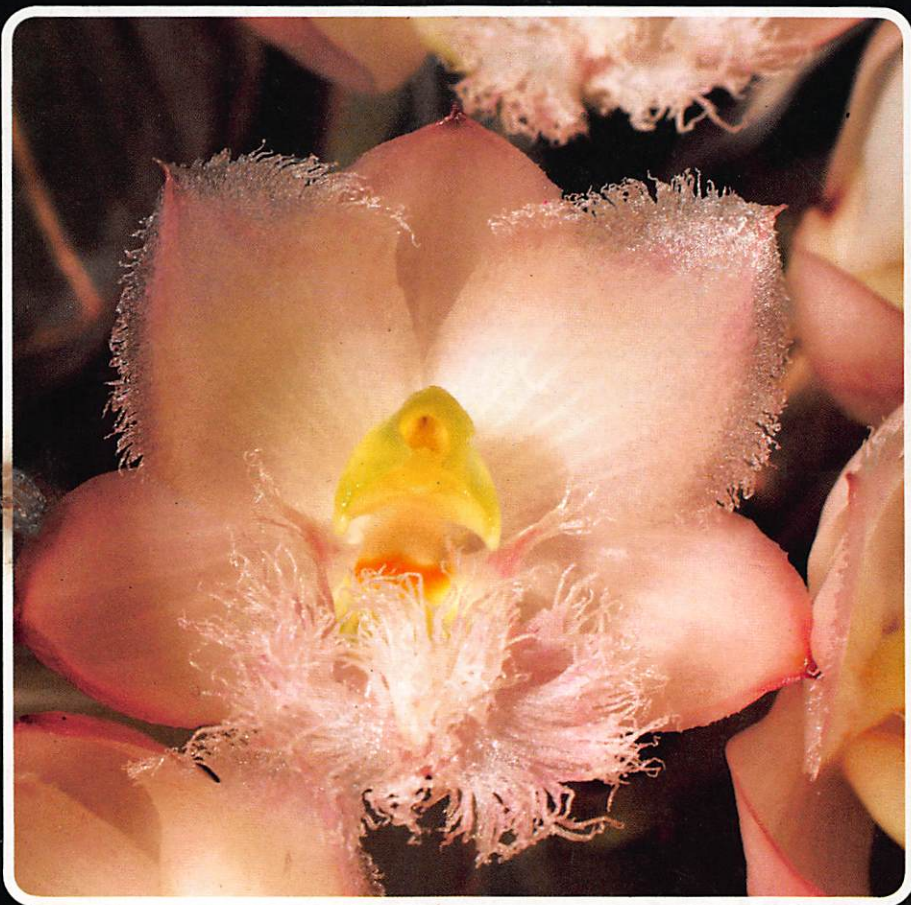


Orchids

IN NEW ZEALAND



Volume 14—No. 3
May/June 1988



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Orchids

IN NEW ZEALAND

incorporating 'The New Zealand Orchid Review'

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF

ORCHID COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND
NEW ZEALAND ORCHID SOCIETY

VOL. 14, No. 3

MAY/JUNE 1988

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FRONT COVER

Catasetum roseum

Sometimes called *Clowesia rosea*, this species comes from
Brazil and likes warmish conditions. It has the reputation of
being difficult to grow. Val warns 'Once a spike is noticed, don't
water until the flowers are out'.

Grower and Photographer: Val Bayliss

BACK COVER

Drymoanthus adversus.

Photography: Bob Goodger.

EDITORIAL

As one of the few 'perks' of the job, the Editors receive newsletters from many (but not all) of the numerous orchid societies around New Zealand. Naturally these newsletters vary widely, according to the experience and facilities available, but most of them make very interesting reading. Often, the smaller societies produce the better newsletters, but not always. Perhaps the most professional looking publication is that of the Auckland Orchid Club, whose Editor deserves warm congratulations. The most attractively illustrated newsletter is that of the Tauranga Orchid Society. Whangarei and North Shore generally put out some useful tips or new ideas, while from the South, Canterbury often provides food for thought. There are a number of others well worth reading as well.

We are sometimes asked why we don't reprint more material from newsletters. This would certainly make our job of finding material much less difficult. However, other alert newsletter Editors obviously think the same way, and by the time the same material has been reprinted in eight or ten different newsletters, it has been well dispersed throughout the country, and it is no longer original.

However, if sufficient of our readers disagree with this viewpoint, we will be happy to reprint suitable material. Remember, however, that we don't wish this journal to degenerate into a collection of reprints.

On a similar topic, we are sometimes asked for more material on "basic orchid growing for the beginner". Again, we feel that most orchid society newsletters are better placed to provide this, as they can tailor their advice to local conditions. Many newsletters cover basic seasonal culture very well indeed. We endeavour instead to supply articles from a range of experienced growers producing information and opinions of interest to all growers, beginners and 'old hands' alike. (Well, that's the theory, but experienced growers tend to have such green thumbs that many can't hold a pen any more!).

The first thing that any beginner to orchid growing should do is to join a lively local orchid society, if one exists. (The second thing is to subscribe to "Orchids in New Zealand"). Any society worth its salt will instruct, enthuse and encourage beginners to the point where some of them will be writing for us.

MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTION

Since the first issue of "Orchids in New Zealand", in July 1975, there have been only two Distribution Managers, to achieve the task of distributing the magazine to its readers.

The first was Mrs Kath Bruce, part of the Taranaki-centred team which got the magazine off the ground, and she carried on for six long years—36

issues. As the subscription lists grew, so did the task. In those days the magazines were sent out in manilla envelopes—boxes and boxes of them to store and address.

Inevitably, Mrs Bruce felt she had done her share, and the task was taken over by Mrs Bev. Godwin of Northcote, Auckland. For her, it filled the gap left after planning for the

1980 N.Z. Orchid Conference was over, and she has carried on with it, from July 1981 until now—40 issues in all! What stamina these ladies have!

The job includes dealing with subscription monies, subscribers address lists, and of course taping up the modern mailing covers and attaching address labels. The complications of preparing the bundles of magazines in regional groups to suit the Post Office, so that we can take advantage of cheaper mailing rates, can be a real headache.

The job has become a joint activity, as Bev's husband, Lin, has become actively involved. This is one of the most time-consuming of the voluntary jobs associated with the Orchid Council, and we have all benefited from the effort they have put in.

Bev took advantage of opportunities to computerise records, and last year organised the transfer of systems to the Council's own computer.

In the meantime, individual mailing of bulk subscriptions and their associated records has added to the workload.

Now Bev and Lin have reluctantly found that at the moment their life does not easily accommodate the present distribution job, and after a long spell of organising their life around the magazine we can only thank them for their years' of sterling service, and wish them more time to relax and to enjoy some new and, as yet, unknown avenue of interest.

Now a new volunteer has stepped in to be a link in the magazine chain. We welcome Trevor Nicholls of Taupo and wish him a trouble-free term.

Thanks for all you have done, Bev and Lin, and Kath, and best wishes to Trevor.

CONZED NEWS

Wal Upton, noted Australian grower and hybridizer of Native Dendrobiums, made a very successful tour of New Zealand in April, and his slide shows have stimulated greater interest than ever in growing these delightful flowers.

A well attended National Judging Seminar was held in Rotorua at the end of April. A fuller report will be included in the next issue.

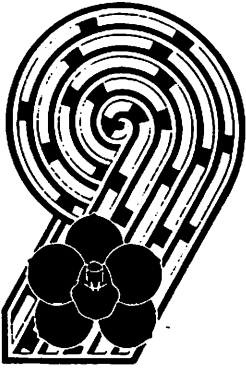
Cyclone Bola swept past in March, causing damage in Northland, the East Coast and Taranaki, but it seems that orchid growers were remarkably lucky. Despite the flooding, high winds and fallen trees in these areas, reports from Gisborne are that most orchid houses were undamaged. Northland growers apparently lost a little shadecloth and spent some time clearing fallen trees. In New Plymouth, although Pukekura Park lost a propagating house, the orchid houses were unaffected. The Oakura area was the most affected there. Those who have visited the Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust bush garden, will be saddened to hear that it suffered badly with the loss of many trees.

RECENT CONZED AWARDS

4/88	<i>Paphiopedilum delenatii</i> 'Esther'	HCC/CCC/OCNZ	Grace Wootton
5/88	<i>Cymbidium</i> Cricket	CCC/OCNZ	T. Dillon
6/88	<i>Odontioda</i> Honiton Lace	AD/OCNZ	F.L. & D. H. Eddy
7/88	<i>Slc.</i> Orglades Early Harvest 'Grace'	AM/OCNZ	I. D. James
8/88	<i>Miltonia</i> Debra Stern 'Pink Champagne'	HCC/OCNZ	G. & P. Anderson

13th World Orchid Conference 1990

Auckland, New Zealand
March 1988



Call for Papers

The 13th World Orchid Conference will take place in Auckland, New Zealand from 5th through to 16th September 1990. Concurrent with the Show and other activities, is a four-day lecture programme (12th through to 15th September). The organisers are seeking proposals for papers to be presented at the Conference.

Located in the temperate climate of the South Pacific, New Zealand has a population of about 3.4 million. There are over 6,000 active members involved in 43 local orchid societies. This relatively large interest is created by the ease with which cool-growing orchids can be cultivated outdoors all year round, especially in the warmer parts of the country.

New Zealanders have a keen interest in cymbidium cultivation and breeding, to the extent that there may be more successful hybridisers of this genus than in any other country. This interest is supported by a growing cut flower export trade in cymbidiums amounting to over \$7,000,000, which is over half of all New Zealand cut flower exports.

In recent years, hobbyist growers have turned to those genera which do well alongside cymbidiums—the odontoglossum alliance, Australian dendrobiums, and the masdevallia family. Many growers now provide a little winter warmth for their collections with the result that paphiopedilums, phalaenopsis, cattleyas and vandaceous orchids are increasingly represented. A few commercial interests now export plants and flowers other than cymbidiums.

Auckland (population 900,000), location of the 13th World Orchid Conference, is New Zealand's largest city, and the largest centre of orchid enthusiasts. The Conference Committee expects that much of its support and attendance will come from hobbyists and commercial growers; therefore papers suitable for these audiences are likely to be given preference. Special conference sessions are expected to be devoted to cymbidiums, odontoglossums, cattleyas, Australian dendrobiums, and masdevallias, with papers purely of scientific interest and lectures on other genera being held concurrently in a second series. Minor papers will be presented informally in poster sessions. Usual audio-visual facilities will be available.

The Programme Committee is calling for papers of 20 minutes in duration. Selected keynote speakers may be asked to make longer presentations. Those wishing to submit papers should send drafts for refereeing by 31st December 1988 to—

Programme Committee
13th World Orchid Conference
P.O. Box 29-152
Auckland 3
New Zealand

and advise of any special facilities required to present the paper. Please include a contact telephone number, if appropriate.

In conjunction with the Conference it is expected to publish a monograph entitled 'A Hundred Years of Orchid Growing in New Zealand'. Extracts of this publication will be presented in a special session. Involvement of societies in collecting local orchid history will be sought soon. Memorabilia including old photographs will be valuable in assisting this project.

A programme outline is expected to be issued as part of the registration documents in March 1989. Further enquiries should be made to Dr. J. A. Kernohan at the above address or telephone (09) 584-776 (home).

CORRECTIONS

The gremlins have been with us again!

On the back cover of the January-February issue, we said that *Calochilus campestris* was rediscovered by Doug McCrae, but of course it was found by Margaret and John, Perry, as we reported in the May-June issue last year (Vol. 13, No. 3).

Sorry, Margaret and John.

In the March-April issue, a misunderstanding caused the cover photo and its caption to not match. The lovely, tall-stemmed yellow *Masdevallia* shown is *M. coccinea* var. *xanthina*, an unusual form of the species. It was initially grown as *M. davisii* (Grower and photographer — N. C. Miller).

We will include the *M. ignea* photo on another occasion.



Orchids from the Coromandel

N. C. Miller

In a quiet corner of the Coromandel Peninsula Barry Fraser is tending a collection of *Phalaenopsis* and *Paphiopedilums* that seems likely to make an increasing impact on the New Zealand orchid scene over the next few years. Barry, a commercial fisherman by trade, got into orchids as a form of 'diversification', and he has done so in a very thorough and methodical way.

The orchids, other than very young seedlings 'ex flask', are grown in a sizeable Gothic Arch greenhouse of Barry's own designing. Clad with twin skin and treble skin polycarbonate, it features a heat pump of unusually efficient design, which provides winter heating at very low cost.

Barry obtains potting bark from Rotorua. Although he buys graded bark, he then goes to considerable trouble to soak and sieve the bark. All material that fails to float is discarded, and the fine sievings are used as garden mulch.

The mature and semi-mature plants are grown in quite a coarse free-

draining grade of bark (approximately 1-2cm size) and they seem to really respond to this treatment. They are lightly fed with every watering.

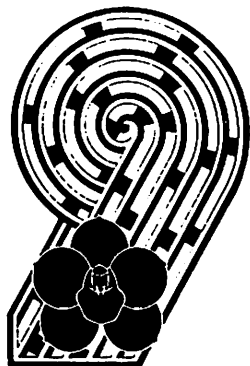
From the many exciting labels to be seen in this collection, we can expect to see a range of top quality blooms in the future. Barry has his eye firmly fixed on the 1990 World Orchid Conference, and is hoping to mount a really impressive display with some assistance from the good supply of artistic talent in his neck of the woods. In the meantime, he is not open to the general public, so please be patient!

Te Akau Road
R.D. 4, Rotorua

13th World Orchid Conference 1990

Auckland, New Zealand

March 1988



8th Newsletter

Promotional Items

More money is continually coming in showing your support and action in selling, and our continued thanks for this. We now have somebody new to head this important souvenir activity, and to take some of the administrative and marketing load off hard working Heather Crofskey. Welcome Keith Savory to this new post.

Two new items have already come your way by now, Magnets and Aprons. Hope these are successful for you. The Aprons are hand sewn so may be a little slow in coming, but have been well received by some Societies.

Very shortly we will have Aerogrammes with orchid motive designs and we know you will be pleased with these.

Visits

Visits have already started to those Societies who have sent an invitation to us. The slide programme on displays is proving to be useful in starting some creative thought and prompting some good and unusual questions.

Some Societies are daunted by the apparent difficulty of transporting flowers or plants long distances to Auckland. In this case, seek out a commercial grower. After all they transport flowers and plants successfully across to the other side of the world. Another thought is to purchase flowers from around Auckland for your display. The flowers will not be eligible for class or award judging of course, but you will certainly get tremendous satisfaction in creating and building a well-designed display.

Another problem seen by smaller Societies is the fear of not having sufficient plants. Believe me, there are many more displays spoilt by too many plants than too few. A small number of quality plants artistically displayed wins every time.

Orchid Growers of Note

A few names are coming to hand, but please remember we need something written to describe these interesting orchid growing characters. They will not do this themselves so you will have to do it for them.

2nd Circular

This is now going out to attract overseas growers to the Conference, and already some response is coming back. Overseas visitors have to plan further ahead than we do as their travel arrangements have to be booked earlier. All we have to do in New Zealand at this stage is to make a mental resolve to attend, and scheme ways to make attendance memorable and pleasant.

1990 Cymbidiums

We have grown on some of the 1990 flasks that the New Zealand Orchid Society had hybridised as a fundraising activity. These are now well established and ready to sell as seedling plants, available in mixed lots of 48 in a tray at \$2.50 per plant. Suggested retail selling price is \$4.00. Societies selling can retain the mark up, or of course 1990 WOC will gladly accept the extra. Trays of these plants can be collected in Auckland by arrangement. Phone Marilyn Johnson at Auckland 298-6619.

Show Space

(Special message from the Show Committee)

The entire Auckland Showgrounds in Greenlane has been booked for the Conference and Exhibition, and the Show Committee has now finalised layout for both Flower Show and Commercial Selling areas. We invite Societies, growers and other interested groups to indicate their possible space requirements as soon as possible so that any additional space necessary can be made available by the Show Committee before publication of a preliminary Show Schedule, layout, etc. This is due to be printed and distributed about August or September this year.

It is proposed to use Hall 1 (Repco Pavilion), Hall 2 (Carter Holt Pavilion) and Hall 3 (United Pavilion) for the Flower Show area. Total floor area of these buildings is just under 8,000 square metres which is approximately equal to areas used at the last Conferences in Tokyo and Miami. Display floor space will be available in Halls 1, 2 and 3 free of charge in modules of four sizes in Hall 1, and five sizes in Hall 2. At

present Hall 3 is being held as a possible quarantine area for overseas growers to display plants in flower. Final approval of this is yet to be given by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, but this is well in hand.

Flower show areas are available in the following sizes—

- Booth 'A' — 36 square metres
- Booth 'B' — 24 square metres
- Booth 'C' — 12 square metres
- Booth 'D' — 6 square metres
- Booth 'E' — 3 square metres

You may book any of the above unit areas or combination of units as you wish.

When booking your space requirement please indicate position required (i.e. against a wall, one, two or three sides to view). Please note that no provision has been made for free standing displays. Walls of these Halls are of concrete block construction and no fixing to the walls is permitted. However, a nailing bar is fixed to all outside walls at a height from the ground of 2.4 metres.

When planning your display the Show Committee suggests that consideration be given to elevating your display from the floor. This will allow better viewing by the public and will add to the overall effect of the displays. Ceilings are very high in all pavilions. However, the way you design your display is entirely up to you.

Listed below is the Fire Department Specification for the Showgrounds, relating to materials that can, or cannot, be used. We hope this will assist you in preparing plans for your display.

All Exhibitors

Fire Specification for Showgrounds

1. No straw, hay, flammable fluids, bituminous building paper or crepe paper will be permitted on stalls.
2. Plastic film, reinforced plastic, or coreflut cannot be used unless approved by Council's Fire and Egress Inspector.
3. Polystyrene is permitted for letterwork only, restricted to approximately 20% of wall area in display. Sheets of polystyrene will not be permitted, unless special conditions have been approved by Council's Fire and Egress Inspector.
4. Paper—No paper in sheet form is to be used. Posters, etc., limited to 20% of wall area.
5. (a) All cloths used in backdrops, ceilings and the like must be of the approved type and/or treated with fire retardant (see list below).
(b) Wool cloth is recommended and is very durable to constant reuse (50% or more wool content).
(c) Restrictions of cloth will depend on the amount and position it is used.

6. If using cooking or heating appliances approval must be obtained from the Council's Fire and Egress Inspector prior to show or exhibition.
7. Encroachment of displays into walkways will not be permitted.
8. Loose display packaging must be removed prior to opening and not stored behind screens.
9. The use of carpets as floor covering is recommended in preference to synthetics or Hessian.
10. Bark is to be kept moist at all times. Limitations may be imposed on amount and placing of bark in some areas.

Approved Materials—

- (a) Wool cloth (50% content minimum).
- (b) Sail cloth—dacron or small areas of mylar with dacron backing.
- (c) Nylon—nylon taffeta only.
- (d) Cottons—Flame treated only.
- (e) Polycarbonate—any form.
- (f) Thick panel plastic—in small areas only, three square metres of surface area.

If in doubt over displays and to avoid problems of having to remove materials from stall, contact the 1990 Show Committee.

Commercial Selling Areas (Pavilion 'A' and Westpac Pavilion). There will be plenty of space for sales at the 13th WOC. Indoor and outdoor sites will be available. Indoor modules of 3 metres x 3 metres will cost \$1,200.00 each if bookings are made before February 1988. Outdoor areas will be available at \$12.00 per square metre.

Anyone who takes commercial space and also produces a display in the exhibition will gain a rebate of \$400.00. Further details of the commercial sales areas will be distributed in the next month or so.

We ask that you give details of your proposed space requirements as soon as possible in writing to the Secretary, 13th World Orchid Conference, P.O. Box 29-152, Greenwoods Corner, Auckland 3.

It is hoped that all Societies in New Zealand will present at least one display, if not more.

Finance

Keep those personal and Society loans and pledges coming in or consider if you have not yet made a commitment. We have a long way to go before we have adequate funds.

A budget summary will be released to Societies very shortly.

*R. W. Dix
Chairman*

Publicity and Public Relations Committee

Closing Dates for

Vol. 14, No. 5: 15th July

Vol. 14, No. 6: 16th September

Cymbidiums and 1990

A. Easton

Despite the often ill informed comments about New Zealand's premier orchid genus, the level of interest in cymbidiums seems to be finally lifting once more. And about time too. To contemplate the major displays envisaged for the 13th W.O.C. without a sturdy backing of hundreds of blooming cymbidiums would be foolhardy to say the least. But as I travel around and visit shows two serious cymbidiums deficiencies are apparent.

Firstly, where are all the well grown plants? Cymbidium culture among hobbyist growers has apparently reached an all time low. At show after show one sees tatty plants, the undersides of their leaves silvered from red spider damage, their bulbs shrivelled as the indicators of inactive roots and carrying flower spikes poorly trained to show off the blooms.

Increasingly I am convinced that the plants are horribly overcrowded. If all cymbidium enthusiasts would dump (not quit on the trading table) the bottom 50% of all their mature plants NOW they would be laying an unbeatable foundation for a fantastic display in September 1990. Mature cymbidiums must have room—we hear hobbyist growers constantly bemoaning this fact—yet will the same people ever throw plants away? Horrors!

Top exhibitors all around the world follow the leaf tip to leaf tip rule. Space all your mature plants so that the leaf tips of the outer bulbs are just touching (not overhanging) their neighbours. Some also de-spike their plants though I personally do not indulge in the practice. Certainly there is no harm in snapping out weak spikes if you wish to concentrate the plants' energy into the "king" spikes and it doesn't break any rules.

The second serious deficiency is in persisting with the culture of the old, tired meristem varieties. Past champions like Highland Mist "Dillabirra", Lake Macquarrie "Winsome" and Highland Lassie "Jersey" have run their race. It is

almost impossible for them to feature among the medal winners in 1990. Rather the awards in 1990 will come from new seedlings that are blooming for the first time in 1988 or 1989.

Neither is it any good buying a quality selection of second generation Peter Pan hybrids or the best *madidum* lines from Australia. These varieties will flower either several months before September 1990 or several months later when the conference show is but a dimming memory. No, the astute grower will be scouring the shows and nurseries in September this year looking for the crosses and parents that are hitting right on time. Likely they will be a mixture of traditional parents like Cleo Sherman, Snowsprite, Pearl Balkis, Poetic, Sensation, Wallara and Winter Fair with newer parents and less familiar names such as Coraki, Mighty Mouse, Red Beauty, Cotton Candy and Fancy Free.

Remember a selection of 50-100 plants in full bloom by 5th September 1988 should give you a very nice group to pick and choose from in September 1990. Think about your colour groups. Don't try to have one seedling of each cross from every cymbidium hybridizer between Te Kao, and Tiwai Point. Get a group of red seedlings of complementary parentage—you will find the shadings blend much better in your display and make sure the dark colours are offset by some clear whites or vice-versa. If you find, for example, the Cleo Sherman seedlings suit your growing conditions, expand your range of

them even if it means bypassing some interesting offspring of Poetic which tends to have a soft spike in your area. It is attention to detail which underlies the apparent ease and regularity with which some exhibitors win the big prizes.

Countdown to 1990

September 1988. Concentrate on selecting plants and crosses with potential that are in flower.

November 1988. Check all plants for dividing or potting on. This is the last season for dividing and all plants should be divided by 30th November. Potential specimen plants should be in their final pot now—give them summer growing room.

December 1988-February 1989. Really grow your plants. Keep nitrogen levels slightly higher than normal. Don't worry about heavy spiking for the 1989 season. Never let red spider get established—watch your plants and spray on a regular cycle.

Winter 1989. Practice your staking. Do you want to stake upright or pendulous for decorative effect? How will you transport your plants to Auckland? Maybe you have no choice but to concentrate on upright spiked varieties. Try some plants at the Hamilton Show and get the feel of transporting large plants without damaging them.

November 1989. Last call! Any new seedlings which are to be slipped up into bigger pots must be handled this month. Topdress any big plants to tide them over one more season. Give the plants room, lots of light and lots of water from now on.

December 1989-February 1990. Drop nitrogen levels back slightly. Keep the red spider non-existent. Topdress all plants with Epsom Salts (MgSO₄) in December-January.

March 1990. Check all undersides of pots for slugs, snails, etc., and bait

copiously. Put in clean stakes by each spike.

April 1990. Ease back into winter watering schedule. Even if you don't normally heat, give your plants a little warmth, just to move the night air. Last spray for red spider if you use Pentac or Mavrik.

May 1990. Put the first ties on the spikes. Do not move the plants now—leave them oriented in the same position until the spikes are open. Bait again for slugs and snails, the first spikes will be stretching now.

June 1990. Continue tying the spikes but only on warm days and preferably after lunch. Use loose ties and remember little by little, not one big jerk or you'll end up with a snapped spike. Ideal time to drench with Rogor for aphid control or if you prefer to spray, pick a dull windy day. Check the floor of the greenhouse and keep all weeds cleaned up or the aphids will settle on them in their hundreds.

July-August 1990. Remember the days are short still but Spring is coming. You may need to shade your greens and keep the darker colours in brighter light. Watch your watering—you need the active roots to fatten out your flowers. Keep up with the staking—one hot sunny day can wreak havoc with unsecured spikes. Keep a close watch on any slime trails and bait again if necessary. Final ties should be going on the spikes. When the final ties are in place, tighten up the lower ties so the spikes will be rigid enroute to Auckland.

September 1990. Its all happening. Tie the leaves for transit, clean off any dry husks, sponge off any dusty leaves with a mixture of nine parts milk and one part summer oil. Get some thin plastic bags from a dry cleaners and put over the flowers, making sure they're dry first. Water your plants thoroughly before leaving for Auckland and let them drain.

(concluded on page 71)

In your Greenhouse, Heading into Spring

Glenn Anderson

Heading into Spring has got to be the most exciting time in your greenhouse. Your cymbidiums will all be coming into bloom nicely, Paphs will be in full flower and there are usually some Catts of the *C. mossiae* lines budding up. The shows are just around the corner and your preparations should be in full swing. Cymbidium spikes should be staked fairly early on if you want them to be straight and well presented. The stake should be pushed into the mix close to the spike and at about 20° off the vertical. If there is more than one spike, arrange the stakes evenly for a well presented plant when in full bloom. Stakes and ties should be of an unobtrusive material and a natural colour so that they blend into the background. Nothing ruins the appearance of a plant more quickly than great hunks of twine and droopy granny's bows. Easy to use materials are natural canes and green twistie ties. If you do use string, be sure to cut off the ends close to the knot.

When tying up your spikes, choose a warm day. Spikes are extremely brittle when still developing and when it is cold. Do not pull the spike up too tightly on the first day. Go back a few days later and you will find it will come up quite a bit further with little trouble. One tie will be sufficient while the spike is still developing. Remember also, the placement of too firm a tie while the spike is still elongating will result in a buckled, twisted spike by hindering this elongating process. Extra ties can be put in place when the buds are fully developed, to secure the flowers for transportation. Most important, is that you trim back the stake to just below the top flower. This will not only improve the overall appearance of your plant but will also help prevent nasty accidents to eyes when people lean over the plant for a closer look or to read the name. One last point is that you should not move or turn your plant while the spike is developing. The spike will twist round to follow the sun, resulting in an ugly twisted spike.

The same principles can be applied to staking most orchids, but don't forget those that are naturally pendulous. A short stake and one tie at the curve so that the spike doesn't

rub on the edge of the pot is all that is needed. With Paphs, a fine stake placed directly behind the growth that is flowering is ideal. Then one tie on the ovary should bring the flower up nicely. Your plants should then be generally cleaned up, old husks pulled off, dead and yellow leaves and brown tips removed.

By August, the days will be starting to draw out a little and the day temperatures will be rising rapidly within your greenhouse. Use every opportunity to vent your greenhouse. The increased air circulation does wonders for your plants, helps to control the dreaded botrytis (a fungus which very quickly attacks and spots your flowers when conditions are cold and damp) and allows your plants and surrounding areas to dry out. But do not neglect watering at this time. Extending flower spikes on your cymbidiums draw quite a lot of water from the plant, and a plant kept too dry at this stage will have shorter spikes and smaller flowers.

The fertilizer you should have been using through autumn and winter was a low nitrogen and higher phosphate and potassium type. There are several on the market like this classified as flowering orchid food.

This type of fertilizer helps induce flowering and gives bigger, stronger flowers and spikes. Soon it will be time to increase the amount of nitrogen again when the plants start their spring growth. If you are holding flowers for the Spring Shows, do not increase your nitrogen until after the shows are over, as your flowers may not keep as well.

One of our favourite orchids that flowers regularly for the spring shows is *Slc.* Jewel Box 'Dark Waters' HCC/AOS. Peter and I imported a few plants from Armaçost and Royston back in 1980, and this was one of them. We didn't know what it was but it sounded good on the catalogue. It was a hybrid between the species *Cattleya aurantiaca*, a small vibrant orange and *Slc.* Anzac 'Orchidhurst' FCC/RHS, a fairly old hybrid registered in 1921 that is still used extensively in breeding today. *Slc.* Jewel Box 'Dark Waters' has turned out to be a 'Classic' and its sibling *Slc.* Jewel Box 'Beverly' is one of the parents of the now famous *Slc.* Hazel Boyds.

Occasionally there is a piece of the original 'Dark Waters' cloning available for sale, but be careful of the source of any clone that you may be tempted to buy. It may in fact be a clone of a clone, or the cutting of your clone may have been carried on far past the recommended number of cuts. Practices such as these greatly increase the chances of mutation and after several years of growing your clone and finally bringing it into flower, you may be very disappointed when the flower bears little resemblance to the original mother plant. We know, we have flowered and thrown out several like this.

But harking back to the *Slc.* Jewel Box, last year we purchased a flask that we are very excited about. It is a remake of *Slc.* Jewel Box using Frank Gronwall's original piece of *Slc.* Anzac 'Orchidhurst' FCC/RHS and Geyserland Orchids own tetraploid

form of *C. aurantiaca*. We will have to wait 1-2 more years to see the results of this, but that is what orchid growing is all about.

July-August is a good time to get your mix organised ready for potting in another month or so. Many people believe that bark should be weathered (left out in the rain) for a couple of months or soaked in water for a couple of days to help remove some of the resins. This may not be strictly necessary, but certainly the addition of Dolomite Lime at about a handful to a wheelbarrow full of bark helps reduce the acidity of the bark to a level where orchids are quite happy. Here in Rotorua we have a good supply of graded pelletised bark which is ideal for potting mix, but I know in some areas such bark is hard to come by and many people add pumice, scoria, oasis or polystyrene to make the bark go further. These media have no real effect on your orchids other than alter the degree of water retention of your mix. Try to use the same mix for all your plants of the same genus so that your orchids all need watering at the same time.

Well that's it from me and I look forward to capturing your eyeballs again in another two months.

421 Pukehangi Road
Rotorua



(continued from page 69)

Secure plants in deep, strong cardboard boxes with the sides at least as high as the top of the pots. Drive like Granny in a Morris Minor, preferably leaving hours earlier than you need to. Pray frequently as you negotiate the highway to Auckland.

October 1990. Count your medals!

Geyserland Orchids
P.O. Box 167
Rotorua

21 This Year

This year the Wanganui Orchid Society Inc., celebrates Twenty-one years as a Club.

It all began in the Christs Church Coffee Bar in Wanganui, May 1967. It is universal that people with similar interests will eventually find each other and in this case it was ten people. Not all the members of the newly formed club were owners of orchids either! But all were obviously orchid lovers.

In those days orchids were very scarce and expensive in New Zealand in general and in Wanganui especially. In fact places where orchids could be purchased were kept secret. Two original members (husband and wife) went to several monthly meetings before they were considered worthy of a single cymbidium back bulb, which they carefully carried home and never let it leave their side until it died. Of course after twenty-one years they have learnt what to do with a back bulb and now teach others. Cymbidiums were the only orchids seen in Wanganui then and the New Zealand natives were not really considered to be orchids, certainly not for the private collection.

The monthly meetings were held in the Wanganui Camera Club rooms and the roll had dropped to seven members to whom we owe the continuation of the club. Two years later a trip was organised to Kath Black's and Norm Porter's (names formerly whispered behind clubroom doors), and off they all went with their life savings to F/S plants, which they thought meant Flowering Size, but we now know only means For Sale.

Incidentally, one of the members asked for a yellow cymbidium and was presented with a plant which, they were told, was great for beginners. They still have the plant and it has not flowered to this day!

The Club grew rapidly after that and during October 1971 hosted a combined meeting with Hutt Valley Orchid Circle and Taranaki Orchid Society. Sixty four people attended from Taranaki, Palmerston North, Masterton, Gold Coast and Wellington. A highly successful function and Wanganui was now a dot on the New Zealand orchid growing map. By 1977 the Club had grown to 40 members and the monthly meeting venue was changed to the Old Folks Centre, Guyton Street, where it remains today, meeting on the first Wednesday of every month at 7.30 p.m. All welcome.

The first Show was held in 1981 with the membership at 106. This was a one-day Show with the above mentioned two commercial growers being invited to participate and orchids were for sale, for the first time, to the Wanganui general public.

It was unbelievable! Plants were leaving the hall at about the same rate that they had entered. The Pipe Band Hall was so crowded that members had to set up a baby sitting operation outside (Ray has never recovered from this). The Show is now an annual event, although there is now room for children.

The Club became an Incorporated Society in 1985 with a membership of 223 and in 1987 highlighted our evolution by hosting the Orchid Council of New Zealand Annual General Meeting.

This year in conjunction with our Show on the 8th and 9th October, we will be holding a 21st birthday celebration Dinner with guest speaker. We extend an invitation and welcome to all orchid growers, particularly past members, wherever you are.

More details will be available in future editions of the Wanganui Orchid Society Newsletter, which is sent monthly to all Affiliated Societies.

Mike Stringer
88 Portal Street
Wanganui

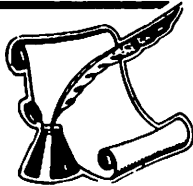
For the Wanganui Orchid Society

are allowed to outweigh the culture, condition and presentation of plants.

S. W. Harris
7 Tyndrum Place
Howick



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Dear Editors,

Re the letter from your correspondent O. Blumhardt in Vol. 14, No. 1 (January/February 1988), in particular the pictured *Soph. coccinea* captioned 'Superior Sophronitis', (Vol. 13, No. 3).

I am completely in accord with the comments made and would like to add that instead of 'Superior' perhaps 'Different' would be better! Who says it is superior? Perhaps the judge of O. Blumhardt's acquaintance? who called the flowers of his *Sl. Marriottiana* 'incomplete': a version of the all too well known comments of late that "it's not full enough" and "it's too small".

Why must there be this insistence that blooms be rounded, overlapping and big?

My reaction to the illustration aforementioned was and is, "gross".

I join O. Blumhardt in his/her sentiments concerning the seemingly insatiable desires of people to change the shape/form of things; especially when its orchids.

I feel that this tends (sometimes when judging is concerned) to lead to an overlooking of natural attributes of blooms, i.e. sheer quality of colour and substance of blooms in preference to great size and man-induced unnatural shape, and certainly in many cases these factors

Editors reply

At last, a response from our readers!. Thank you!. We were starting to think you were all dead!

The caption '*Superior Sophronitis*' was our doing - an exercise in editorial alliteration. Seriously though, we stick by our contention that the plant shown is a superior form of the species *Sophronitis coccinea*, and in no way could it be said to resemble a daisy or a *gloxinia*.

We feel that it is superior because it combines good size, magnificent colour, a well-filled pleasing shape as well as good substance. If it did not have all these attributes it would not have received an award at the World Orchid Conference.

Any judge who gave a high award to an orchid deficient in colour or substance would be failing in his duty, and a poorly grown, conditioned or presented plant would not stand a chance at a World Orchid Conference Show.

As to the comment on "man-induced unnatural shape" we suggest that you consult the article '*The Culture of the Brazilian Sophronitis*' by Cecilia and Alvara Pessoa (*American Orchid Society Bulletin*, December 1983, p.1273), which shows flowers of *Sophronitis coccinea*, collected from the wild, which are just as full and round in shape as the flowers we are discussing.

In fact, so many plants of *Sophronitis coccinea* have been sent from Brazil to Japan in recent years that, for all we know, this controversial plant may have started life in a Brazilian forest!.

The Editors

MASDEVALLIAS—The Species

Part 1

Russell Hutton

With the upsurge in interest in Masdevallias an increasing number of species and hybrids are becoming available. Although many of these new plants are well deserving of the attention and bench space of enthusiasts, as yet very little descriptive information is readily available about them as regards culture, size, colour, etc. To help you get to know these intriguing orchids a little better I have decided to put together a series of articles to acquaint you with some of the more showy and in many cases little known members of this diverse genus of orchids.

Masdevallias are epiphytic or semi-terrestrial plants without pseudobulbs. The habit is generally tufted but with some species the rhizome is decidedly creeping. The leaves are typically fleshy tapering to a narrow grooved petiole and grow from the apex of a short stem or ramicaule arising from the rhizome. Inflorescences arise from a point on the stem below the base of the leaf and in a number of species several can be produced either simultaneously or in succession.

The species of the genus Masdevallia are grouped into sub-genera, sections and sub-sections.

e.g. —

Genus Masdevallia

Sub-genus Masdevallia

Section Masdevallia

Sub-section Caudatae

Species caudata, estradae, prodigiosa, wurdackii, etc.

Sub-section Masdevallia

Species uniflora, agaster, calocodon, etc.

Sub-section Oscillantes

Species pteroglossa, wagneriana, rubiginosa, etc.

Sub-section Coccineae

Species coccinea, ignea, veitchiana, etc.

Sub-section Saltatrices

Species angulifera, saltatrix, strobilii, etc.

Sub-section Tubulosae

Species tubulosa, venezuelana, etc.

This list is by no means complete and takes into account only one section. For anyone wanting to delve more deeply into the taxonomy of Masdevallias I suggest you obtain a copy of *Icones Pleurothallidarum, Part 2, 'Systematics of Masdevallia'* published by Missouri Botanical Garden.

The classification of plants into division, sub-division, class, sub-class, order, sub-order, family, sub-family, tribe, sub-tribe, genus, sub-genus and finally species and sub-species is an indication of the affinity of the species to one another and a knowledge or understanding of this can often be helpful to the orchid enthusiast regarding the culture of little known plants and to the hybridizer in making new hybrids.

Our first group, the sub-section Caudatae, is made up of around 30 species widely distributed in the orchid-rich cloud forests and damp shrubby woods of the Andean regions in Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. Most are small compact plants of tufted habit with proportionately large showy blooms, qualities which make them desirable additions to any collection.

Masdevallia caudata

First described by the botanist John Lindley in 1833 and named for the long-tailed or caudate sepals, a



Masdevallia caudata 'Noel'

Grower: Pukekura Park Collection

Photographer: G. Fuller

characteristic of all species in this group. First collected in Colombia near San Fortunato *M. caudata* is also known from Venezuela, Ecuador and Peru in cool moist cloud forests at altitudes of 2,000m-2,500m.

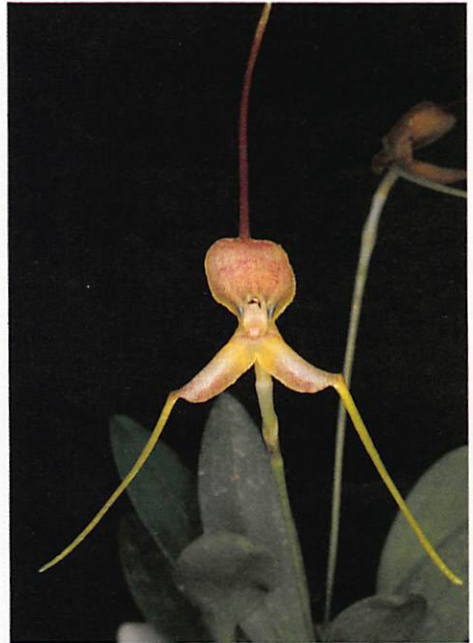
The plants are epiphytic with short rounded leaves, the elegant well displayed blooms begin to appear in late winter with greater numbers arising as the summer approaches. *M. caudata* is best grown cool and rather shaded and delights in a moist airy atmosphere.

Masdevallia decumana

A more recent discovery from the cloud forests of Peru, this gem was described by Mr W. Koniger in 1982. The striking bright rose blooms are densely spotted crimson and held above the neat tufted foliage. Culture is similar to *M. caudata*.

Masdevallia discolor

This pretty species comes from the misty forests of the Colombian Andes. In cultivation *M. discolor* enjoys cool conditions and plenty of moist moving air. The plants are medium sized (10cm-15cm tall) with tufted deep green leaves and the interesting delicately coloured blooms as the accompanying photograph shows are held clear of the foliage on erect slender stems.



M. discolor

Grower and Photographer: V. Bayliss

Masdevallia estradae

A pretty species known only from Colombia in the high misty forests of all three of the Colombian cordilleras. Plants were first discovered in the collection of a Senora Estrada and named by Reichenbach in 1874 in her honour. The plants have a neat tufted habit and rarely exceed 12cm tall with the sparkling white and purple, yellow-tailed blooms displayed on erect stems above the leaves. It is



M. estradae

Grower: L. & R. Orchids

Photographer: V. Bayliss

one of the parents of the hybrid *M. Stella* made by Hincks in 1890, the other parent being *M. coccinea*. Coming from altitudes of 2,000m-2,500m this species prefers cool house treatment.

M. klabochorum

Grower: L. & R. Orchids

Photographer: V. Bayliss



Masdevallia klabochorum

This delightful little species is from the damp cloud forests of the Colombian Andes. Growth is similar to the preceding species with the leaves typically broader. Spring and summer brings a succession of sparkling white, yellow-tailed blooms displayed on erect to arching stems.

Masdevallia pallida

Similar in habit to the other small growing species although the ends of the leaves are often bent over from the vertical. High cloud forest regions of Ecuador are the home of *M. pallida*.



M. pallida

Grower: L. & R. Orchids

Photographer: V. Bayliss

In cultivation cool to cool/intermediate conditions suit it best and a well grown plant will be somewhat dwarfed by the showy white blooms with very long bright yellow tails. The base of the lower sepals have a narrow band of deep maroon.

Masdevallia prodigiosa

Named for its remarkable flowers, *M. prodigiosa* is relatively common in the cloud forests of Northern Peru. Unfortunately this, along with many other orchids which abound in this region, are endangered because the forests are being cleared for timber and farming. *M. prodigiosa* is a dwarf plant with tufted deep green leaves with blackish bracts at the base. The plants respond well to cool or cool/intermediate treatment with the 'spacey' looking blooms being presented freely on horizontal to slightly drooping stems variously throughout the year.



M. prodigiosa

Grower: L. & R. Orchids

Photographer: V. Bayliss

Masdevallia purpurella

This is a little gem typically only 3cm-5cm tall and found in Northern Colombia at around 2,500m in dense scrubby cloud forest. Numerous flowers are produced variously

throughout the year on erect to slightly arching stems. The colour varies from sparkling pink to bright rose with yellow centre and tails.

Masdevallia replicata

This is a Peruvian species which grows well in cool to cool/intermediate conditions and prefers to be kept a little drier over the winter months. The plants have deep green



M. replicata

Grower and Photographer: V. Bayliss

leaves about 15cm tall, which are blackish at the base, and produce large glossy blooms displayed well clear of the foliage. Each sepal is furnished with a very long slender tail.

Masdevallia sanctae-inesae

One of nature's masterpieces, this rare and very desirable little species is known from one locality in remote cloud forests of Southern Ecuador. It's discovery was by chance when Dr. Benigno Malo of Cuenca was searching for pre-inca ruins on the

eastern slopes of the Andes near Cuenca. *M. sanctae-inesae* responds well to cool conditions and a well grown plant can produce many blooms throughout the year. An additional quality is the ability to produce several blooms successively from each leaf.



M. sanctae-inesae

Grower: L. & R. Orchids

Photographer: V. Bayliss

Masdevallia setacea

A small tufted species 8cm-12cm tall. Erect stems carry large spectacular long-tailed blooms which have an unusual stretched appearance. *M. setacea* comes from Ecuador and prefers cool to cool/intermediate conditions.

Masdevallia triangularis

Quite well known and a somewhat variable species from Venezuela from where it was introduced into cultivation by Sanders in 1881. *M. triangularis* grows well in cultivation preferring cool to cool/intermediate conditions. The yellow to tawny-yellow blooms have very appealing



M. setacea

Grower and Photographer: V. Bayliss

shape and form and can be seen sometimes in profusion over the spring and summer months. As with *M. sanctae-inesae* each leaf can produce more than one bloom. Several hybrids have been made with *M. triangularis*, two of which are fairly widespread in New Zealand—*M. Doris* (*M. racemosa* x *M. triangularis*) and *M. Copper Angel* (*M. veitchiana* x *M. triangularis*).

Masdevallia wurdackii

One of the largest members of this group reaching 20cm or more tall. Similar to *M. replicata* and *M. setacea* in flower form with that long stretched look of the sepals, the plant, however, is taller and more robust. It is a striking species coming from a small area in northern Peru at 2,000m-2,500m, where it has a marked dry season, and so in cultivation must not be kept too wet



M. triangularis 'aurea'

Grower and Photographer: V. Bayliss

M. wurdackii

Grower: L. & R. Orchids

Photographer: V. Bayliss



over the winter months. Large distinctive blooms are held clear of the leaves and are around 20cm long including the tails.

Masdevallia xanthina

A miniature species from Colombia and Ecuador in damp forests at around 1,800m-2,500m which suggests cool to cool/intermediate treatment. The relatively large blooms vary from rich yellow to tawny-yellow, spotted or dusted with crimson towards the centre. This little plant grows well in cultivation and may produce blooms throughout the year.

That concludes the long-tailed Masdevallias of the sub-section Caudatae. We will look at other sub-sections of the genus in future issues.

At this point I will take the opportunity to acknowledge information gained from the wonderful publication *Thesaurus Masdevalliarum*. A series of volumes being published at the rate of two or



M. xanthina

Grower: L. & R. Orchids

Photographer: V. Bayliss

three per year describing all known species of *Masdevallia*. This series is being written by Carlyle A. Luer, W. Koniger and B. Wurstle, with water-colour illustrations by Anne Marie Trechlin. Needless to say future volumes are eagerly awaited.

*L. & R. Orchids
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The editors' lament —

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Wanganui Orchid Society 21st Birthday Show

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OCTOBER 8th - 9th 1988

A special feature will be displays from neighbouring societies and special displays by club members.

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-21st August
North Shore Training College Hall,
Akoranga Drive, Takapuna.

MARLBOROUGH ORCHID SOCIETY

25th, 26th, 27th August
St. Christophers Hall, Redwoodtown

ROTORUA ORCHID SOCIETY

27th, 28th August
Soundshell, Rotorua

HOWICK ORCHID SOCIETY

27th, 28th August
Howick Community Centre

WHANGAREI ORCHID SOCIETY

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

OTAGO ORCHID CLUB

3rd-4th September
St. Peters Church Hall,
Hillside Road, South Dunedin.

TAUPO ORCHID SOCIETY

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

AUCKLAND ORCHID CLUB

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

NORTH OTAGO ORCHID SOCIETY

10th, 11th September
R.S.A. Hall, Oamaru

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.

MANAWATU ORCHID SOCIETY

30th September-2nd October
Civic Complex, Palmerston North.

TARANAKI ORCHID SOCIETY

30th September-2nd October
St. Josephs Youth Centre,
Devon Street West, New Plymouth.

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.

CANTERBURY ORCHID SOCIETY

1st, 2nd October

WANGANUI ORCHID SOCIETY

8th, 9th October
Memorial Hall, Wanganui.

CYMBIDIUMS 'AU NATUREL'

Janice Larsen

In the January/February 1986 edition of 'Orchids in New Zealand' A. A. Haszard's article, 'A Case of National Pollination and Germination of Cymbidium Seed', caught my attention. Here was a description of one of the great attractions of growing orchids—the element of the unexpected. It reminded me of a somewhat similar experience which happened to us some years ago, and which is now inextricably connected to the folklore of our family.

In the early seventies, before we had been really bitten by the orchid bug, we were visiting some elderly orchid-growing friends. Our young daughter played outside for a while, and then ran in excitedly with a cymbidium back bulb she had found behind a greenhouse.

"Throw it away, it's dirty", said one of our friends. "Oh, let her keep it", said the other, indulgently, not wanting to spoil the child's pleasure.

So we brought the back bulb home, tended it and watched the young shoot grow into a handsome plant. We became orchid enthusiasts, our collection grew, as did our knowledge and experience, and one day we realised that our daughter's plant had virus! We hardened our hearts and despite the spike of flowers it bore, we threw the plant down into the bush on our section. There the bumble-bees found it and pollinated a flower. The months passed, and finally someone noticed a fat seed pod, ready to burst. We had heard that seed from virused plants does not carry the infection, and to test that theory (and the one that orchids can germinate without the help of science) my husband let the seed blow onto the sawdust on our shadehouse floor. He thought no more about the seeds until one day in 1980 (we have now lost track of how long this was after the seed was sown) he noticed small orchid plants on the sawdust floor. His first reaction was to wonder who had carelessly dropped mericlones on the

floor, but it didn't take him long to realise the plants' true identity. There were 5-6 short, sturdy plants with long fat healthy roots, firmly anchored in the sawdust. They were then rescued from the floor, potted up and each was labelled with our daughter's name 'Erna'. After five years of care, the first plant flowered—as spidery as a daddy-long-legs, and muddy pink, but with a beautiful scent which attracted every bee that happened to slip into the shadehouse. Unfortunately, our daughter had already travelled to Europe and missed the long-awaited first flowering. Last year, two more plants flowered, one an insignificant beige, but the other the culmination of a hybridiser's fantasy. The spike was tall and

Cym. Bumblebee's Choice
'Champagne Bubbles'



perfectly straight and the blooms so perfectly positioned, that I wished a lot of our cut flower clones would take notice. A star was born—and star-shaped it certainly was, but so eye-catching that orchid buff and uninitiated visitor alike could not resist a second glance, and wanted to know the story behind the bloom. The plant was rechristened to something much more pretentiously suitable—Bumblebee's Choice 'Champagne Bubbles', and the photo depicts it better than my words could do. By the way, none of the seedlings showed any sign of virus!

This story leads to a practical tip, which some growers may like to try—the raising of seedlings 'in the old fashioned way'. Many amateur growers would love to dabble in a bit of impetuous hybridising, but do not have the room to grow on even one flask of laboratory produced seedlings. Take the advice of T. H. Marshall printed in the article 'Bright Coloured Cymbidium from Seed', which was published in 'The Orchid Review', Volume 89, No. 1054, August 1981. He suggests scattering the seed onto live sphagnum moss growing around the base of a host plant—a cattleya has been just as effective for him as a cymbidium and a box of spent mix and old roots also worked well. Just remember to keep careful records of your crosses and exactly where and when each pod is sown. A seedling without a name can be lovely, but it is worthless, especially if you flower an award winner!

Producing a plant, which you have nurtured from the day of pollination to the moment when the first bud bursts open, gives a satisfaction which is very hard to match.

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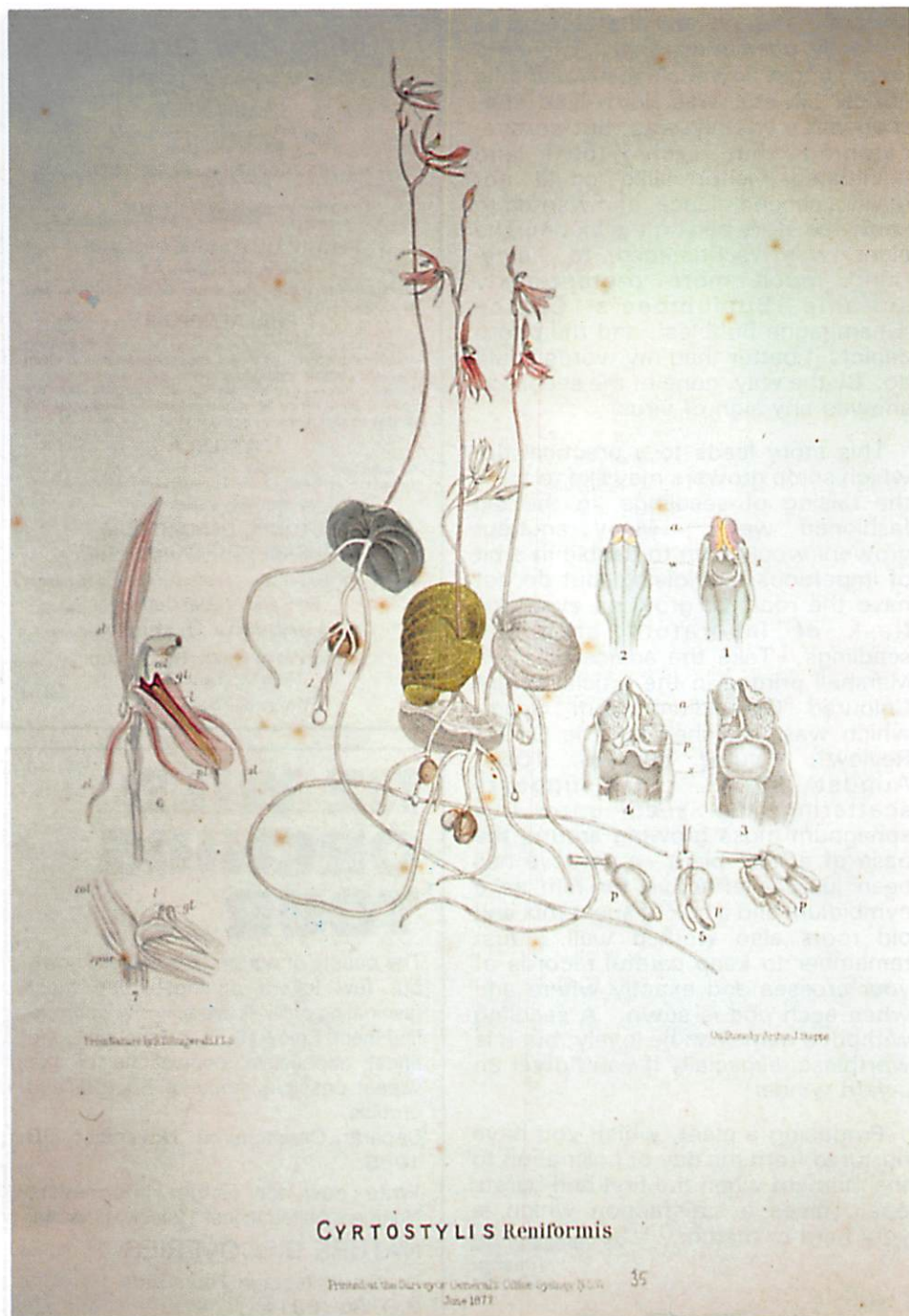
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CYRTOSTYLIS Reniformis

Printed at the Directorate of the Imperial University of St. Petersburg, 1877

35

Cryptostylis reniformis

15. ROBERT DESMOND FITZGERALD

(1830-1892)

Ian St. George

"Thanks to you the Australian orchids are now better known than those of any country outside Europe," wrote George Bentham of this man.

FitzGerald was an Irishman who arrived in Sydney in 1856. He was a surveyor, but a dedicated naturalist who successfully bridged the gap between amateur and professional botanist, a man whose hobby attained scientific standard and recognition. In Sydney, within a radius of a mile, he found sixty-two orchid species. He described many orchids in scientific journals, and even described one in the Sydney Morning Herald. Two orchids are named in his honour.

His great work was his *Australian orchids*, published between 1875 and 1894 in seven folio parts with 118 plates in all. The lithographic plates are exquisite, and include enlargements of his dissections, the drawings by FitzGerald himself, lithographed by the author and his friend Arthur J. Stopps, and coloured by various artists. J. D. Hooker considered it "a work which would be an honour to any country and to any Botanist". Full editions are now very rare, but the Auckland Museum Library has one. Many of the orchids are of course shared with New Zealand, and the plate shows *Acianthus reniformis*.

FitzGerald dedicated the first volume to Charles Darwin. In his introduction he made some elegantly argued points on self-fertilisation, thereby supporting Darwin's evolutionary theories—

"Mr Darwin's proposition regarding 'the contrivances by which orchids are fertilized' is, that they 'have for their main objects the fertilization of each flower by the pollen of another flower.' As far as I could investigate the subject in Australia, I have not been able altogether to verify this proposition; for though the great majority appear to be frequently impregnated by pollen brought from other flowers, I believe they are also frequently fertilized by their own . . . Closely allied species of the same genus differ in this respect; but through this difference—this difference and connection—such species as *Thelymitra carnea* and *ixioides*, in my opinion, strongly support Mr Darwin's theory of development. Much has been made of 'design', which might be viewed in different light, as adaptation. Certain parts of plants and animals being wonderfully designed (or adapted) for certain ends to the palpable benefit of such plant or animal, it is argued that their life or existence being dependant on such design, they must have been so created. But what, except *inheritance*, can account for the extension of similar parts to others where they are evidently useless? The flowers of *Thelymitra ixioides* are of a beautiful blue colour, and are borne in attractive spikes. In the centre of each flower is placed the stigma or female part of the flower; it resembles a shield, covered with viscid matter. At the top of it is inserted, in a notch, a little boss or button called the rostellum, connected with which, and behind the stigma, are the pollen masses, and on either side arms stretch out, supposed to attract and guide to the rostellum. Touch this rostellum, which is covered, as it were, with glue, with the point of a pin, and then withdraw it, and the pollen masses are at once withdrawn from behind the stigma. Return the pollen masses, now firmly attached to the point of the pin, again into the flower, and the greater part of them adhere to the viscid surface of the stigma, and the flower is fertilised. Such is the process, and the only one, by which it can be impregnated; but in nature the proboscis, or some part of an insect, acts as the pin has done in the experiment. Left to themselves, in a bell-glass, not one flower of *Thelymitra ixioides* will produce seed.

Plate. *Acianthus reniformis*, handcoloured lithograph "From Nature by R. D. FitzGerald FLS" and "On Stone by Arthur J. Stopps", ca 1880. From R. D. FitzGerald's *Australian orchids*.

"Can there be a more perfect example of predetermined design? The bright colour to attract the insect—the arms to guide it—the projecting rostellum for it to touch—the viscid

matter on the rostellum to adhere to the visitor—and the expanded shield-like stigma, covered in its turn with gum to lay hold of the pollen, when the insect either returns its head in search of honey or visits another flower, perhaps on the same spike. What trace is there of development? It is a well-adapted whole: a whole adapted to one end.

"Now examine another species of the same genus, *Thelymitra carnea*. The flowers are of a bright pink. Here are the extended arms—the shield-like stigma—the sticky rostellum and the pollen masses behind the glutinous stigma; but there is a slight modification; the pollen masses are not only behind but over the stigma, and crumble upon it whilst yet in bud, thereby fertilizing the flower, which seldom opens, and never until after fertilization. What has become of the picture of design? For what is the colour in the flowers, seeing that they so rarely open, and then to no purpose? For what are the arms? What use is the rostellum? Without their aid, *Thelymitra carnea* is far more fertile than *T. ixioides*, in fact, every flower produces seed. Why are all those parts, so necessary in *T. ixioides*, present in *T. carnea*? Can they be accounted for by any other explanation than relationship through inheritance?"

45 Cargill Street
Dunedin

BOOK REVIEW

"Modern Orchid Growing for Pleasure and Profit"

Editor: Wayne K. Harris

Publisher: Orchid Club of South Australia Inc., 1987 \$A19.50 from Orchid Club of South Australia Inc., Box 730, G.P.O. Australia 5001, South Australia.

This volume consists of the lectures given at the 10th Australian Orchid Conference 1986. It contains much useful information, aimed perhaps more at the experienced grower or the commercial grower, rather than the beginner or those with "just a few plants on the porch".

The book is divided into five major sections. The first one deals with Cymbidiums, with a look at a commercial operation in South Africa and a review of Australian hybridising in this genus. The highly automated and technical approach to cut-flower

production in Holland is discussed in detail, followed by a look at the Gallup and Stribling operation in California. The Dutch attitude to the flower trade is covered, and the section ends with a paper on the very different Japanese way with Cymbidiums.

The second section covers Australian native orchids. With the exception of one paper on hybridising and growing Australian epiphytes, which will interest many New Zealand growers, the remaining five articles deal with terrestrial orchids and thus are aimed at a limited, but enthusiastic, market. There are some excellent papers in this section.

Section Three covers the vexed question of orchid conservation. One paper examines the problems involved in this matter, a second looks at practical aspects as practiced at Kew Gardens. Mexican orchids, their habitats and cultivation are followed by a review of the *Paphiopedilum* species introduced to cultivation over the past decade. The section closes with an article on endemic species from the Philippines, with emphasis on *Phalaenopsis*.

Section Four covers a miscellany including a most useful paper on growing the *Odontoglossum* alliance in Northern California, a look at the colourful small-growing *Cattleyas* popular in Japan, and a history and description of the orchid cut-flower industry in Thailand.

The final section covers orchid judging, with papers presenting views on judging from the U.S.A., the U.K., New Zealand and Australia. Needless to say, there are some forthrightly expressed opinions here!

The book contains thirty pages of colour illustrations, some of good quality, others rather disappointing. There are numerous black and white illustrations, which are also variable in quality. At 152 pages, the book represents good value for money.

N. C. Miller

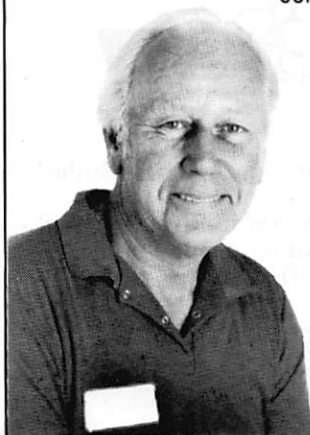
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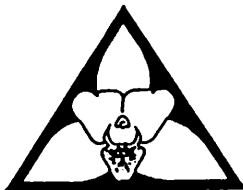
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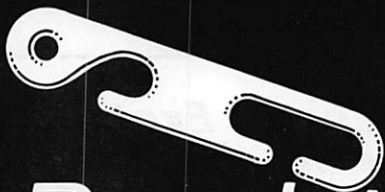
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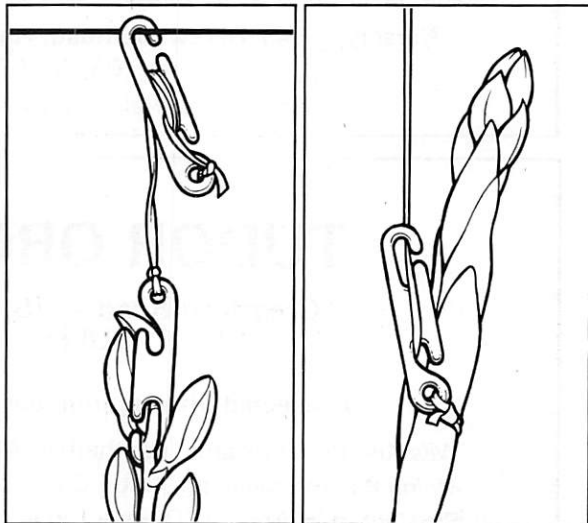
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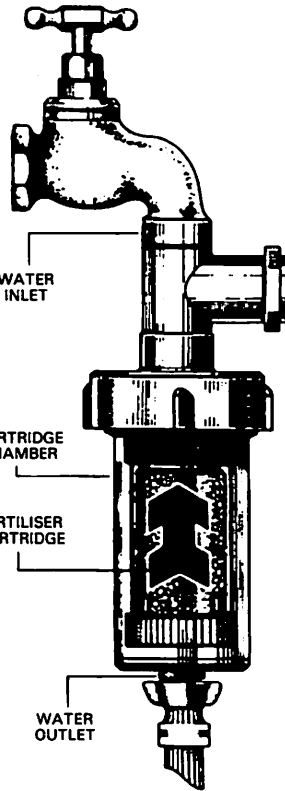
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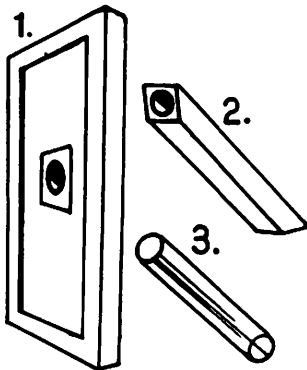
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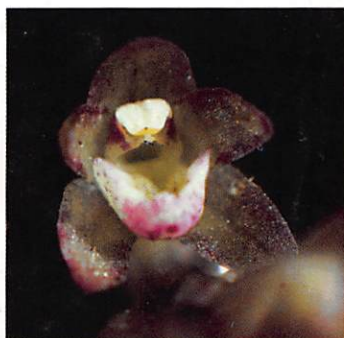
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