and queens of the plant kingdom

by Russel Martin of Australia

For many years orchids were regarded as exotic tropical plants which were difficult to cultivate, and because of their value, were only to be found in the hands of very wealthy collectors. This myth has long since been expended and orchids are now to be found in collections wherever interested horticultural bodies exist.

The first myth that they are exotic tropical fragile plants, no longer exists, for all genera of orchids have proven themselves to be very hardy, and will withstand extremes far beyond the capabilities of many other plants.

The second myth that they are difficult to cultivate, is also far behind us. Due to the rapid progress in modern methods of cultivation, together with the introduction of a better

understanding in plant food requirements, orchids now thrive in most parts of the world.

The third myth that they are expensive plants which are out of the reach of the average home gardener, has also faded into obscurity due to modern methods of plant propagation exercised by the commercial hybridizers and raisers of orchids. The cost of production has now been drastically reduced and an orchid plant is no dearer than an average Standard Rose, or the average well established garden shrub.

Without doubt the Cymbidium is the most popular genus in Australia. It has a long lasting flower spike, carrying from six to thirty flowers, for long periods of time—in some instances flowers have lasted sixteen weeks.

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AN AUSTRALIAN TRIP

(continued) by Fred Burke

Next stop: Wondahbar Orchids run by Robert Giles. A very neat and tidy establishment, now concentrating on plant sales instead of cut flowers. I would like to have had my cheque book out here but one can't buy everything. The large houses of seedling plants, recently out of flask were really good. A side venture has been developed that is proving very successful. This is commercial composting, using as a base, five-year-old crushed and graded pine bark and peat with heavy applications of dolomite, about six kilograms to the cubic metre. Sales are running into many thousands of bags per year.

Adelaide came up after a two-day coast drive with its beautiful scenery. Valley Orchids was of course where I was heading for and as Merv Dunn was in Germany reading a paper on the "pure-colour" Cymbidiums at the World Orchid Conference, I rang Bob Nicholle, Merv's son-in-law. Bob picked us up next morning and drove first of all to Merv's home where all deflasked seedlings and mericlones are kept for a period of two to three months before transferring to the nursery at Reynella. Plants were all in community pots and were in excellent condition. Adelaide Orchids were on our way out, so we stopped there and spent a pleasant hour talking and viewing Sid Monkhouse's nursery. Quite a large number of miniatures here and we found it very interesting. Sid and his wife Shirley moved their old-established nursery to their new location a couple of years ago and considerable alterations are still in progress. It takes a while to move a large nursery and get it as one likes, but the end results will be very good with modern selling facilities, offices and a seed sowing, replanting and mericlone laboratory. Also a bit of diversification here into the home garden and shrub line. Just another place we would have liked to stop longer with very friendly people. Valley Orchids, at Reynella, where Bob and Merv's daughter "Muffy" lives, did not let us down. After an enthusiastic welcome and a generous morning tea, we viewed several thousand lush plants, two months from flask to mature flowering size growing in Merv's

impressive "Ritelite" houses. These houses are so designed to allow maximum sunlight during winter and extra shading during the hotter and brighter summer months without manual manipulation. It was obvious from the plants' condition that they were enjoying the environment and the compost of red gum saw dust and old fowl manure at a rate of two to one with a couple of handfuls of bone dust to a large mixing. No other feeding, and from the spiking it was all that was needed. I saw a plant of Pharaoh "Pathfinder" with four spikes on one bulb. Valley Orchids are now well established in the pure and standard colour field as show and award successes and published colour photographs indicate. Pure colours are now well beyond the experimental stage and each year will see more and more of them taking their place among the topline Cymbidiums.

It was a pleasure to meet Nicky Zurcher who does all of Valley Orchids flasking. His reputation in this field is second-to-none having had years of experience with a large English firm before migrating to Australia.

A nursery with a late flowering history is that of friendly Angus and Marie Fulton, 460 metres up in the hills northeast of Adelaide. Not a large collection but very high class in quality and generally flowering into December. Plants are grown under saron during summer and put into glasshouses for flowering. Spikes appeared to be as far advanced as ours but evidently the longer winter at this height delayed their flowering.

Selecting and packaging of 160 ordered plants from Valley Orchids for clients in New Zealand took considerable time but we finally left Adelaide looking more like commercial travellers and raised a few eyebrows at airports.

Thank you Australia for a very pleasant trip.

P.O. Box 422, Whakatane.

TRANS-TASMAN GREETINGS

by G. Hermon Slade

After a long and interesting world trip devoted largely to orchids, it was a pleasure to find among the pile of mail awaiting me, Volume One, Number One of "Orchids in New Zealand".

Congratulations on your praiseworthy effort, including the spectacular colour print of your lovely New Zealand native, *Dendrobium cunninghamii*.

What a wonderful climate you have to grow a wide array of the world's orchids. New Zealand epiphytic orchids are not the most cold tolerant orchids in the world and thus there are many other cool loving orchids that are equal, if not more ready to grace your garden trees and rocks if given a chance. I have travelled widely and have lived in the tropics for a number of years; one thing is certain, the equatorial zone lowland and thus "tropical" orchids are rarely as showy and as intriguing as the highland and lower altitude ones. *Oncidium varicosum* for instance, out-glories its tropical sisters and yet it is a cool growing orchid that grows so well left to itself in Sydney that it must surely do well as a garden orchid in Auckland.

The Japanese orchids are rather few but especially charming and would surely love New Zealand climate. There are several lovely epiphytes, *Dendrobium moniliforme*, *Aerides japonicum*, *Neofinetia falcata*, all charming.

Vanda coerulea is capricious, yet ever a challenge because of its marvellous blue flowers. Nowhere have I seen it or its hybrids grow more successfully than in New Zealand but it needs to be treated as an "adult" and given its freedom, not coddled and over indulged by a clucky-hen grower who over waters, over feeds and over heats it. A number of three-quarter and seven-eighths *Vanda coerulea* hybrids are available.

Lovely cool growing *Dendrobiums*, *Coelogyne*s, *Pleione*s and other genera orchids grow with *Rhododendrons* and are especially sure to succeed in New Zealand as have the renowned *Rhododendrons* in Pukeiti *Rhododen-*

dron Garden (near New Plymouth). Orchids are not delicate—they are hardy and tough and extremely tenacious to life. Short of drowning them (as many growers inadvertently do) they will survive long periods of adverse conditions of heat, cold and dryness. But many of them, like a number of animals are easily drowned and capable of being killed by unusual or over rich food. If they are placed on rocks or trees and come from the right place, the chance of finding orchids as much at home in New Zealand as are the exotic *Rhododendron* is almost certain.

You have a wonderful land, blessed with proven host trees that grow your own local epiphytic species, set in a challenging but well suited climate for the worlds "temperate" and "cool" orchids. It is these very groups that include the colourful, long-lasting and most fascinating of all the huge orchid family of species and ever growing hybrids.

When planting exotic orchids on trees, try to use the same place as a local orchid has found. This may well be a micro-climate that is ecologically suited to orchid life. With frosts for instance, it is remarkable, almost unbelievable, how different the intensity of the frost over quite a small area, especially above the ground in a tree, where elevation, air movement and the biological warmth of the living tree have a mitigating effect.

My good wishes to your bi-monthly Journal and best wishes to all growers in New Zealand.

"Ting Hao" 15/104 Darley Road, Manly, N.S.W., 2095, Australia.

G. Hermon Slade was the first editor of the "Australian Orchid Review" in 1936 and held that position for many years. He is well known throughout the "orchid world" for his outstanding work encouraging the conservation of orchids and for popularising so many of the species among orchid growers. He has established orchids in "natural" conditions in many places and encouraged many other to success in this fascinating aspect of orchid growing.

ORCHID "TREES"

by Oncidium

This time I would like to discuss the growing of orchids on trees. Although I have only recently attached the plants to my "tree," it was some years ago when I first observed them displayed this way in the Wellington Botanical Gardens. The plants were mostly *Coelogyne massangeana* fixed to ponga trunks and great they looked too.

Here is how I went about it. A good branched piece was selected from a plum tree being pruned to make way for a new shed. This was about two metres high. All minor twigs were cut off, leaving just the main forks and enough side branches to give it character. This was stood in a 10-litre plastic bucket and filled with concrete to make it stable. A larger tree would require a correspondingly larger base.

Plants selected were all true epiphytes and in my case, all common ones, so if they did die, they could be replaced reasonably easily.

Those types already established on slabs were dealt with first. Some wet sphagnum moss was placed on the selected spot on the branch, then the plant was wired on, slab and all. The wire was put right round the branch and around the slab, taking care that the rhizome of the plant was not cut and making sure it was tight and secure. This accounted for things such as *Oncidium varicosum* and *Dendrobium linguiforme*.

Plants in pots were done differently. A thin slab of soft ponga (*Dicksonia fibrosa*) about 15 cm wide was wrapped around the forks of the branches and wired tightly at the bottom. This gave cup-shaped recesses in which some orchid mix was placed, then the plant was removed from its pot and placed in the new "ponga pot." More orchid mix was added to fill in the spaces and finally, another wire around the top area of the ponga strip to hold the plant firmly. *Dendrobium striolatum*, *Oncidium ornithorhynchum*, and *Platyclinus glumaceum* etc. were dealt with in this manner.

For the *Stanhopea*—a bird-nest-like shape was made from plastic netting, the sort with about two cm mesh. This was attached around



a twiggly join of several branchlets. The nest was lined with sphagnum moss, then mix and planted. The pendant flower spikes should have no trouble in breaking through.

Bromeliads were also attached, these along with ferns, lichens and mosses of course, form the companion plants of orchids in the tropical Americas and add that bit of interest.

Other "trees" to be used, could be any with rough permanent bark, such as oak, beech or pohutakawa. Mine is of a shape and size that can be removed from the glasshouse and taken to shows and suchlike. The life of the branch is probably only a few years, but in any case the plants will require some attention by then. Drainage of "tree" plants is superb.

PUKEKURA CORNER

by GEORGE FULLER, N.D.H. (N.Z.), Curator



Masdevallia simula Rchb.f.

As I write, this fascinating little orchid is gracing our display but I wonder how many visitors will discover it amongst all the flamboyancy for it is in a tiny pot easily hidden by a single leaf of the average plant. Yes, tiny indeed, for those leaves are only about five to six centimetres long and the blooms barely one centimetre across.

It was many years ago in England that I was first captivated by the sheer impudence of the "partridge in the grass" orchid and little did I expect to see it again upon return to New Zealand but one astute enthusiast had the wisdom to import it and it was a great thrill to see it turn up in a donation to the park.

Caring for such a midget presents problems, especially as the *Masdevallias* do not have pseudobulbs and therefore do not appreciate extended periods of dryness as can occur through having been "overlooked" at watering. Cultivation is otherwise not difficult with climatic conditions of cool to intermediate being satisfactory. Plenty of air is advised (but not dryness) since most *Masdevallias* come from the alpine regions extending from Mexico to Ecuador. Fibres and mosses have been used in mixes traditionally but I find that *Cymbidium*-type mixes used here are satisfactory but care must be taken to avoid over potting whatever is used.

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A GLOSSARY OF ORCHIDACEOUS TERMS

compiled by the Reverend B. J. EDWARDS
A few more to keep you going!

Culture: The type of song which you sing to your weeds. The more exotic species require more devious forms. It can also mean, that if you are not getting flowers, you should try the National Programme for a while.

Debt: What the plant sellers will soon get into if you're not careful.

Disease: If you are reading this you have probably already got it. It is caused by buying the first orchid, then the next, ad infinitum. There is no known cure.

Expert: Common: the person at the monthly meeting who apparently knows more than you do, but actually is better at pronouncing the names of various weeds. Should not be taken too seriously, but should be humoured or it may become aggressive.

Drip (1) An expert not being asked a question; (2) The usual cause of fungus.

Exhibition: A group skite.

This species has dull yellow blooms enhanced by a transparent quality and speckled with purple. They are long lasting and produce over several months of early summer, almost jostling for position. Once seen never forgotten if you are tipped off about the "partridge" part. People who walk past orchids to look admiringly at decorative curly-kale are brought to a standstill by this one. I wonder if I will ever see again its charming little friend the "pheasant in the grass." (*M. obrieniana*) or even more fascinating, *M. muscosa* which temporarily traps tiny insects with its sensitive labellum. But perhaps I am being a little too hopeful.

I water the top ones first, this drains from there down the branches watering the others on the way, but I soak them all thoroughly. I do not think you could overwater in the warmer months.

An artificial tree would be even better, one made of various sized novapipes glued together, connected to a hose, with small holes drilled where the plants are attached. To water—simply turn on the tap. I believe there is one in Auckland somewhere. A living tree in a tub is possible, but may be not practical. In more favoured areas, the plants can be put on trees outside permanently, many of these do exist.

What sort of plants are suitable? All epiphytes, especially those with arching or pendant spikes, even tufted plants like *Masdevallias* are good tree subjects with their tall spikes.

Why not try one, using cheaper plants for a start. It adds interest to your collection, is a good way to display your species and takes no more space than an average standard Cymbidium.

REPORT FROM SOCIETIES NEWS

Most societies that held spring shows or exhibitions have now recovered from their efforts, assessed affairs and returned to regular meetings. At the last meeting the Hutt Valley Orchid Circle showed two colour films supplied by Mr. A. Smith, which proved of great interest. This society is going to run another Meristem Competition organised by Mr. Ralph Woodhouse. The North Shore Orchid Society had a pleasing plant display at their last meeting with Mr. Aldridge giving the commentary. I hope the Hawke's Bay Orchid Society members enjoyed the slides that were scheduled for their last meeting. It was good to hear from the Wanganui Orchid Club and to know that they are active. The Taranaki Orchid Society held a free ballot for 12 plants last meeting, all interested members taking part. The winners to table plants every six months for growing technique evaluation.

NEW YEAR SPECIAL

ANGRAECUM VEITCHII

Waxy white, long lasting flowers. Strong plants in 100 mm pots.

EPIDENDRUM ATROPURPUREUM var. ROSEUM

Many 60 x 70 mm flowers on erect raceme. Sepals and petals brown, the large lip bright rose. Strong plants to flower next spring. \$6.50 each, post free. Limited stocks.

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NOTES FROM ORCHID COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND

The beginning of a new year is a time of anticipation and retrospection for orchid enthusiasts. We look forward to improving the culture of our plants, the flowering of new seedlings, and the making of new friends in the orchid world. We look back over the year past, and remember the pleasures, and sometimes sorrows, that our plants gave us, the cultural knowledge gained, and the friendships made with people who also grow orchids.

The increase of interest in the growing of orchids is evidenced by the formation of several new Orchid Societies in the past year, with more to be promoted in the near future. The Orchid Council of N.Z. welcomes all new Orchid Societies, and offers every assistance to those in the process of formation.

During the past six months a sub-committee appointed by the Orchid Council of N.Z. Executive has been working on suitable Standards and Rules for the judging of Orchids both for awards and at shows. This sub-committee has made good progress and when finalised the Standards and Rules will enable the Council to grant National Awards to qualifying orchid clones, and will be of benefit to those societies conducting competitive orchid shows.

The application of the Plant Breeders Rights Act by Government is being closely watched by The Council, in view of its likely effects on the Orchid Industry and the amateur grower. The Australian Orchid Council, in discussion on this, considered that proof of ownership of a distinct clone may be difficult, owing to the frequency of protocorm proliferation within the flask. At present the Act is applicable only to roses in the horticultural field on a trial basis, and The Council will be informed of further extensions.

The Orchid Council's magazine, "Orchids in New Zealand" has been well received both in N.Z. and overseas. As readers will have noticed, many articles of merit have been contributed by orchid growers from other coun-

tries, and the list of overseas subscribers grows each month. The magazine is fortunate in the quality of material supplied by N.Z. writers on orchid matters, but to maintain this quality and reader interest, the Editor does require a constant flow of material from both present and new contributors.

Several members of the Orchid Council of N.Z. attended the recent Australian Orchid Conference in Sydney, and were warmly welcomed by the Australian hosts. Considerable information of value was gained from attendance at the various seminars, and a basis was established for co-operation and exchange of information between the Councils. The Editor of our magazine, Mr. Graeme Boon, and the Editor of The Australian Orchid Review, Mr. Ronald Kerr, found much of interest to discuss.

Although The Orchid Council of N.Z. has been in existence for only a short time, it is pleasing to note that steady progress has been made in achieving the objects of the Council, to the mutual advantage of all orchid growers.

TOM FRENCH,
President.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Pleased to hear of your successes or failures or suggestions about our journal.

Dear Mr. Boon,

If I may, I would like to take this opportunity through the pages of your magazine to say "thanks" for our group to all of the orchid people in New Zealand who made our tour of your country such a roaring success. It would be near impossible to write to each individual that contributed so much time and energy to making us so welcome. There was no doubt in

Slugs and Snails: Orchids are most attractive to snails, which can cause severe damage to leaves and spikes.

Control: Bait with metaldehyde or methiocarb, all year round.

Fungus gnats: Sciarid flies, may damage young plants.

Control: Drench with diazinon once or with maldison twice at seven-day intervals and spray compost heaps etc. in which they may be breeding.

Crickets: Occasionally cause damage.

Control: Bait with 28 ml maldison in 1 kg wheat applied in the evening to 400 m² of ground in and around the orchid house. Harmless to children, birds and pets.

Vine weevil: Cream-coloured larvae occasionally found damaging roots, or orchids.

Control: Drench mix with diazinon or re-pot into fresh mix.

by MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE & FISHERIES,
Auckland.

WAIKATO ORCHID SOCIETY SPRING SHOW

On 3 and 4 October, 1975, the Waikato Orchid Society held its spring show at the Ferrybank Lounge, Hamilton. The grand champion Cymbidium San Francisco "The Beat" exhibited by Mr. Ken Blackman took the Nairn Cup.

Orchid history for New Zealand was made at the show. For the first time two seedlings hybridised and raised by two of our members were awarded by the N.Z.O.S. (Auckland). Mr. John Young gained an HCC with Cymbidium Baltic Knight "Becky," two erect spikes of well formed green flowers and bold cream lip with contrasting red spots. Our second success went to Mr. James's Odontoglossum White Heron (white flower with a delicate edging of pink) which gained an AM.

Following the closing of the show an entertaining evening was enjoyed by many members and friends. Ten guests from the San Diego County Orchid Society, U.S.A., attended our show and Mr. Gene Casey, a noted judge in California, did the honours in presenting the prizes to the successful exhibitors.

POVERTY BAY-EAST COAST ORCHID SOCIETY

The first Annual General Meeting was held on 29 September when the following were elected to office:

Patron: Mr. A. Beck, Ngatea.

President: Mrs. R. Bell.

Vice-President: Mr. D. Lees.

Secretary: Mrs. M. Jacobs, 6 Buchanan St., Gisborne.

Our first year as a society has been a very busy one, but with the aim that "one gets out of any society what one puts into it" our 95 members can justifiably claim the reward—satisfaction and success. This was clearly shown when we staged our first Orchid Show on 12 and 13 September. Meetings are held on the second Monday in the month, 7.30 p.m. Upper Mangapapa Residents Hall. No meetings in December and January.

GOLDEN COAST'S FIRST SHOW

The Golden Coast Orchid Society held its first show on 9, 10 and 11 October in the Coastlands Shopping Mall at Paraparaumu, taking up all the space in the huge central open court area. All promotion was handled by the Mall Management, who also paid the Society a lump sum to locate the show there. It was an outstanding success with people travelling many miles to see the display. There was an added advantage of a crowded Saturday shopping day, and night (this coastal area enjoys Saturday trading.)

The orchids were displayed on tiered arrangements of cut pine logs of different heights arranged in bold groups to give as natural an effect as possible, with ferns and foliage plants used to disguise the pots. Although the flowers were roped off, there was no attempt to interfere or touch them from the mixed crowds, many of whom returned again and again to admire the display.

Members put all they had into the show and the president, Mr. E. T. Bartosh, contributed a number of genera other than cymbidiums, to add further interest. Commercial growers, Blacks Orchids of Levin and Norman Porter, Waikanae, both put on massive stands of cymbidiums.

Pests and diseases are few; slugs, snails, scale and aphids being the main ones. In some areas slaters may be a problem and get in the pots, but in the main these are easily controlled. If you do have one or two of those prize plants that develop scale here is an old remedy that may save you time and money. Use equal parts water and methylated spirits mixed and brush into all corners of the plant. But do not get that mix too strong.

Feeding: I have always preferred to feed a chemical solution not animal manures. For one thing, you know exactly what you are feeding and for another you are not filling up your open mixture with insoluble substances and so risking root rot. Certainly a more open mix could need more nitrogen.

In conclusion I would like to suggest that all you growers who do not have our marvellous Bay of Plenty weather conditions can still have a ball by growing Cattleyas. Or again think of the satisfaction of placing your home grown white Cattleya flower in daughter's (?) wedding bouquet. Yes you could do it by providing heat and I realise this can be a costly item. However have a good check out first on this point, find something that will not let you down on a cold frosty night or during a storm. Perhaps you could double glaze your glasshouse or even use that venetian-type shade contraption to keep frost from the glass. Again, you could tack sheets of polythene film under the glass—similar idea to double glazing and more popular. Close the house down while the daylight can still build heat and so create a reserve for the cold night. Do not have any broken panes of glass or cracks in the putty where drips can enter. Ventilate first from vents under the bench and have the others well fitted. Now see if you can think up other fuel-saving ideas. Did you get the one where cold winds can blow directly onto the glass and so what about shelter? I once read that covering plants at night with blackout paper saves 20 per cent. fuel costs—check it, it could be true. Now I must wish you all, good plants, good growing and good flowering for many a year to come.

Cymbidium Orchids: Pest and Disease Control 1975

PART 4

False mite: Similar to mites, but cause pitting and silvering on upper surface of leaf. No webs are formed.

Control: Diazinon gives excellent control, usually with one spray only. Other organophosphates are not effective, or dicofol, two or three times at seven to 10 day intervals, as for mites.

Leaf roller caterpillars: Of special importance if blooms are to be exported to U.S.A. and Canada. Not a problem except where native bush or orchards are close to orchid house. Use azinphosmethyl (e.g. Gusathion), carbaryl, DDD or lead arsenate on susceptible plants outside the orchid house, e.g. azinphosmethyl 0.5 g/litre applied every two weeks, Spring-Autumn.

In spike control: Try acephate.

Watch for and hand-pick leaf roller on orchids, or use DDT, lindane, carbaryl (effect of azinphos-methyl on orchids not known). Sprays used for other pests e.g. acephate, diazinon, give some control.

Ants: Often an indication of the presence of other pests e.g. aphids, mealybug.

Control: Proprietary baits, or spray surrounding area, benches, floors etc. NOT the plants, with dieldrin or chlordane.

Cockroach: Damage aerial roots.

Control: Proprietary baits. DDT or lindane dust.

Collembola: Springtails, tiny white insects in potting mix, feeding on decaying organic matter.

Control: Drench mix with maldison or diazinon or dust with DDT or lindane. Avoid wetting leaves with maldison.

Slaters: Woodlice, Pillbugs—injure aerial roots.

Control: Raise containers off ground. Use nylon mesh to cover drainage holes and prevent entry. DDT dust applied to source of infestation. Dieldrin sprayed on the ground and surrounding area. Diazinon applied as a drench.

our minds that we would receive a fine welcome when we arrived "down under," but none of us were prepared for the open arms, warmth and hospitality that was given to us so freely. I have had several phone calls from the members of our tour group asking to be remembered when I wrote to you. All the wonderful luncheons, buffet dinners, cocktail parties, shows and meetings we had with all the wonderful New Zealanders will long linger in our memories.

Most of us have our colour slides and photographs back from processing and the common note that runs through our conversations is the beauty and intensity of the colour in the Cymbidium orchids it was our privilege to view. The bright array of colour would be pretty difficult to explain to our stay at home colleagues without the many colour slides and photos that we took while visiting the orchid shows in Auckland and Hamilton, the meeting with the Taranaki Orchid Society, and the many orchid ranges we were fortunate enough to visit. All in all we can see no way that there could have been an improvement on our trip. Everybody was so helpful and gracious that the word "thanks" seems to be a very trite expression and does not adequately express our feelings.

We still have fond memories also of the visit of the New Zealand Orchid Growers to our San Diego County Orchid Show last year and hope that some of you might be able to join us again next year. Our 30th Annual Show will be held from the 2nd through the 4th of April, 1976. We only hope that any that can make it up our way will see as wonderful a time as we had in New Zealand. Once again, we all want to say thanks for the wonderful memories you all provided us with during our all too short visit with the Orchid Growers of New Zealand.

Sincerely,

BEN HARDY,

9443 E. Heaney Circle, Santee, Calif. 92071,
U.S.A.

28 Oct. 1975.

To Secretary/Treasurer
Orchid Council of New Zealand.

Enclosed is a cheque for \$250 from the Golden Coast Orchid Society. This is a portion of the profit from our October Show. We feel that our function as an orchid society is not to accumulate funds, but to use any surplus money to encourage orchid growing. By making this contribution to the Orchid Council of New Zealand we feel that the greatest number of orchid enthusiasts will benefit.

All of our members are keen about the magazine and we hope that our small contribution will help to keep up the high standard.

J. J. MATTHEWS,
Secretary.

This magnificent gesture from the Golden Coast Orchid Society is truly appreciated by the Orchid Council of New Zealand. Following the Golden Coast suggestion this money will be applied to the best advantage for all the orchid fraternity of this country. This is a most generous donation from a society in considering not only themselves but furthering orchid growing throughout New Zealand.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

This section is for the use of amateur growers only. Trade your surplus back bulbs and divisions for profit and pleasure. Please reply direct to the addresses given as no correspondence will be entered into by the Editor or magazine staff. Fifty cents for each advertisement, limited to 18 words.

WANTED TO BUY OR EXCHANGE

Phalaenopsis and Cattleya plants. I have a few young Phalaenopsis plants to swap. Cyril Pritchard, 24 Pohutu Street, Whakatane.

WANTED TO BUY

A few Phalaenopsis by beginner, also Paphiopedilum. Reply: R. A. Dewstow, P.O. Box 118, Te Kopuru.

THE CATTLEYA GROUP

by Bruce Douglas
46 Grey Street, Kawerau

The genus *Cattleya* was named in England by the botanist John Lindley after William Cattley, an English grower who was the first man to flower a *Cattleya* in England. (*C. labiata*). This by the way was in the early 1820s.

In those days there was little if any, correct knowledge about these and the allied genera such as *Laelia* and *Sophranitis* etc. Then gradually with more and more plants being collected and sent back "home" (England), and the expertise gained by those grand old gardeners of yester-year, things changed until today in both breeding and culture we have quite sophisticated plants.

Within this group there are species that can suit all pockets and tastes. Added to this there are the many hybrids and intergeneric crosses making up the vast range on today's market. *Cattleyas* for my money are amongst the most satisfying orchids to grow.

I do not know when *Cattleyas* (for the purpose of this article *Laelias* and other allied groups are included under this heading) were first grown in New Zealand but 25 years ago there were some interesting collections that I remember seeing—some quite large. Back in those days they were classed as intermediate orchids, that is plants that require intermediate conditions as opposed to cool and tropical conditions (this is generally where they belong today).

In the main they were grown in one mixture—todea fibre with the main variation being to include or not, various amounts of sphagnum moss. Containers were always clay pots, well crocked (except for some grown in ponga pots and a few in slat baskets).

What sort of conditions did that give us? First, being clay pots there was evaporation from all round and over the pot. This was aided again by the use of todea, a tough and wiry fern root that would easily last three years if it was loosely packed. In all we had a rooting medium that when watered, let the water run out the hole (often enlarged) at the base of the pot leaving only a film of moisture behind. *Cattleya* types grow naturally on tree



trunks and sometimes rocks so you can easily imagine the roots growing out along branches exploring any cracks in the bark and getting wet only when it rained and dry again very soon afterwards.

This then is something we must try to copy with our present-day mixes, whatever they may be. Once water can stay in a mixture the roots, normally white, will turn green and if allowed to stay that colour are very likely to rot. With today's materials it is not necessary to think in terms of a compost lasting three years but you must still be concerned with an open mix.

Light and air are also very important factors, as they should be with all orchids. If you go into our New Zealand bush you should be able to notice that there is always movement of air—never a wind but never still. Remember, these orchids grow naturally on trees and rocks. Therefore never let your glasshouse build to extremes of temperature. Keep that flow of air going all the time except perhaps on a frosty night, if you are in such an area. By opening the air vents under a bench you can get an air change without losing the heat through the roof or side vents. This on cool days can be quite important.

The question of light follows. The plants being tree dwellers will receive ample light, though dappled because of leaves. If you take time to stand back and look at a mature forest tree you will probably notice that there is not a thick covering of leaves over the whole tree but rather gaps here and there which will let in greater amounts of light. I suspect it is in these open areas that most *Cattleyas* would be found in their natural habitat for they take plenty of light though not to the point of scorching. Those on rock faces on cliffs etc. would no doubt receive even more light.

Perhaps shading of glasshouses should be considered. Often whitewash goes on in the spring and stays there until washed off by the autumn rains. Is this good? It does not take into account density of shade, or will it be a dull or bright summer. It must shorten day length to some degree; just as well we have very clear skies in New Zealand.

Up to this point I have not really mentioned a glasshouse. Yes you will need one unless you are in one of New Zealand's most favoured areas, else you will be pushing your luck a little. When you have decided on which type of glasshouse needed why not use a little Kiwi ingenuity and put up some sort of lath shading that can be rolled up or better still opened up on dull days. What about some sort of venetian blind structure that you can open to any degree you like even to letting stripes of sunlight through and giving that dappled-like effect inside. This is not a hard thing to design so go to it. By way of a bonus it is very handy on a frosty night. Just close it up and keep the frost away from the glass.

Humidity: How do you judge this? Unless you can have a hygrometer or a wet and dry bulb I suppose you can't. Again, let us take our bush as an example. When you go for a walk in it, the atmosphere is buoyant, you seldom see it soaking wet and you seldom see it dry—just nicely moist. This then is the "feeling" you should aim for in your glasshouse. By the way, not many folk seem to like damping down *Cattleyas* but when growing them I used to damp them down with my finger over the end of the hose and I never lost a growth. After all they come from a two season climate—not a four season one as we have here.

Humidity, light, air and moisture all need to be juggled into your particular set of circumstances. *Cattleyas* and their allied genera come from the Northern part of South America. Even though this is in the tropical zone there are many species that can be found growing at quite high altitudes and so require cooler growing conditions. Today this may not be so apparent with our modern hybrids which are often many generations away from the wild species and have been crossed, warm to cool growing and back again leaving you with a plant not quite knowing the season it should flower. This factor is no problem when growing the plants in a glasshouse. I believe you can grow *Cattleyas* outside under "most favoured conditions" especially if you choose those with "blood" from the higher altitudes. In fact I have seen many of these orchids actually grown outside—some grown very well indeed, mainly in the Auckland and Bay Of Plenty areas. Don't forget though, you are not likely to get the beautiful flowers possible in a glasshouse. I would think a few of these plants like *Laelia anceps* could be tried under indoor conditions. What a difference in colour intensity, texture and shape these new *Cattleyas* have and here again you have a choice. Do you want these plants or do you want the species and primary hybrids that some people collect? What ever way you choose there will be a life of interest ahead of you such as may not be equalled by any other type of plant. Then, where else, by crossing late and early flowering species do you get seedlings so mixed up they do not know if they are early or late and may well flower twice per year.