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# ORCHIDS OF NEW ZEALAND

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**COVER PHOTO:**

Brassavola cucullata — photo by courtesy George Fuller. Approximately 15 species in this showy family. Found West Indies, Mexico and Central America to northern South America.

# VANDACEOUS ORCHIDS

by Barry Paget Australia

Continued from last issue.

Vandas have long been hybridised in various parts of the world and using many of the colourful species such as *Vanda luzonica*, *Vanda tricolour*, etc. The species which has influenced vandaceous breeding most is *Euanthe sanderana*, a Philippine species of rounded form. It has passed this desirable form on to most of its progeny and in doing so it has developed a strain of hybrids which are considered the ultimate in shape and colour. Hawaii had long been the breeding centre for vandaceous hybrids. Around 1970 Bangkok hybridists, using stock originating in Hawaii, continued the development of these hybrids and today we have hybrids which are consistently of fine form and colour. Most of today's stud plants have a very high percentage of *Euanthe sanderana* in their background. Apart from improvements in the basic coloured forms of pink, blue and yellow a whole new range of colours has been developed. Colour in itself is now a greater priority than shape which is consistently good. The semi-terete and quarter-terete hybrids have been developed primarily for the cut flower trade. While a number of worth-while hybrids are available further line breeding with these is blocked by a sterility barrier. The Josephine van Brero hybrids and Emma van Deventer hybrids are very difficult to hybridise and if any seed is obtained it is very low in yield.

Using the cool growing *Ascocentrum* species from Thailand a whole new range of intergeneric hybrids has emerged. The brightly

coloured blooms of the *Ascocentrum* species have passed this quality on to their hybrids, at the same time reducing the size of the plant and the size of the blooms. This has made this group of orchids more acceptable as a "pot-plant." These hybrids range in colour from blue, purple, mulberry, red, orange and yellow with many combinations of these. Since the first such hybrid, *Ascda. Portia Dolittle* (*Ascmtm. curvifolium* X *V. lamellata*) in 1949, some very desirable first generation hybrids have been developed. These include the hybrids *Meda Arnold*, *Ophelia*, *Yip Sum Wah*. Some disappointment has been expressed about the early results of this type of breeding. These hybrids were to provide the building blocks for future generations of hybrids which have been more consistent in their quality. Following the establishment of this first generation hybrid, breeding proceeded in two directions. One school of thought was to cross these hybrids with the *Ascocentrum* species to further reduce the size of the plant. *Ascda. Eileen Beauty* is one such hybrid where the intense red colour of *Ascmtm curvifolium* has been reinforced. The other school of thought was to cross the first generation hybrids with vandas to increase the size of the blooms, and, to some extent, the size of the plant: These second generation hybrids are most satisfactory in that the plant size is manageable in most orchid houses and the blooms carry through the bright colours, influenced by the *Ascocentrum*

blood line. To some, these hybrids are considered the ultimate in this type of breeding, being of good shape, bright colours, and of reduced plant size. Further line breeding has continued, using vandas with second generation *Ascocenda* hybrids to produce third generation hybrids. Some of these are growing as large as their vanda parents, but the brighter range of colours is being carried through to the hybrids. Ultimately the *Ascocenda* hybrids will reach the size of their vanda parents, both vegetatively and florally, but this line breeding will maintain a range of colours, degrees brighter than their vanda parents. I feel there is a need to maintain breeding plants of second generation hybrids, or first generation hybrids, for there will always be a call for such hybrids. Human nature demands that all tastes must be satisfied.

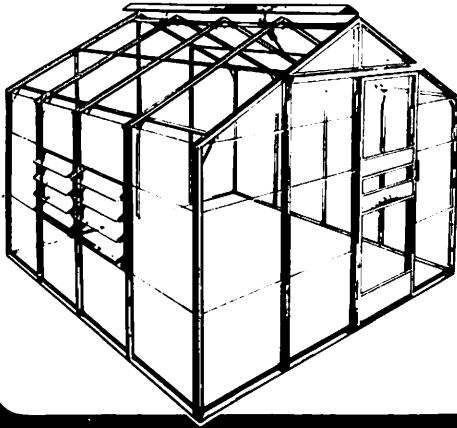
Many other intergeneric hybrids are being developed, using other vandaceous genera such as *Renanthera*, *Arachnis*, *Phalaenopsis*, *Aerides*. Many of these were originally used for cut-flowers production, producing such spray-type orchids as *Arandas*, *Renantandas*, *Aeridachnis* etc . . . By line breeding many of the early hybrids have been improved immensely in form and colour, as well as flower production. The focus here has been on to *Ascocendas*, reducing the size of plants and intensifying colour. This type of breeding is very often quite difficult especially where widely differing parents are used. The amount of seed produced in some of these hybrids is very small, though the development of green pod and embryo culture have assisted in germination of such hybrids. Many

of the intergeneric hybrids are highly speculative but, as with the early *Ascocenda* hybrids, these will not doubt provide some building block for future generations of intergeneric hybrids. Some very interesting advances have appeared in breeding *Phalaenopsis* with various other genera. Perhaps some of the intergeneric hybrids being produced today will not be more than interesting novelties. The future is an open book.

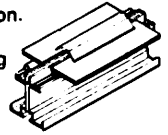
The way is long in improving earlier hybrids. All new intersectional hybrids are speculative in origin, but without man's inquisitive nature and his desire to experiment, we would be without the very desirable *Ascocenda* hybrids we have today. Commercial competition in this type of breeding is very strong and, as new hybrids bloom on smaller plants, the best of these, in turn, are being used to produce further hybrids. One benefit of such intense breeding is that plants are making their initial flower spikes on smaller plants than they did some years ago. Vandaceous orchids have become very popular with orchid growers. The range of shapes and colours, as well as flower form, is almost infinite. Their free-flowering habit has endeared these hybrids to many who have been accustomed to once a year blooming in other genera. The future holds so much hope for breeders in these lines of plants and the possibilities in generic combinations are endless. Our own Australian species in the *Sarcanthinae* section remain almost untouched and breeding here offers endless possibilities. I feel sure that the surface in vandaceous breeding is still barely scratched, the challenge lies before us.

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# Heating Without Power

Phil Mayhead, 360 Carrington St., New Plymouth

I have grown cool-growing genera such as *Odontoglossums*, *Laelias*, *Bifrenaria*, *Cymbidiums*, etc, for some years without any heat being used. Each year in Winter and early Spring when we have frosts the temperature in the glasshouse drops overnight to freezing or slightly below, to about  $-1^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Apart from slowing down the growth cycle this hasn't killed any of the genera mentioned, although flowers on *Laelias* and *Cattleyas* are damaged. The pansy *Miltonia* group, the cool growing section, react dramatically when they experience the first frost, by mid-morning they are a wet grey colour and by late-afternoon have collapsed in a soggy sloshy mess on top of the pot. Paradoxically, the so-called warmer growing group that I have such as *Miltonia clowesii*, *spectabilis*, *Wm Kirsch*, etc. grow and flower reasonably well. This is explained of course by the fact that most of the pansy *Miltonia* species come from the high Andes, where the remarkable narrow temperature range of  $10^{\circ}\text{C}$  —  $20^{\circ}\text{C}$  is experienced, with the plants being under stress when these temperatures are exceeded, either below or above. The Brazilian *Miltonias* of course stand warm summers, and seemingly are fairly hardy as well.

During the last year or so I have become more interested in the *Oncidium Alliance*; as I think *Odont*, *Oncidium*, and *Miltonia* inter-generics, etc, have a grand future; and also in the growing of such seedlings from flasks.

These plants, particularly the seedlings, do need protection from very low temperatures and the recommended low minimum of  $10^{\circ}\text{C}$  should be aimed for, with even  $15^{\circ}\text{C}$  minimum for the babies from the flasks. My glasshouse is a lean-to type, concrete block wall on the South side, glass on the other three walls, and the roof is Novarroof.

Some form of supplementary heating was therefore required — but what? On checking with other local growers to see what was being used, and on reading a variety of magazines and books, both New Zealand and overseas, on glasshouse heating there were several options available. First of all electricity. Without doubt I should think the most efficient of all forms of heating is the electrical fan heater. These quickly circulate heated air, and also have the advantage that you can rig up a thermostat so that it just runs the fan to circulate the air when a desired upper limit is reached on a warm day, for instance say  $23^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

Also, the air can be blown through a 'wet pad' arrangement with a little thought, so you get a higher humidity. Disadvantage in my case — no power to the far end of the section where the glasshouse is situated, the cost of the unit, and of course — the 42% price rise in electricity charges.

Natural gas was investigated, especially as our street was recently reticulated, but again "joining" fees, the costs of running the pipeline up to the glasshouse

and the cost of the heater unit itself didn't make for an economical situation.

"Solid" gas seemed a viable proposition. In the April—May 1978 Newsletter of the Whangarei Orchid Society there is a report given by Mrs McCullough on heating in her Solar glasshouse, here are some extracts —

"The heater is thermostatically controlled around 70°F (22°C) and gives off carbon dioxide fumes which the plants like.

Q. What does gas heat?

A. It has a flame which when temperature drops burns hotter.

Q. Is it expensive to run?

A. Cost approximately \$9 every three weeks over the winter months. Gas bottle lasts three months in summer."

Kerosene heating, one of the cheapest methods investigated, but oh dear, what bad reports in The Orchid Review re bud dropping, etc. Kath and Gordon Bruce, who live further up the road, use an old water boiler, originally used in Schools years ago. Their boiler, uses bits of wood and scraps from his trade as a carpet-layer — the hot water is directed into what could be best described as a covered indoor swimming pool. They grow Phalaenopsis in this section, but disadvantages are no thermostatic control and daily "stoking." They also have a household water heater and thermostat unit in the water for when they are away on holiday, or when it is too wet to attend the boiler.

Tom French has a fully automated oil-fired furnace but his comments about the cost rises of home-heating oil put me off this as well.

At this stage of indecision I read the following small article in The NZ Orchid Review, the magazine of The NZ Orchid Society, June 1978. "An elderly gentleman heats his glasshouse with fresh grass clippings, mixed with a sprinkling of dried blood. Put into a large black polythene bag. Place the bags beneath the benches. The heat of the composting grass clippings rises to heat your plants. The mixture is changed every 10 days or so. And there you have heat and almost instant compost for your garden. (I wondered about holes in the plastic bag)." The next day when I cut the lawn I put one 'catcher-full' in a clear plastic bag, added blood and bone (had no dried blood) tied the top and put in the glasshouse, on the floor. Nothing happened. Even after a week. A check with the bulk of the clippings in the compost showed them to be very hot under the surface. Two dark blue plastic rubbish bags were bought and the lawns were duly cut again. Dried fowl manure was mixed in this time, and each bag took three catcher-fulls, with the top tied on one. Again — no heat. A check with George Fuller, who is the Vice President of the Soil Association of New Zealand, suggested that they should be "working," and that the three essential requirements are oxygen, moisture and organic material, also there are several micro-organisms involved, each type working at different temperatures.

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## HUTT VALLEY ORCHID CIRCLE

Orchid display at the Hutt Valley Horticultural Society Spring Show, September 15th and 16th, 1979.



# 1980 CONFERENCE

181 overseas growers have indicated their intention of attending our Conference next year. 59 New Zealanders have so far replied. With such an enthusiastic response, it is clear that numbers may have to be restricted to manageable proportions. If you wish to attend, please request that your name be placed on the list for registration forms. The address is: The Conference Secretary, P.O. Box 33-493, Takapuna, Auckland, 9.

Display space for the 1980 National Show needs to be booked immediately. The areas are flexible but are broadly speaking divided into 80 sq ft. (Maximum), 50 sq ft. (Maximum) or 40 sq ft. (Maximum). Society exhibits can be either 40 sq ft. or 80 sq ft., individual, group or commercial exhibits are 50 sq ft. We now need to know your preference for pillar, wall, or free-standing display areas, so that the Show Committee for next year can plan for Ellerslie.

A detailed budget indicates we need in the vicinity of \$60,000 to stage the event. It is a substantial amount, but much of it is comprised of air fares and accommodation for our speakers, and this cost will be considered in setting the registration fee. Another major item is the provision of quality souvenirs which must be purchased in advance. We anticipate a ready market and some considerable profit from these. Many other costs such as hire of the venue and provision of ancillary lighting will not have to be met until the conclusion of the Show, which we are confident will attract many thousands to Ellerslie. Now is the

time to persuade your friends and neighbours to take their annual holiday in Auckland in mid-October, 1980. It is your job to be our ambassadors!

We can report that we have now —(1) Appointed a professional public relations man to promote the Conference; (2) The menu for the banquet has been chosen; (3) Presentations to our speakers have been selected and ordered; (4) A film slide programme has been prepared, shown in England, and will go to Australia with a North Shore Society group in October; (5) The Conference badge has been designed and ordered; (6) The Conference calendar is in its first stages of production.

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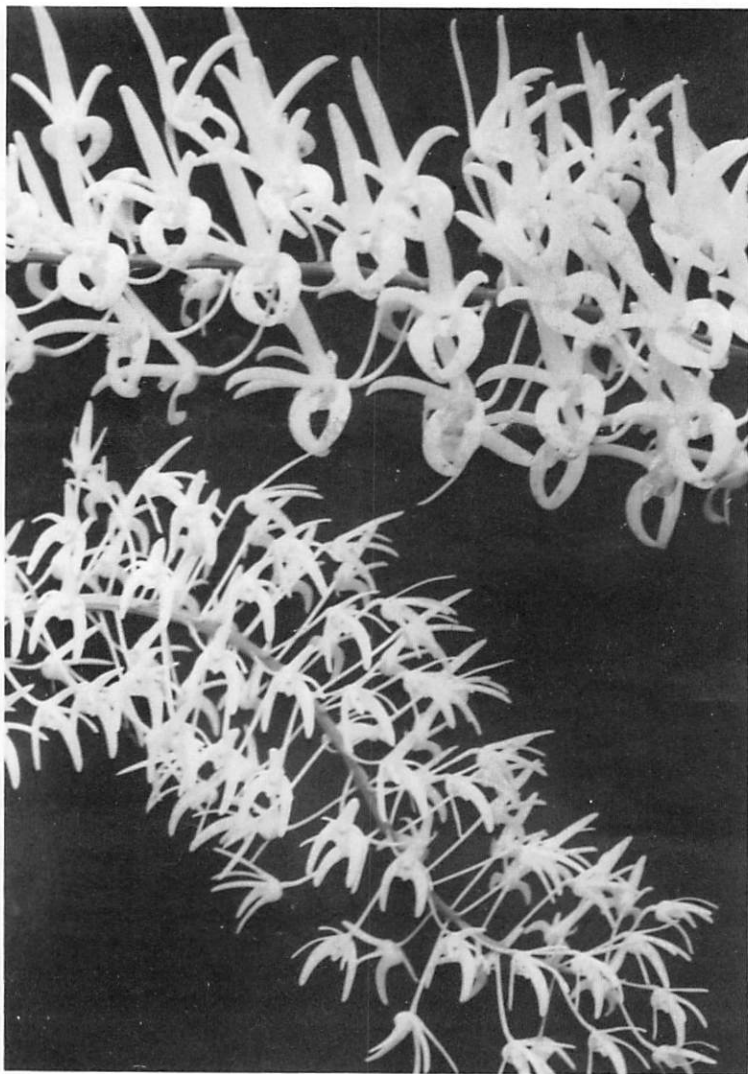
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**PUKEKURA CORNER**

By George Fuller, N.D.H. [N.Z.],  
Curator Pukekura Park, New Plymouth.



**Dendrobium speciosum Sm.**

Most references I have heard or read about this Australian species don't go very far before words like 'handsome' 'spectacular' and 'magnificent' are used, usually concerning the size of the specimen plant in bloom. Over forty years ago Tom French senior had a giant specimen growing outside at the base of a tree beside his residence near New Plymouth. I have never forgotten the plant I photographed at Mr Fred Parkers' in 1968 which from a 30cm tub produced arching spikes which spanned almost 2m. I read of plants in Australia bearing over 100 spikes, each over 50cm long and with more than 100 blooms. Convincing enough.

Distribution is along the eastern seaboard of Australia from northern Victoria north. Hawkes records it in New Guinea also. The habit of growing in full exposure on rocky out-crops has earned it the common name of 'Rock Orchid'.

The pseudobulbs are best described as shaped like a large bulls horn, tapering fairly abruptly and up to 75cm tall, topped by three to five leathery leaves. Flower spikes emerge terminally or from leaf axils. There are numerous variants, the most notable being *D. spec. var hillii* which apparently grows more on trees than rocks in the vicinity of the N.S.W. — Queensland border. Almost white, whereas typical forms are usually cream to yellow, this one is the lower spike in the illustration. Form of the bloom is lighter and smaller but the plant is easily recognised out of bloom also through having cylindrical less tapered pseudobulbs which are more

slender and taller (up to almost 1m). Both make 'magnificent specimens' when well grown which raises a point — how do we grow them?

In my experience they resent upheavel and to split up a large specimen is tantamount to invoking the disapproval of an aboriginal medicine man. Any potting mix or substance must be very free draining and over-potting should be avoided for the roots are best exposed — in fact *var. hillii* in particular will send roots up vertically from the mix as if in an act of disdain! (Think of the rock face habitat, or 40m up a blue gum!)

New growths are massive, their appearance should be associated with ample watering and feed. Maximum sun short of actual burning is desirable — in fact in outside frost-free corners facing north where some protection can be given from winter rains this tough species would probably thrive, even if leaves appear somewhat bleached.

There is a flowering characteristic which I wish more orchids showed. If you boob one year you may get a second chance, for each pseudobulb is capable of sending up flower spikes for several years. If you have a mature plant which has not flowered, try increasing light to a maximum and winter watering to a minimum and you may be in for a 'big' surprise of the 'spectacular' kind. Our plants bloom in September—October.

Oh, yes! and 'speciosum' means beautiful.

# DENDROBIUM — nobile type

by Jack Hart — Auckland

**Dendrobium nobile type:** Let's be clear that the following notes apply to the nobile type Dendrobium only. Some other Dendrobiums need similar treatment but many others require different conditions. These Dendrobes are known as the "soft-cane type."

**Origin and climate:** In the wild they grow (or perhaps grew) in the Himalayas, South China, Thailand, Laos, Viet Nam, Taiwan. But in the mountains they are subjected to a distinct hot, wet "summer" and a dry, cool winter.

**Culture for Adult plants:** Because of the two opposing seasons we must endeavour to duplicate the conditions experienced by the plants in their homelands. Our Auckland climate is well suited to these orchids as we have the warmth and the watering hose available in summer and a reasonably cool winter. But in winter they should be sheltered from the rain! As a rule of thumb, the plants should be dried off gradually on or about Anzac Day — end April. Ideally, the year's growth should be finished by then, the year's growth showing their terminal leaf. The plants should be kept outside — but frost free, — under cover (glass, novarroof, etc) to receive maximum winter light, but no rain. They don't mind wind but as older plants have long canes (up to 4ft) watch they don't blow over. I hang mine under a novarroof-covered carport where they can get plenty of light and sway in the wind.

A watering (no feed) once a month — on a warm, bright day — will prevent the canes from shrivelling too much. When the nodes on the leafless canes begin to swell you can start counting how many flowers you are going to enjoy. Each node should produce two, usually three, flowers.

When August arrives move the plants to a warmer environment (about 60 F/16 C) by day (55 F/13 C) by night. If you don't have a glasshouse with heat take them inside the house and hang them up behind a sunny window. If the temperature is somewhat higher than those stated above the flowers will develop quicker. Flowering time can be fairly accurately determined by experimenting each year and keeping records of when the 'cool' period ends, temperatures provided after the 'cool' period and the date flowering commences. As a rough guide it takes 5—7 weeks approximately from the time the plants are afforded more warmth, to flowering. If records are kept, it will be possible to regulate the flowering period to coincide with the shows.

Flowers are long lasting — up to one month on the plant if kept shaded and relatively cool. Watering commences gradually after the cool period, but feeding should be delayed until there is some spring warmth.

Sometimes before, but usually after, flowering, the new shoot(s) will appear . . . these canes will develop during the early summer and often further new canes will show in Dec/Jan. The late comers

will not reach their full growth during the summer . . . they will retain their leaves during the winter slow their growth to a virtual standstill in the 'dry' period and take off again in the spring, reaching maturity the following autumn.

Watering should be frequent, two or, in hot weather, three times a week in summer.

**Pots:** These can be clay or plastic, but if using plastic, enlarge the drainage holes. My personal preference is clay because it will dry out quickly in summer and the occasional watering in winter, provided it is done on a relatively warm day, will not keep the mix wet for long.

Do not overpot — especially young plants.

**Mix:** Not critical but it must be quick draining. Although 'crocking' is now regarded to be out of date, I prefer to have a good layer of coarse drainage material in the bottom of the pot.

Mix can consist of any coarser material that is used for potting orchids or a combination thereof. Dendrobies have thin but very strong, wiry roots which often stray outside the pots. Equal amounts of bark, polystyrene chips or balls (or coarse pumice) with some charcoal and some chunks of fibrous peat or sphagnum moss. Add some Magamp.

**Feeding:** Commencing November, about every second or third watering use a weak solution of a low nitrogen fertiliser. Foliar feeding is beneficial. Make sure that the pots are thoroughly flushed with water only, between feeds to clean away any salt deposits — specially if clay pots are used. Taper off with feeding towards the end of April and do not feed at all until next Spring.

**Pests & Disease:** Dendrobies do not seem to have more disease problem than any other orchid. Sometimes black spots appear on the odd leaf which should be cut off to prevent spreading. However, bugs, contrary to what you read in orchid books, seem to have a liking for these plants in the Auckland area. Therefore, be a little more prepared for the bugwar than you would be with Cymbidiums. Young plants kept inside may be attacked by mealy bug — remove with a small artist's brush dipped in methylated spirits.

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VALE

## KENNETH ARNOLD BLACKMAN

The passing of Ken Blackman on May 7, 1979 is a sad loss to all orchid growers in New Zealand who knew him. Ken, always a keen horticulturist, turned to the cultivation of orchids over twenty years ago. During this time he acquired a great deal of knowledge which he willingly passed on to others. This extended to working on the Committee set up to formulate the Judging Rules and Standards for the Orchid Council of New Zealand Awards. For some years he held Executive posts with the New Zealand Orchid Society and in particular turned his talents to the show and exhibition field.

Our deepest sympathy to his wife and family.

# NEW ZEALAND INDIGENOUS ORCHIDS

by Albert H. Blackmore  
(Continued from last issue)

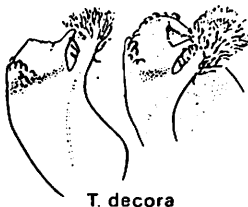
Fig. 6. *Thelymitra*. Flower followed by Columns from side; also from back (*T. formosa*, *T. intermedia*), from above (*T. carnea*, *T. Ixioides*, *T. pauciflora*), from front (*T. dentata* with right-hand column-arm removed, *T. longifolia*), and bisected longitudinally (*T. longifolia*).

9 **THELYMITRA** has twelve species in New Zealand, *carnea*, *decora*, *dentata*, *formosa*, *halchii*, *intermedia*, *ixioides*, *longifolia*, *matthewsii*, *pauciflora*, *pulchella* and *venosa*. They are terrestrial.



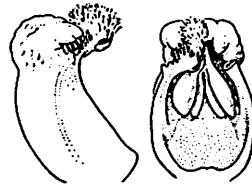
*T. carnea*

(a) *carnea*, found north of 39 degrees latitude. Flower creamy red during October and November.



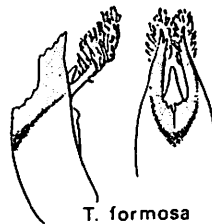
*T. decora*

(b) *decora* found in both Islands from clay banks in Marlborough-Nelson coasts to 1000-1500m base of Ngauruhoe and summit of Mt. Kakaramea. Flowers lavender blue with darker spots especially on petals. Flowers October to December.



*T. dentata*

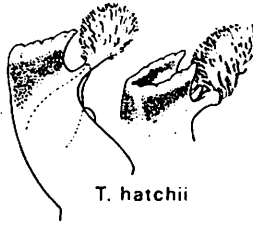
(c) *dentata*, found in both Islands on clay and peaty soils. Flowers pinkish to very pale lavender or blue with strong blue stripes especially on petals. Flowers October and November.



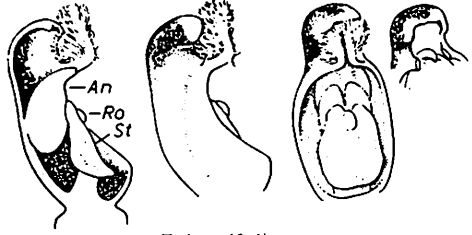
*T. formosa*

(d) *formosa*, found in both Islands in clayey open forests and scrub. Flowers blue in December.





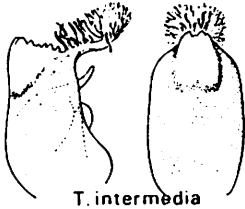
*T. hatchii*



*T. longifolia*

- (e) *hatchii*, found 38 degrees latitude southward, widespread in open and grassy places. Flowers pink and blue without stripes or spots. Flowers November and December.

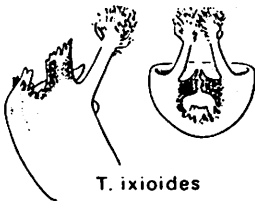
- (h) *longifolia*, found in both Islands on rocks, banks and open ground from maritime to sub-alpine. Flowers reddish green externally, internally white, occasionally pink no stripes or spots in October and November.



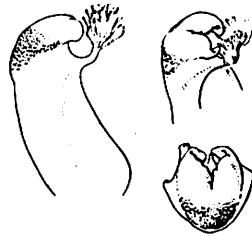
*T. intermedia*

- (i) *matthewsii*, found near Kaitaia on the low hills between Lake Tongongoe and the coast. Flowers dark purplish blue with darker veins during October and November.

- (f) *intermedia*, found near Auckland and further north in scrublands. Flowers as with *hatchii* pink and blue without stripes or spots. Flowers October to December.



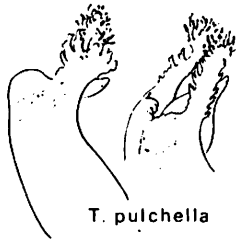
*T. ixioides*



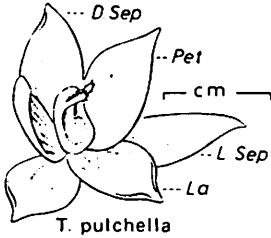
*T. pauciflora*

- (g) *ixioides*, found in both Islands in scrublands. Flowers blue with darker spots in October and November.

- (j) *pauciflora*, found on both Islands north of Canterbury on sunny banks and rough grasslands. Flowers lilac-pink during October and November.

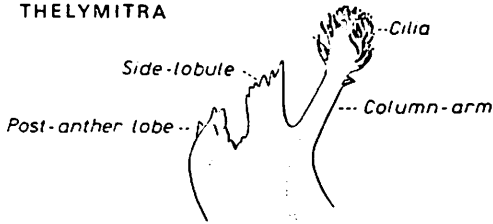


T. pulchella

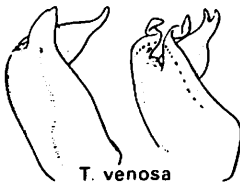


T. pulchella

THELYMITRA

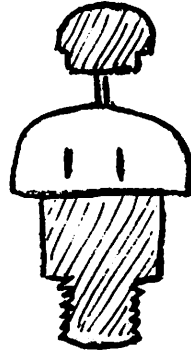


- (k) pulchella, found on both Islands in clay banks, gumlands to boggy places. Flowers between blue and pink with strong blue stipes. Flowers October and November.



T. venosa

- (l) venosa, found in both Islands mostly in poorly drained sites. Flowers most commonly blue, less commonly white, occasionally wholly pink. Flowers January.



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Kumēu

# IMPORTATION OF ORCHIDS

by A.F. Rainbow, Officer-in-Charge, Ministry  
of Agriculture and Fisheries

- 1 There is currently considerable interest in the growing of Cymbidium orchid blooms for export and this has led to some new developments in importing policy.
- 2 Hitherto there has been an annual limit of 2,000 orchid plants per importer per year but only rarely has the full quota been introduced. With the current interest in export MAF has been asked to increase these limits to enable exporters to increase their number of plants quickly to take advantage of the export market.
- 3 MAF has therefore agreed to increase the limit by an additional 2,000 Cymbidium pseudobulbs (back-bulbs) per importer provided:
  - a. the application is accompanied by a signed statement from the importer that the Cymbidium pseudobulbs are for the purpose of producing cut flowers for export.
  - b. the pseudobulbs are dormant when imported i.e. free from foliage.
  - c. the pseudobulbs are accompanied by a health certificate endorsed to the effect that the bulbs were taken from plants inspected during active growth and found substantially free from injurious pests and diseases including virus diseases.
  - d. the pseudobulbs are subjected to an insecticidal dip on arrival in New Zealand. The dip (of maldison and carbaryl, each product at 1g active ingredient per litre water (or 1.6 oz in 10 gals)) to be given by the importer immediately the pseudobulbs are received, under the supervision of an officer of MAF. If pests are found by the Port Agriculture Officer on arrival, treatment will be carried out at the port.
- 4 The pseudobulbs are to be held in quarantine for the minimum three month period and until they have made reasonable growth, usually one fully expanded leaf.
- 5 Present limits for such importers will therefore be 2,000 plants plus 2,000 dormant Cymbidium pseudobulbs, or the plants can be replaced by pseudobulbs in any proportion up to a maximum of 4,000 Cymbidium pseudobulbs.
- 6 Because Cymbidiums may not be grown under glass, large consignments of imported plants/pseudobulbs must be kept well isolated (think in terms of 50 metres) from local plants. If the imported plants are to be grown in a greenhouse (this excludes "screen houses") the isolation distance may be reduced to 10 metres. No other plants may be held in a greenhouse whilst it is holding plants in quarantine.
- 7 MAF has also agreed to the importation of a small number of pseudobulbs from which the importer would take his own

meristem cultures. Such importations will require a permit but, provided the meristems are taken under supervision of a Field Officer and the pseudobulbs then surrendered for destruction, the meristem cultures need not be kept in quarantine. If the importer wishes to keep the pseudobulbs in case the meristems are a failure, the pseudobulbs will be subject to the normal quarantine requirements.

- 8 There has been no change in policy whereby orchid plants may be imported growing under sterile conditions in flasks or similar containers. Such importations can continue without a prior permit to import and without the need to be grown in post entry quarantine.

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# ORCHIDS

by Janet Lennane P.B.; E.C.O.S.

To most people orchids are Cymbidiums but to me, orchids are Cattleyas. I didn't have a heated glass house and I'd been told I'd need one to grow Cattleyas.

I kept hearing about "someone" who had a Cattleya given to her and when it finished flowering, put it under a tree and when she next looked at it, it had a bud!

Given some money to buy "something you really want" I bought my first Cattleya in Napier and was told, "of course you can grow it cool," and once again I was told about the lady and the Cattleya under the tree. By now I'd been told that Bifoliate (two leaves on each pseudo-bulb) Cattleyas were easier

to grow cool; also I read every book I could find about growing orchids.

I then got the chance to buy two more Cattleyas and did so. How I nursed those three plants — put them on the kitchen table — there was a heater under it — stood them in ice-cream containers ¼ full of damp pumice.

Orchids talk to you, the books said. Maybe they do, but I couldn't understand them, and so they sat for weeks and looked sad. I took the saddest and put it in our Dormobile for a while, but was afraid to leave it there in case my husband drove off with it. Pity, as it was so warm in there.

It was now spring and I put my plants near a window, as I'd been told Cattleyas needed good light; shaded sunlight. By this time the Cattleya leaves looked like un-ironed silk. Not enough moisture in the air or no roots, the books said. I looked. Sure enough my plants didn't have any roots. Wrong treatment — air too dry — too much water during the winter — not enough sunlight. Maybe I was beginning to understand what my plants were saying to me. So I hung them up in the glass house in February, watered the floors every day but only watered the Catts when they felt dry and used a weak manure the next day. The roots started to grow, the leaves filled out and by April there was a flower bud showing! I lined the warmest corner of the glass house with plastic and kept my fingers crossed and after the winter my plant flowered.

Now two years later two of my plants have flowered twice; but I still haven't met the lady who grew hers under the tree.

The manure I used is as follows:

Mix five tablespoons of Alaska in one gallon of water. Use ½ cup of this in one gallon of water. Manure Cattleyas four out of five weeks. Water on the 5th week. Use Spring and Summer and once a month in Autumn and Winter.

## **BROKEN SHOOTS WITH NO ROOTS**

by R.J. Crawley, H.B.O.S.

Have you ever experienced the sudden horror when repotting one of your favourite Cymbidium or Paphiopedilum orchids of finding that you are left with only a shoot and no sign of any roots, or the back bulb of a Cymbidium has rotted? Do not despair. This happened on two occasions to me and not wishing to loose these shoots I have tried the following with success.

The Cymbidium shoot I put in a small pot of sand mixed with a little potting mixture and kept the mixture just slightly damp. After some months of patient waiting, new leaf growth was noticed; the shoot when first potted was only about 3cm long and it is now 8cm long and has two very strong roots.

The Paphiopedilum which was only 2cm long and also without roots, had only the first leaf opening. It was put into a container of pure potting mixture some four months ago and now has three leaves, the longest about 10cm and to my pleasure its first root nearly 2½cm long. Neither of these pots had drainage holes, so I just kept the mixture slightly damp to dry and was rewarded with a plant, saved from what has been considered a hopeless situation.

Try it, it could be worth your while.

## **AWARD OF HONOUR**

**To Mr Albert H. Blackmore for outstanding services to the Orchid Council and Orchid growing in New Zealand.**

This is a fitting tribute to Mr Blackmore who took a leading part in the formation of the Council and was Chairman of the Committee set up to establish Judging Rules and Standards and then appointed the first Registrar General. Albert has given willingly of his vast knowledge and experience to the advantage of all orchid growers in New Zealand.

## **CATTS IN THE GLASSHOUSE**

J. Mendoza

Add cats (felix) to your list of glasshouse pests. Our cat was recently accidentally shut in our small glasshouse. He apparently got peckish and decided to sample the products. Result — about 10 small Cattleyas eaten, a dozen larger chewed and spat out. Hardcane Dendrobiums were tasted, but only one Phalaenopsis had a bite out of one leaf. Paphiopedilums were tipped out of pots, but otherwise untouched.

Deduction — orchids in descending order of merit on cats menu : 1, Cattleyas; 2, Dendrobiums; 3, Phalaenopsis; 4, Paphiopedilums.

Conclusion — Cats eat Catts.

Resolution — Keep cat out of glasshouse.

## Backbulbs & growth of two choice clones.

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**Argyll "Cooksbridge" AM/RHS \$15 each**

Eye stopping light green with attractive red overlay and red blushed lip. 12 and more flat flowers of excellent shape.

### Seedling flasks

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A remake of a successful cross which is giving nice apricots to golds \$25.

**Janet Marion (Vieux Rose "DP" x Etta Barlow "Opalescent" FCC)**

Another remake of a cross which is giving excellent late pinks \$25.

### Mericlone flasks

**San Francisco "The Beat" late erect spiked polychrome \$35**

**Levis Duke "Bella Vista" AM champion late chartreuse with pink lip and a mass of flowers \$75**

### Species flasks

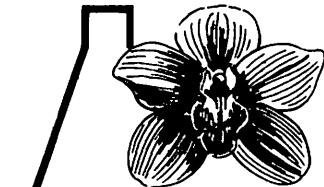
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7758 *late* SLEEPING DREAM 'TETRA GOLD' AM/RHS x SLEEPING LAMB 'GOLDEN TETRA' AM/AOS  
7760 *late* SLEEPING GIANT 'LATE SEPTEMBER' x SLEEPING DREAM 'TETRA GOLD' AM/RHS.

#### GREEN, YELLOW LIPS:

- 7703 *mid.* SLEEPING GIANT 'TETRA GREEN' x WYANGA 'ELANORA' AD  
7706 *mid.* SLEEPING LAMB 'GOLDEN TETRA' AM/AOS x WYANGA 'ELANORA' AD.

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7751 *late* ANN GREEN 'PLOTKINS RED' x VALLEY FLOWER 'TOBASCO'

#### YELLOWS:

- 7746 *mid.* VALLEY GEM 'PICADILLY' x WALLARA 'GOLDEN GLOW'  
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