

Orchids

IN NEW ZEALAND



Volume 14—No. 2
March/April 1988

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ORCHID COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND

NEW ZEALAND ORCHID SOCIETY

VOL. 14, No. 2

MARCH/APRIL 1988

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FRONT COVER

Masdevallia ignea

Formerly known as *M. militaris* but this name has been found to
be invalid. A vigorous species from high elevations in Columbia
where it grows among shrubby woodlands on damp slopes.

Grower: L. & R. Orchids

Photography: R. Hutton

BACK COVER

Orthoceras strictum—two forms.

Photography: Bob Goodger

EDITORIAL

THE MASDEVALLIA REVOLUTION

The issue contains two articles on the genus *Masdevallia*. One of these is the first of a major series on the genus, in which we hope to illustrate a number of new species.

For some of these species this may well be their first "public appearance" outside the pages of "*Thesaurus Masdevalliarum*". Outside the pages of what? If you are not a Mas. fanatic you may not have heard of this magnificent publication, which is illustrating all of this remarkable genus. In a publishing *tour de force* a series of beautiful plates are appearing at regular intervals, accompanied by an up-to-date commentary. Oh for a sufficient bank balance . . .!

However, back to the point at issue. *Masdevallia* growers may not yet out number cymbidium growers in this country, but interest is high and the enthusiasm of the devotees is infectious. With our climatic advantages, we may well end up

becoming the *Masdevallia* centre of the orchid world. We are so far the only country to have a specialist group devoted to the genus, and congratulations are due to the initiators. The co-operation and sharing of ideas and skills they have encouraged will help continue its success.

In New Zealand, the expertise and ability exist for other such ventures into understanding orchids, and the wide range of genera which tolerate or thrive in our temperate climate give a wide scope to work on. Perhaps the time is ripe with the W.O.C. in Auckland in two and a half years, for others with ambition and enthusiasm to show what we can do. And come on, you cymbid. lovers!

COLOUR FUND

Recently we have received donations from—

Mrs A. E. Swney, Matamata
Taupo Orchid Society

We are always very grateful to those who support colour in the magazine in this way.

The Taupo Orchid Society donation was the profit from their recent Native Orchid Camp at Iwitahi and we appreciate their generosity.



N.Z.O.S. 40th Anniversary

The Society will be celebrating this landmark in its history with a dinner for members in June.

Special emphasis of the forty years will be placed on activity at the Winter Show on the 8th, 9th and 10th July and the Spring Show on the 23rd, 24th and 25th September.

All events will be held in the Mt. Albert War Memorial Hall, which has been the Society's headquarters for the last 23 years.

CONZED NEWS

Conzed Raffle

The proceeds from the raffle have been disbursed as follows—

Computer \$5,000

Speakers \$2,000

Loans to 1990 Fund \$10,000

GST \$3,300

The balance, including \$3,000 interest, has been deposited in the General Account to cover day to day expenses of the Council.

Orchids in New Zealand

The Council is concerned that the number of subscriptions to the magazine is dropping, because the cost per copy depends on production numbers. Recent subscription increases have been necessary to cover inflation increases, but the price could rise still higher if numbers drop further, as the basic production costs will need to be shared amongst a smaller number of copies.

The Orchid Council is preparing a questionnaire which will give everyone a chance to express their opinions and help the Editors try to please all of the people all of the time! But do be patient—they are only human! Remember too, that the Editors can only work with the contributions they get from you and your friends, and a continuous supply

is needed. When did you last write even a short note for the magazine?

Closing dates for contributions and advertising for the rest of this year—

July/August—Friday 13th May

September/October—Friday 15th July

November/December—Friday 16th September

January/February 1989—Friday 4th November

Sanders Hybrid Lists

These are expected shortly. An invoice will be sent quite soon and distribution can occur when payment is received.

The A.O.S.B. Handbook of Nomenclature can be readily obtained from the Wellington or New Zealand Orchid Societies.

Judging Seminar

A seminar with emphasis on Show Judging will be held in Rotorua from the 30th April to 1st May, at the Keswick Convention Centre, Holdens Bay. This should be a stimulating get-together.

Help!

Information is required on the early history of N.Z. Orchid Growing. If you remember this era, or have information about it, Nancie Bonham, 24 Coronation Road, Epsom, Auckland is longing to hear from you.



RECENT CONZED AWARDS

- 12/87 *Dendrobium fimbriatum oculatum* 'Adonis' AD/OCNZ (NPCC Parks and Reserves Department).
- 15/87 *Paphiopedilum parishii* 'Maxine' HCC/OCNZ (Mr J. Scott).
- 16/87 *Dendrobium nobile* CCC/OCNZ (Miss Lesley Newton).
- 17/87 *Odontioda* (Red Queen x Brocade) x Perrymanda 'Jeanette' AD/OCNZ (Mr A. Day).
- 1/88 *Leptotes bicolor* 'Noeline' AM/OCNZ (David Brockenshire).
- 2/88 *Odm. Stamfordiense* 'Regal Tudor' HCC/OCNZ (Patricia Elms).
- 3/88 *Odcn. Tiger Hamburhen* 'Mieki' HCC/OCNZ (A. H. & M. E. Grapes).

SHOW DATES 1988

Those available so far are—

Winter Shows

NEW ZEALAND ORCHID SOCIETY

8th, 9th, 10th July
Mt. Albert War Memorial Hall, Auckland.

HAWKE'S BAY ORCHID SOCIETY

9th July
Taradale Town Hall, Napier.

WELLINGTON ORCHID SOCIETY

16th, 17th July
Upper Hutt Civic Centre.

WAIKATO ORCHID SOCIETY

24th July
Te Rapa Racecourse, Hamilton.

Spring Shows

NORTH SHORE ORCHID SOCIETY

19th, 20th, 21st August
A.T.I., North Shore Hall, Akoranga Drive,
Northcote.

WHANGAREI ORCHID SOCIETY

2nd, 3rd, 4th September
Forum North, Whangarei.

TAUPO ORCHID SOCIETY

9th, 10th, 11th September
Memorial Hall, Tongariro Street, Taupo.

AUCKLAND ORCHID CLUB

9th, 10th, 11th September
Henderson Civic Centre

TAURANGA ORCHID SOCIETY

16th, 17th, 18th September
Greerton Hall, Cameron Road, Tauranga.

SOUTH AUCKLAND ORCHID SOCIETY

17th, 18th September
Papakura Community Centre, Great South
Road, Papakura.

NEW ZEALAND ORCHID SOCIETY

23rd, 24th, 25th September
Mt. Albert War Memorial Hall, Auckland.

SOUTH TARANAKI ORCHID SOCIETY

24th, 25th September
Community Centre, Hawera.

HAWKE'S BAY ORCHID SOCIETY

30th September-2nd October
Indoor Stadium, Railway Road, Hastings.

WAIKATO ORCHID SOCIETY

30th September-2nd October
Te Rapa Racecourse, Hamilton.

THAMES ORCHID SOCIETY

30th September, 1st October
War Memorial Hall, Thames.

POVERTY BAY EAST COAST ORCHID SOCIETY

1st, 2nd October
Archery Club Hall, Disraeli Street, Gisborne.

WANGANUI ORCHID SOCIETY

8th, 9th October
Memorial Hall, Wanganui.

Society News

Thanks to the Societies which send Newsletters to the Editors. We notice that some Societies have turned to bi-monthly Newsletters, which of course halves the postage costs and work involved, in sending them out. Aren't we all looking to cut down on these?

Several Societies have enjoyed weekend or evening barbeque meetings in the early part of the year—they sound lots of fun and a change from hot meeting halls in the hot weather.

We also notice a few Societies having non-orchid bring and buy stalls, at their monthly meetings (cakes, cuttings, vegetables, handwork, etc.) with all proceeds to the 1990 Conference funds. What a wonderfully supportive idea that it. Maybe other Societies might like to try it from time to time.

The W.O.C. Committee does appreciate your continuing help with plant auctions, raffles and other fund-raising efforts—they feel they are not working alone at it.

Taranaki's Summer Show

January 1988

Thanks for everything Taranaki. So many memories, old friends and new faces.

It was fun and fantastic for fanatics at New Plymouth again this January. A coach load from Auckland, two mini's from Tauranga and car loads of plants and folk from Gisborne, Whangarei and Wellington. Masdevallia's were everywhere, from Friday night slides and meeting for MOGs (Masdevallia Orchid Group)—or is it MOGI (Masdevallia Orchid Group International)—great displays of species and specimens. There were lots of *Disa*—new ones including *D. cardinalis* and *D. Helmut Meyer* with sweeping ventrals, plus the tall lilac-pink *D. Veitchii*s. Spooky *Dracula* with mirrored reflection caught the attention. We saw just too many orchids to mention.

Highlights were a fun Boot Sale of sixteen or so commercials and hobbyists, trading like gypsies to the masses from their wagons; home visits, home billets; new friends; new purchases and a pot luck dinner for ninety on the Brooklands Bowl staging, with pavlovas, cheesecake, juice and wine for the taking. Don't forget the basketball beforehand—or was it rounders? Those sport fanatic Aucklanders roughed up everyone—the bounders! Alf thought

they were the winners, while cricket crank Frank and cronies were glued to a transistor.

George Fuller received his birthday cake amongst vegetables and there were tall stories and risque jokes from some rascals before thanks all round from representatives.

A walk through the park in darkness brought back memories of romances. We joined the thousands of others around the fountain, under the water-wheel, by the waterfall and along walkways. All were enjoying the lighting spectacular amongst the trees and branches, the occasion made special by electricity centenary celebrations.

Next day George, full of life, on his hobbyhorse facts of life, showed us *Disa uniflora*'s marvel and put the pollen on its navel!

We left the clean-up to those kind-hearted hosts and hostesses to whom we give our congratulations. If you didn't enjoy yourselves in January, you didn't come to Taranaki. Don't miss it next year—start making arrangements early.

Hope to see you there!

Another MUG

RECENT N.Z.O.S. AWARDS

C.C.
H.C.C.
C.C.
C.C.
H.C.C. & C.C.
A.D.
C.C.

Cym. Claude Pepper 'Coburg'
Cym. Hallmark 'Henderson'
Cym. Budmarch 'Rosetta'
Dend. linguiforme 'St. Aubyn'
Burregeara Buckland Beacon 'Nancie'
Onc. (Koishi Yonezawa x Mollie Jerningham 'Greg's Delight'
Masdevallia Heathii 'Be Jay'

Sunrae Orchids
I. D. James
J. Van Dam
Mrs J. Parker
D. & N. Bonham
Mrs N. Chisnall
L. Godwin

Odontoglossums—David Stead's Visit

E. M. Miller

On Sunday 9th August last year, an expectant crowd of Odontoglossum enthusiasts gathered at a quiet venue on Auckland's North Shore for a day of talks from Britain's David Stead, punctuated by panel contributions, conversation with friends, coveting displayed plants, and the sustaining refreshments. The occasion was organised by members of the North Shore Orchid Society, to begin David's whirlwind lecture tour of New Zealand Orchid Societies.

For those not able to attend, here are a few key points from the cultural information—

Climate

Odontoglossums have no resting period, so can be encouraged to keep up their growth momentum during the cooler winter months, with a little warmth. David stressed that his main experience is in British conditions, and was envious of our relatively mild winters (in the north at least!), remembering the heating bills for his own greenhouse—the boiler runs about eight months a year. His winter temperature range is minimum 10 °C during the night, and 10-12 °C in the day. Very low winter light levels and short day length in Britain would slow photosynthesis, so a little warmth would help compensate for this. The lower winter minimum temperatures many Odonts. in New Zealand grow under would be slightly counteracted by our higher light level, and not quite such brief days! In spring, the British day temperatures can rise to the 70 °s F (20 °s C) and in summer, of course, higher, so close control of ventilation and shading is required.

Although Odonts. are regularly described as cool-growing, **cool** does not mean **cold** and they do **not** tolerate frosts.

Potting

David chooses to keep plants in fairly small pots which saves bench room, mix and tends to avoid the mix going soggy.

His mix:

6 parts bark
2 parts perlite
1 part charcoal

A novel idea to most people was a self-watering clay pot. A hanging, porous clay pot **without** a drainage hole has a plant attached to the **outside**. The inside is kept topped up with water, which seeps through the pot to the roots.

Repotting should be carried out when the plant is just making a new growth (with a 2-3cm growth) as new roots will just be starting to form and less disturbance will be caused than when the root system is larger.

Feeding

High nitrogen is used in early spring, and high potassium later as a main summer and autumn fertilizer. Foliar feeding is used, especially in winter on sunny days, so that the plants can take full advantage of the warmth.

Pests and Diseases

Bush snails seem a problem everywhere—suitable slug pellets ground up into the mix are one answer. Black spots or dents on leaves are damaged cells and may be caused by cold but provide areas susceptible to fungal attack. If plants show shrivelling or poor growth, check the roots. If there are no roots, put the plant in sphagnum, until a new growth starts when it should start producing roots. During this time, mist, don't water. The sphagnum

should be moist, but the plant cannot take up water through its roots. Heavy shade and heavy misting will slow transpiration (water loss through the leaves), until the plant is resuscitated.

Cut Flowers

Some *Odontoglossum* flowers last better than others as cut spikes. Standing them in a solution of a little sugar and a trace of janola can help

(one teaspoon sugar and ½ teaspoon janola to a bucket of water).

The seminar and later talks included many tantalising illustrations of old and new intergeneric hybrids of the *Odontoglossum* alliance.

We are all very grateful to the organisers of the seminar and the tour.

*Te Akau Road
R.D.4
Rotorua*

Raising Young *Odontoglossums*—One Answer

Ron Maunder

The editor has asked me to comment on or answer John Lloyd's questions from his article "Raising Young *Odontoglossums*" in the May/June 1987 'Orchids in New Zealand' magazine.

First question is:—Are my plants, as I describe them, up to scratch in growth at this time?

In answer to this, may I say that some people would say you are very smart to have raised 32 plants from an *Odontoglossum* flask! They are usually rated harder than cymbidiums to grow ex flask.

Obviously they were deflasked in January 1986 not 1987 as printed! I would expect the leading seedlings of a crispum-type cross to flower 24-30 months ex flask, i.e. January 1988 to July 1988. It seems unlikely that yours will achieve this if their bulb size was 5mm in March 1987 and leaf length 50mm. One possible cause beyond your control may have been very small plants in the flask to start with. I expect plantlets of 2" high if I am to flower them in 24-30 months.

Another reason is the breeding of the cross. In your case with *Odm. bicross* (not Big Ross is it?) x *Oda. Annette*, you have a mix of *Odm. bicktoniense*, *Odm. rossii* and *Odm. crispum*-type *Annette*. I find the *Odm. bicktoniense* species a slow grower in flask with tall leaves before they bulb up. *Odm. rossii* is a compact species and gives tiny bulbs

and will flower on thumb-nail sized bulbs.

So it may be that the *Odm. rossii* is influencing the size of the plantlets and that they will flower (1-3 flowers) on tiny compact plants. Another cause of slow growth may be you are not fertilizing them on a regular basis for 12 months! Fertilizing should start as soon as the plants are hardened off out of the flask.

The second question is:—Should I be altering my technique to cover the next 12 months? My answer would be Yes. Alternate feeding with a good inorganic fertilizer. Keep light levels about 50%. For me plants do better in compots. A 50mm tube for a 50mm high plant is too big unless the plant has a lot of roots.

The third question is:—Would higher low temperatures be preferable? Certainly! 10°C-12°C is suitable for mature plants in winter. Small plants ex flask need coddling to get the best out of them. 16°C (60°F) is a better minimum.

The last question seeks helpful advice. I could give you my methods but I'll save them for some future article. You are having good success

anyway! I don't like spraying with chemical sprays too often, as they can retard growth. I don't like peat but add Aquarius foam (shredded Oasis) at 20% to control moisture in the mix. I use ½" sieved and washed bark which has been soaked in boiling water to kill fungus spores. Some then soak this in weak fertilizer for two or three days. I use broken up styrene chunks as crocking in the bottom of all pots, for good drainage. Moss around the top of pots stops the flow of air through the mix and gives poor drainage and eventually loss of roots and breakdown of mix. Repot when this occurs. I don't like sphagnum as it often contains garlic and bush snails which eat roots and greatly retard and even kill small seedlings. I can't deny it is used successfully, but it soon looks messy when algae kill it. Use Mesurool (methiocarb) powder at 5gm per litre every six months to spray plants and tops of potting mix to control snails and insect pests. Buy it now as it is being taken off the market. It is used in grape growing areas as a bird repellent but kills mites as well as most other insects and slugs and snails. It costs around \$130.00 for

1.5kg—enough for a lifetime for most growers! It is far more effective in the wettable powder form than the pellet form—which is good for slugs and snails.

A hint I was given recently by an expert—when deflasking any seedlings, leave washed plants to dry off until their roots whiten, then plant up. Overnight was suggested, but I would be very careful the tops didn't dry out too much and cause die back to the leaf tips. Perhaps cover the leaves with damp sphagnum moss while the roots are drying out. Evidently the agar roots never look back and don't die off once potted up—as is often the case when planted directly from the flask.

Seems you have everything under control John. Don't change your methods radically without doing a trial with a flask or a few plants first. What works for me may not work for you in your different climate and conditions.

Best of luck with your babies and the Dendrobiums and Masdevallias. The latter usually do well in similar conditions to Odontoglossums.

P.O. Box 2107
Tauranga South

VALE HAZEL HANSON

Hazel joined the New Zealand Orchid Society 29 years ago, was made a Judge in 1970 and a Life Judge in 1984.

She served on the Show Committee for many years. She was Assistant Registrar for three years. She helped to manage the trading table at both Annual Shows for 11 years and was renowned for her friendly practical advice in helping members of the public to chose their purchases.

One of her greatest successes was when she won Grand Champion and Reserve Champion with *Cymbidium* Mirahill 'Tapestry', which she grew from a seedling, named herself and registered in 1972.

Growing Masdevallias in the Winterless North

Anne Andrews and Nola Chisnall

Masdevallias are a genus of orchids that is found 1,500 to 2,500 metres above sea level in the Andes, and also in Mexico, Brazil, Boliva and Columbia. Other genera related to Masdevallias are Draculas and Dryadellas. The Masdevallia plants are made up of thick fleshy leaves, therefore they have no psuedobulbs. The flowers usually arise from the inside of the leaf base on completed growths.

Our Cultivation Methods

Masdevallias will not tolerate sour mixes or wet boggy feet. To the selected pot size (do not overpot, one just big enough to accommodate its root system), add large pieces of scoria or similar for drainage. The potting medium is made up of sieved bark and a quarter of fine sharp scoria which has been thoroughly washed to remove dust. Repotting is best done between Autumn and Spring. As they have no rest period, they are in growth all year. Repotting during summer should be avoided as this tends to put a lot of stress on the plants. Some of these plants make good candidates for growing on slab culture as they tend to climb out of their pots, namely *M. nitida*, *M. gutierrezii*, *M. strobellii* and *M. mejiana*.

Watering

Masdevallias must be kept moist but not soggy at all times. We like to see the top of the compost dry out a little before the next watering. As compost becomes older it retains more moisture, so this must be kept in mind. Therefore, newly potted plants tend to dry out more quickly and so do small pots. In the summer time, plants are given a good misting each morning and watered every second day. In the winter they are watered once a week with a misting most mornings.

Feeding Programme

Make sure pots are well watered before manuring. A good misting of liquid manure is done every two or

three days. A little bone flour sprinkled around the top of the pot in early Spring can be beneficial. Also remember to give the pots a good watering once a month to wash out any build up of salts.

Diseases and Pests

Aphids seem to enjoy getting on your growths and flower spikes as does the occasional mealy bug. Whatever you use on other orchid genera, use the same on Masdevallias. Black marks can be troublesome on Masdevallia leaves, especially during the summer. Try to increase air movement, and a spraying of a fungicidal spray such as Benlate is helpful.

Summary

Give them plenty of air movement, open mix, watering, light feedings and at least 50% shading during the summer months.

Some Masdevallias have the habit of flowering on the same stem again, therefore do not be in too big a hurry to cut off spent flower spikes until they turn yellow. Examples are: *M. tovarensis* and *M. infracta*.

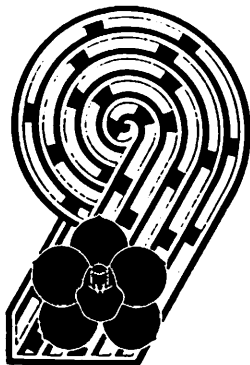
For further reference see the book 'Intriguing Masdevallias' by Jo Kelleher.

A. Andrews
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Whangarei
N. Chisnall
Three Mile Bush Road
R.D. 7
Whangarei

13th World Orchid Conference 1990

Auckland, New Zealand

February 1988



7th Newsletter

Promotional Items

After a good effort in 1987 we now have a new year to keep sales ticking along, something you can all be involved in and something that is valuable for keeping 1990 in the minds of orchid growers as well as for boosting funds. Two new items are soon to come available, magnets to keep your messages and shopping lists, etc., on your refrigerator, and aerogrammes with orchid designs on them. There are also plenty of badges, spoons, tea towels and car stickers, if you require them.

It will be most helpful if you will send to us as soon as possible, any sales money you have so far collected. Many of you have already done so, and thank you to these.

Visits

Nine Societies have so far requested visits to their meetings or a copy of the display slide programme. Hope you are one of them. The Planning Committee are conscious that high priority must be paid to getting out to see as many of you as possible so that you are kept right up to date with planning and so that we can get important feedback from all around New Zealand. This is your Conference and we need and value your input.

Invite us to be part of your programme this year.

Orchid Growers of Note

Not yet any response to our request for you to send in details of those special orchid people in your area for our portfolio of New Zealand Growers of Note. Still, New Zealand and the orchid year is about to start up again so we expect some names to come rolling in soon.

Planning Committee Notes

Your Planning Committee has already met this year and the following are some highlights—

Show and Commercial

- Plenty of effort is going into a show layout which is now almost to a stage for presentation to the local Council for their approval (fire, egress, safety, etc.)
- It is always a problem to predict exactly the amount of space required by exhibitors, but soon we will be asking New Zealand Societies for their needs, and we do have a guide from the Tokyo and Miami events.
- A quarantine area is under investigation so that plants from overseas can be exhibited.
- Labelling for stands and flowers is receiving attention.
- Preliminary Show and Commercial Floor Plan and Schedule is targeted to be ready for the end of May this year.

Lecture Programme

- A new Committee has been formed, headed by John Kernohan from the North Shore Society, who also now joins the

Planning Committee. Welcome John.

- Prime importance is placed on the programme attracting Registrants, so it is expected that the proportion of papers will be—
 - 50% hobbyist directed
 - 30% commercial oriented
 - 20% scientific
- It is anticipated that Registrants will be looking forward to exploring those interests that are more developed in New Zealand, and therefore the programme is expected to feature in order of priority—
 - Cymbidiums
 - Odontoglossum alliance
 - Australian Dendrobiums
 - Masdevallias
 - Phalaenopsis
 - Paphiopedilums
 - Cattleyas
 - Vandaceous orchids
 - Others
- The programme will probably be run with two concurrent sessions but Registrants will be able to attend most of the main priority interest areas.

—There is a proposal to publish a history of orchid growing in New Zealand in conjunction with the Conference.

Finance

An overall budget has been collated and is almost ready for release. This should be helpful for you to understand the big financial effort required to run a large undertaking such as the 13th World Orchid Council.

Please take note of the special message from the Finance Committee published in the 6th Newsletter. Time is marching on and we are in real need of bridging funds to come available now, prior to major sponsorship finance which will come later. Efforts to secure major sponsorship are underway but with the financial world in a whirl since last October there are difficulties.

Please consider your personal and Society loan programme soon.

*R. W. Dix
Chairman*

Publicity and Public Relations Committee

NOTES FROM APOROSTYLIS

The user pays and pays and pays! New quarantine charges will be a shock to importers and will cut out many hobby growers who will probably bring in more flasks as a result. As from the 1st January this year all permits will cost \$50.00 up front. Inspection fees will be charged out at around \$37.00 per hour and mileage at 47¢ per kilometer. And of course there's the 'Facility Fee' of \$10.00 plus GST!

A great crowd of people from around the country turned up at Geyserland Orchids recently, where eight or nine commercial growers sold plants over the weekend. We don't know if they'll try it again but the concept was innovative and probably modelled on the Santa Barbara Orchid

Fair in the U.S.A. Ideas of interest were a large marquee with free sausages and sauce on bread, anytime you wanted them and free tea and soft drink. Inside the nursery a Silent Auction was held where up to five choice or specimen plants from each nursery were auctioned. The bidder checked to see if a reserve price was written on the plant's label, then wrote on a piece of paper his name, address and bid and put it in the bid box. The box was opened at the end of the weekend and the highest bidders for each plant were to have their plants sent to them if no-one was able to collect them on the spot. Only three or four plants didn't reach their reserve. Rumours abound that the highest price bid was \$250.00 for a Paphiopedilum primary hybrid!

YOUR GREENHOUSE IN WINTER

Glenn Anderson

There I was, just home from two idyllic weeks in sunny Waihou Bay, feeling very laid back and at peace with the world, when I was "politely asked" if I would write a column for "Orchids in New Zealand". SHOCK!! HORROR!!

It is surprising how persuasive a room full of people can be when they already consider the matter a foregone conclusion. So, whilst I lay no claim to superior knowledge, I am "lucky" enough to have some very "dear" friends.

I was talking to a grower from Melbourne recently. It was 28 °C here and I was complaining of the heat. She said that for one month of the year they get temperatures up to 40 °C. In desperation one day when the greenhouse was very hot and there was no wind, they put a large garden sprinkler high up on a pole outside their greenhouse and turned it on. They were amazed when the internal temperature dropped 15 °C in a very short time. I doubt if we would ever have to resort to such measures in New Zealand, but perhaps it should be categorized as useful trivia and slotted away for future reference.

But enough about summer heat. This article is supposed to be about winter in your greenhouse. I find it quite difficult to sit here in February and write about what happens in May/June, but if memory serves me, many of the Laelias will be in spike. Paphiopedilums will also be spiking up. Keep water out of the leaf axils or your buds may rot off. A few weeks of cooler nights at this time of the year will help initiate new flower spikes on your Phalaenopsis, but don't overdo it. It is surprising how fast a Phalaenopsis can collapse with a combination of water in the leaf axil and cold temperatures.

Watering with cold water straight from a hose can shock your plants at this time of year. On Phalaenopsis

especially it can cause tissue collapse similar to a patch of burn. If a fungal or bacterial infection gets in to this damaged tissue, it can be very difficult to stop it from spreading through the whole plant. Try cutting the leaf well below the damage and dusting with a fungicide.

Far better would be not to let the damage happen in the first place. If you only have a small number of plants you can mix water to luke warm in a bucket. If you require larger quantities perhaps a tank high in the glasshouse might fit the bill. A direct water line up to the tank with a tap in line would make for easy filling. Leave in the tank for a couple of days to warm up a little, then use. Painting the tank black would help to absorb more solar heat.

There is also another approach to your winter watering you might like to try. Separate your collection in two. Those that grow and flower in the spring and summer can be placed in the cooler section of your greenhouse. They can be missed out at every second watering. They will be almost dormant and don't require much water at this time and will get through the winter in much better condition for being left on the dry side. Those plants that are still growing and flowering in the winter months can be placed in the warmer section and watered every time.

Over the winter months pick your watering day carefully. Try and avoid a cool overcast day even if it means waiting several days past the normal time. Sunny, frosty weather is actually ideal for watering, and remember water as early in the day as

possible. That way by nightfall all the exposed plant surfaces should be dry.

Before the really cold weather sets in it might be worth spraying with a fungicide/insecticide combination to clean up the pockets of infestation that may still be around and give yourself a head start in the spring.

Another major factor for these winter months is the cost of heating. My husband recently built us a new greenhouse to replace our 8' x 8' which was 'bursting at the seams'. After much thought we built the new house 20' x 14'. This meant that two sheets of Laserlite could be used on the roof without having to cut the sheets. But our prime concern was with the insulation. We were worried that building a much larger greenhouse would proportionately increase our heating bills. We came up with several ideas that seem to have worked. The corrugations of the Laserlite were filled with strips of foam plastic then screwed down tight. Side cuts were sealed with a bead of mastic. Then the inside of the 6 x 2" rafters was lined with clear polythene. One side of the roof and down a wide wall were covered in one strip. A strip of polythene was cut longer than the length to cover. Battens were tacked on top and bottom and turned over a few times, wrapping the polythene around them. The final length of polythene should be just a few inches shorter than the actual measurement. The two battens are then nailed in place top and bottom. Then to tighten the whole thing up, a third batten is used to push the polythene in place at the join between wall and roof. It was a tight stretch but the finish is very neat and tidy. The next sheet should be overlapped a couple of inches to form a complete seal. There is then a 6" layer of dead air which is very effective insulation. The final factors we used to help with insulation was to dig the house into a gentle slope and use concrete blocks up to bench

height (you don't need light any lower, after all). We are pleased to report that the new house doesn't use any more electricity than the old 8' x 8'. It would only cost around \$60.00 to heat for the winter, about the cost of two big plants. That is not much when you think how many plants you are protecting and nurturing.

Incidentally, for our heating we use a small fan heater on a thermostat set to cut in when the temperature drops to 12 °C. On a very cold or cold and windy night the temperature might drop to 10 °C but never lower. We thought we may have needed two heaters in tandem for the new house, but thanks to the good insulation, the one heater has proved sufficient. We grow mainly Cattleyas in this environment and they do very well. However, it is too cold for Phalaenopsis. They survive but do not thrive over the winter months, and you are rewarded with a very poor flowering in spring.

There is not a lot to be done in the greenhouse at this time of the year, but there are a few things that need attending to. Cymbidium spikes will be extending and will require staking. Do so very carefully as they are brittle in the morning and after watering. A warm afternoon is the best time. Don't move your Cymbidium plants that are in spike as the spike will twist around to face the sun and ruin the appearance of your plant. Keep an eye out for Cattleya sheaths that turn dark. These should be removed so that the buds don't rot.

A final hint is to check the floor for weeds. Aphids like to hide in these weeds and then pounce on your Cymbidium buds as soon as they emerge from the sheath. So give 'em a taste of Kiwi!

421 Pukehangi Road
Rotorua

We plan to have a series of articles on orchid growing, season by season. Glenn is a highly respected and successful grower in the Bay of Plenty/Waikato area, and we look forward to more contributions from her.



M. Angel Frost 'Val' No. 1. A more recent hybrid produced by crossing the large *M. veitchiana* with miniature *M. strobilii*.

Grower: Val Bayliss Photography: Val Bayliss

IN VOGUE—Masdevallias

Russell Hutton

Having enjoyed popularity with English orchid enthusiasts around the turn of the century, Masdevallias then slowly disappeared into obscurity but a few die-hards carried the flag and now this fascinating group of orchids is assuming a popularity beyond that of the early 1900's.

To many, Masdevallias may not on first or indeed the second look, appear to be particularly orchid-like. The prominent and showy parts of the flower are the sepals which are joined for part of their length and their tips are typically drawn out into thread-like tails or caudae. The column, petals and lip are usually very small and quite often cannot be seen. Masdevallias may not appear physically orchidaceous but their brilliant colours and bizzare shapes still have that same mystery about them that makes the beholder look and wonder.

The renewal of interest in Masdevallias is quite recent with New Zealand orchidists but has been growing for sometime now overseas, particularly in the U.S.A. where as is usual when interest is shown in a group of orchids, the hybridiser goes to work with his/her imagination. The result of this is a growing number of hybrids which can only have a bright and exciting future.

How are they grown? By far the greater number of Masdevallias species originate from the higher altitudes of the Andes in Venezuela, Colombia, Equador and Peru but their range does, however, extend to Mexico in the north, Brazil in the east and Argentina to the south. Coming from high altitudes these orchids enjoy cool temperatures and high humidity. Those species which come

M. strobilii. A small but very floriferous species from around 1,400 metres in Equador and Peru. Flourishes under cultivation with a little warmth in winter.

Grower: L. & R. Orchids Photography: Val Bayliss





▲ *M. laucheana* 'Seminole' from Costa Rica at elevations of 800m-1,000m. Likes a little comfort over winter.

Grower: L. & R. Orchids Photography: R. Hutton



▲ *M. schmidt-mummii*. A quite recent introduction named in honour of Dr. Helmuth Schmidt-Mumm who introduced the plant into cultivation.

Grower: L. & R. Orchids Photography: Val Bayliss

M. ova-avis. The name ova-avis is derived from Latin meaning birds' eggs. An allusion to the appearance of the cluster of flowers especially when seen from above.

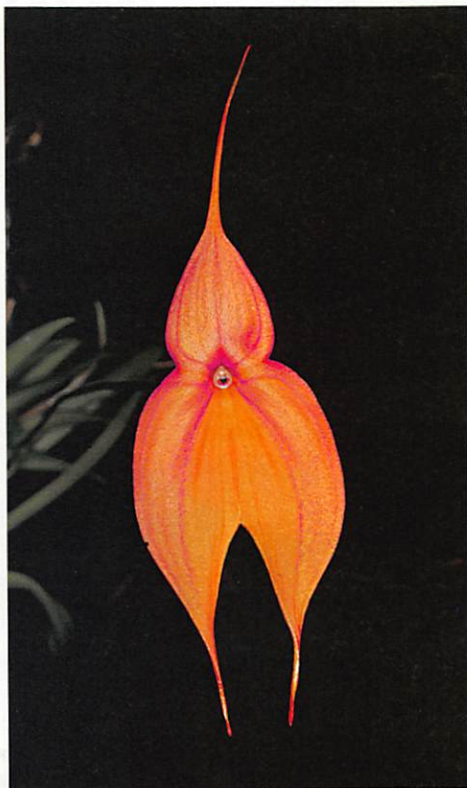
▼ Grower: Val Bayliss Photography: Val Bayliss





▲ *M. saltatrix*. Although this delightful little species from the Colombian Andes has been known and in cultivation for many years, it is still difficult to obtain.

Grower: L. & R. Orchids Photography: Val Bayliss

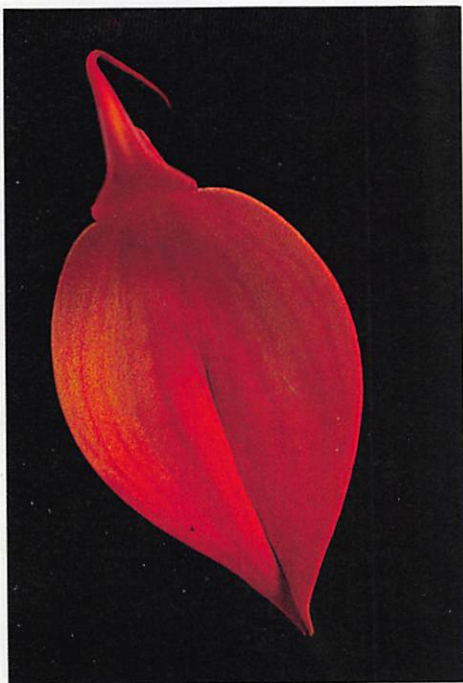


▲ *M. veitchiana* Prince des Galles AM/AOS. One of the best clones of this magnificent species which occurs naturally around the Inca ruins of Machu Picchu.

Grower: L. & R. Orchids Photography: Val Bayliss

M. Falcata. An old hybrid (*M. veitchiana* x *coccinea*) and still popular for its brilliancy of colour.

◀ Grower: Val Bayliss Photography: Val Bayliss



from lower elevations naturally would like a little warmer conditions but this in our experience only applies to winter nights. Their demands are not great and in many parts of New Zealand can be grown successfully in a shade house or unheated greenhouse the year round. A word of warning, these plants are more intolerant to excessive heat and dry air than to cold so if growing in a glass or plastic house be sure you have



▲ *M. uniflora* from high altitudes of Peru, this species was the first species of *Masdevallia* to be named.

Grower: L. & R. Orchids Photography: Val Bayliss

adequate ventilation and keep the floor well damped to keep summer temperatures down. When deciding upon a location to grow *Masdevallias*, if possible, choose an area on the south-east to south-west side of the house. Some species such as *M. bicolor*, *barlaeana*, *amaluzae*, *calura*, *floribunda*, *herraduriae*, *infracta*, *picturata*, *peristeria*, *rolfeana*, *strobilii*, *tovarensis* are more tolerant of warmer conditions and can be grown indoors provided adequate humidity is supplied around the plants by placing them in a tray or other container of wet sphagnum moss or a bed of wet pebbles. If you are growing crispum-type *Odont.* then *Masdevallias* will be a breeze as their cultural requirements are the same. But below the leaf canopy of *Cymbidium* plants or any situation away from bright sunlight and where the air feels cool and moist, will suit

these orchids well. To get the maximum flowering we have found that they should receive as much light as you can give before the leaves feel warm to the touch. Possibly the most important feature of their culture is movement of cool moist air around the plants.

Masdevallias should never be left to dry out, moisture should be available at all times, particularly when in bloom, and as they are continually in growth, if using a bark based potting mix, food should be given on a regular basis at approximately half the strength normally given *Cymbidiums*.

For a potting mix we use pine bark, 5mm to 10mm for smaller plants and a larger grade for larger plants to which is added 10% by volume of *Aquarius* Foam chips. An open airy mix is important; constant moisture is best supplied by frequent watering

▼ *M. coccinea*. This superbly grown plant would defy anyone to walk past and not take a second look.

Grower: Gwenda Parkinson Photography: George Fuller



and misting in hot weather as this more closely simulates their natural habitat than the use of a closer mix which contains smaller particles and therefore holds more water so plants will dry out more slowly but, contains less air. These orchids are in the main epiphytes and require a well-ventilated rooting medium.

Avoid over-potting; if in doubt choose the smaller sized pot. When to divide? The full impact of Masdevallias can be best appreciated from larger plants so only divide them to remove the old or expended parts of the plant and to rejuvenate old specimens. When potting-on it is advisable to remove all of the old potting medium especially from the centre of the plant as this will keep the plant in top condition for growing on to a large specimen. *Masdevallia veitchiana* or *M. coccinea* showing upwards of 20 blooms are a truly magnificent sight.

Masdevallias are not large plants and with only a few exceptions are tidy compact plants giving spectacular floral displays from 8cm to 18cm pots. Possibly the tallest of the genus is *M. macrura* which may

reach 40cm with taller flower stems, although smaller plants which still have a floral impact may be down to a mere 6cm or so tall. For those growing only Cymbidiums they make an excellent diversion as many bloom in the late spring and summer months giving welcome colour to an otherwise green orchid house.

For those of you who are in the initial stages or already confirmed addicts of the blatant brilliance and whimsical beauty of Masdevallias you may be interested to know there is a Masdevallia Club now well established. There are some 50 growers including a number from overseas who have joined this Club which was formed initially to jointly stage a display at the 13th World Orchid Conference in 1990. Any Masdevallia enthusiasts not already aware of this and who would like further information should contact Phil Mayhead at 360 Carrington Street, New Plymouth. The planning of this display is already well under way with some exciting and imaginative ideas.

L. & R. Orchids
P.O. Box 167
Tuakau



M. tovarensis. This species takes its name from Tovar in Venezuela where it was first collected. A very rewarding and easy plant to grow. The flower stems bloom for several years.

Grower: L. & R. Orchids Photography: Val Bayliss



Plate. *Corybas macranthus*, *Caladenia lyallii*, and *Pterostylis banksii*. Watercolour sketch (345 x 287mm), by Elizabeth Mary Hocken, ca 1890. Reproduced courtesy of the Hocken Library, Dunedin.



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14. ELIZABETH MARY HOCKEN

(c 1846-1933)

Ian St. George

Bessie (she seems always to have been so called) Buckland was born in Auckland, the third daughter of W. T. Buckland whose family had come from Australia. The Bucklands lived for a time at Waikouaiti, just north of Dunedin, and she journeyed overseas. She met Dr. Thomas Morland Hocken when he was travelling abroad on leave after his first wife had died in 1881; they were married in Invercargill in 1883. She was a much travelled lady, skilled in at least French and German: it was she who at least helped him with his translation (of which he was inordinately proud) of Tasman's journal from the middle ages Dutch. She was associated with him in the collecting of his manuscripts and books (later to form the great Hocken Library in Dunedin) and their Maori artifacts, which formed the basis for the Otago Museum's ethnological collection.

Bessie was a talented painter. She made many copies of early New Zealand drawings and painting for her husband, exhibited at the Otago Art Society 1887-1914, and at the South Seas Exhibition in Dunedin 1889-1890, winning Third Award for a flower painting. In the Hocken Library collection is an album (ca 1890) of her watercolour sketches, among them a jug of kowhai flowers with a clump of *Earina autumnalis*, and (shown here) *Corybas macranthus*, *Caladenia lyallii* and *Pterostylis banksii*.

She used water colours and oils and was a recognised embroiderer, photographer and cook—her tables were said to be the envy of their social circle in Dunedin. The Otago Daily Times of 28th October 1895 reported

the Otago Photographic Society's exhibition: Mrs Hocken had exhibited "Mother's Treasure Box", which had gained first prize in the Australasian competition, and the ODT said that it—

"... will naturally attract a good deal of notice, and attention may be drawn to the admirable proportion of the soft flesh of the model's arm and hand against the white dress."

She spent the Great War in Britain, and moved to South Africa at its end. She died in Rondebosch, Capetown, in 1933.

I am indebted to Dr. A. G. Hocken (no relation) for much of this information.

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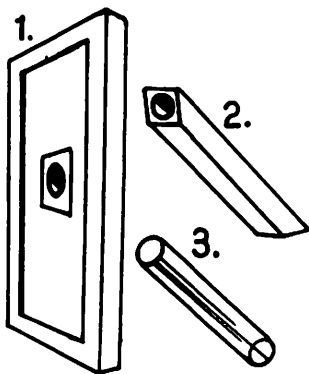
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Send to:

NORM PORTER

"CYMBIDIUM ORCHID SPECIALIST"

Nursery - 23 Parata Street, Waikanae
(Parata Street is opposite Woolworths)

Phone (058) 36-977

Hours: Tuesday-Saturday 9.00 a.m.-5.00 p.m.

During the flowering season, May-November, the Nursery is Open
Sundays and Public Holidays



SALE SALE SALE

CYMBIDIUM SEEDLING FLASKS AND COMMUNITY POTS

Due to over-ordering, I now have the following flasks and community pots surplus to my requirements—

SEEDLING FLASKS

Each flask contains 45 husky seedlings ready to plant out.

Usual price: \$6.00

Sale price \$45.00 each

3 flasks—less 10%

5 flasks—less 20%

CROSSES INCLUDE—

Dag 'Lollipop' 4N x Ruby Eyes 'Red Baron' 4N—cascading pink and rose miniatures. August.
Sue 'Belle of Kapiti' 4N x Peter 'Pilot' Arctic Snow—scented white intermediates. May.
Doris Aurea 'F.J.Noonan' x Coralea 'Rewa' 4N HCC, AD/OCNZ—orange, peach and bi-coloured. June.
Via Mar Tranquila 'Milky Way' 4N x Acapulco Gold 'Coburg' 4N—white, concolor lips. June.
Sue 'Waitohu' 4N x Stanley Fouraker 'Arcadia' HCC/AOS—white intermediates. Good. June.
Vanguard 'Mas Beauty' x Candy Floss 'Flamingo' 4N—pinks with pink lips. June.
Red Panther 'Rajahs Ruby' 4N x Mighty Mouse 'Minnie'—copper reds, bold scarlet lips.

COMMUNITY POTS

These plants have been grown on to a larger size of 20-30cm (8"-12") in height, ready to plant out into 4" and 5" pots to make up their first bulb. Available in mericlones, miniatures and seedlings.

VARIETIES INCLUDE—

Last Chance 'Autumn Glory'—scented, pinks, tall stems. April-May.
Alison Shaw 'Strawberry Pink'—rose intermediate, wine red lip.
Red Beauty 'Princess Frederika'—light red, very free flowering. June.
Khyber Pass 'Potentate'—deep red with white border on petals.
Running Bear 'Candy Striper'—cream with mauve pink stripe. Unique.
Tijuana Purity 'Hooter'—burnished copper with scarlet red lip. Massive.
Jungfrau 'Dos Pueblos'—superb cut flower. White with rose and pink flushed lip.
Eliot Haberlitz 'Black Opal'—cascading dark red with blackish lip.
Tapestry 'Firefall' x Claudona 'Rajah' 4N—orange, red and copper shades.
Babylon 'Castle Hill' x Tamatea 'Tahi' 4N—chocolate brown and red tetraploids.
Coraki 'Margaret' 4N x Maureen Grapes 'Little Toots' 4N—yellow, exquisite. June.
Winter Fair 'Nancy' 4N x Featherhill Beach 'Nevinka' 4N—glistening whites. June.
Claudona 'Rajah' 4N x Jocko 'Copper Smoke'—massive copper and sunset shades.

For complete list of both flasks and community pots (60 varieties) send to—

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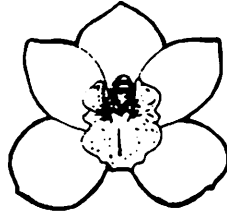
Phone (058) 36-977

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There will be other Special Sale Days as
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6th-7th May, 3rd-4th June, 1st-2nd July and
5th-6th August.

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(Opposite Hell's Gate)

Mailing: P.O. Box 162, Rotorua

Phone: (073) 55-202

(10.00 a.m., 12 noon, 3.00 p.m.)

FALL SPECIALS

From the New Geyserland Orchids

* CATTLEYA CLEARANCE

We must free up some bench space so are reluctantly offering near flowering size Cattleya seedlings, most large enough to be shifted into 12cm pots.

To keep prices down we won't list crosses but all plants are named, of superior parentage and we **guarantee** you will be happy with Glenn's selection.

7 plants (all different) for \$55.00

13 plants (all different) for \$90.00

25 plants (some duplicates) for \$150.00

includes freight and GST

* PHALAENOPSIS FOR FALL

Three different Phalaenopsis seedlings, at least one in spike \$45.00

includes freight and GST

* MILTONIA MADNESS

Three different multi-bulb Miltonia seedlings all of which should bloom next Spring \$35.00

includes freight and GST

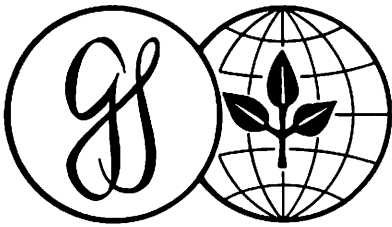
Orders filled in rotation, first in gets the largest plants. Our packing and plant size is, we believe, unequalled by any other N.Z. Orchid Nursery.

* ABOVE OFFERS EXPIRE 31st MAY 1988

Society Bus Tours and Visits to Geyserland

Secretaries please note—Tours welcomed at the New Geyserland. All Societies visiting Geyserland will receive \$50.00 worth of orchid plants for future raffles, etc.

- * Bring this advertisement to any of the Retail Open Weekends and receive a **free** Cattleya seedling.



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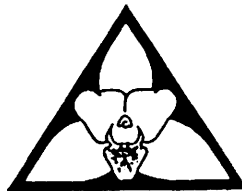
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Also carnivorous plants!! . . . and lots more

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Stem Grip

A Revolution in Orchid Tying



Straight Spikes

StemGrip ensures true straight spike growth. Straight spikes are easier to pack and fetch a higher market price.

Damage Free

StemGrip has been carefully designed to hold the spikes securely without damaging or distorting growth. Nor can larger adjacent spikes be damaged by its line.

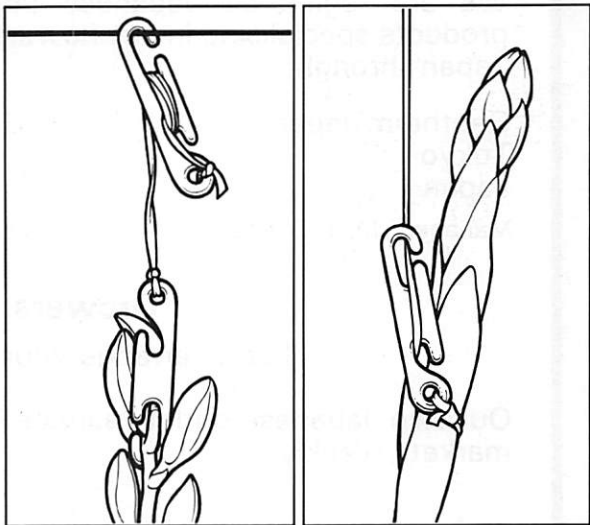
Greatly Reduced Labour Costs

StemGrip is only adjusted twice on each stem. Once to secure the budding spike and later to grip an upper bud. StemGrip can be hooked and unhooked in seconds. Minor adjustments to the elastic string tension can be made without disturbing the spike.

At cutting simply unhook the StemGrip and the spike is free. The StemGrip is left hanging ready for the next budding spike or quickly removed from over-head wire.

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StemGrip is made of special plastic that is not affected by ultra-violet light. It will remain soft and flexible for years.



Elastic: New improved lycra/nylon elastic now available from Neatfit International Ltd, P.O. Box 201, Levin. Phone 86-276.

Order

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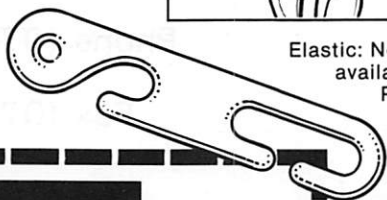
Please send me thousand StemGrips @ \$(NZ)66.00 per thousand GST inclusive. (Only sold in lots of one thousand). Enclosed is my cheque or money order to the value of \$

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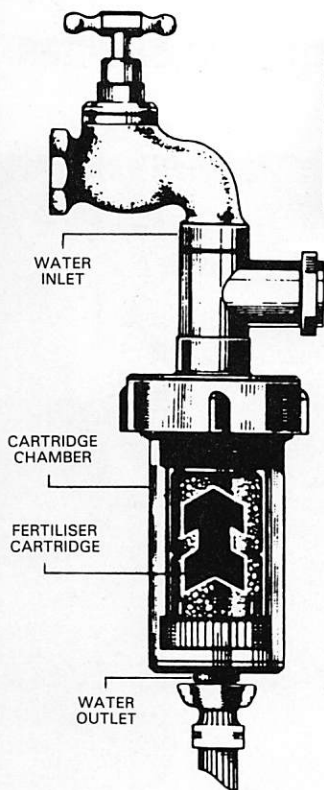
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Signed

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The ideal addition to your orchid collection.

The advantages of using Fert-O-Mat. Easy to fit, simple to use, fertilise as you water, even distribution of fertiliser, use with any watering system, quick, convenient with excellent results. Unit comes complete with fertiliser plugs in initial purchase price.

Orchid experts agree orchids do best with regular soluble fertiliser feeds of fairly low strength.

Two analysis of fertiliser available: "Quick Green" corresponds to the U.S. recommendation for orchids of 30-10-10 or N.Z. 30-5-8.

"General Purpose" corresponds closely to the U.S. 10-10-10 for orchids in spike (generally known as the blossom booster).

Fert-O-Mat provides the three main elements N.P.K. in the proportions recommended by both U.S. and N.Z. Orchid experts for orchids. (American Orchid Society Bulletin, N.Z. Orchid Review, Department Scientific & Industrial Research, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries). Both formula of fertiliser contain essential trace elements.

For best results use Fert-O-Mat with every watering. Quick Green is recommended for spring/summer growth, General Purpose blossom time.

Fert-O-Mat is also highly recommended for use in flower and vegetable gardening. Use Fert-O-Mat and judge the results for yourself.

AUSTRALASIAN IMPORTS LTD.

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PORTRAITS OF NEW ZEALAND ORCHID SPECIES

Orthoceras strictum



This species of open scrub and banks flowers in summer.

On close inspection, there are considerable variations between different plants, providing botanists with yet another taxonomic puzzle—are they the same species or not?

The photos here show different colouring, lip shape and bract length.

Photography: Bob Goodger