

# ORCHIDS IN NEW ZEALAND



MAY/JUNE 1984

# Beck's . . .



## ORCHID MIXES

- |                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| ★ Proven       | ★ Fast Drainage |
| ★ Ready to use | ★ Screened      |
| ★ Free flowing | ★ Fertilised    |

BECK'S ORCHID MIX IS BAGGED IN DRY CONDITION AND SHOULD BE DAMPED PREFERABLY THE DAY BEFORE USE.



A. Beck, R.D.2, Ngatea, Hauraki Plains

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Linwood Orchids, Muriwai Rd, R.D.1, Waimauku

**Hastings:**

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# ORCHIDS IN NEW ZEALAND

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## COUNCIL 1983-84

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**Editor:** Mr G. Boon, 30B Waiwaka Terrace, New Plymouth

**Distribution:** Mrs B. Godwin, 47 Alton Avenue, Northcote, Auckland 9.

**Registrar General:**

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**COVER PHOTO:** SLC Brandywine 'Burgundy'. This lovely cattleya is in the collection of / Gordon Maney of Palmerston North.

# COUNCIL EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

*by Dorothy Cooper, Secretary O.C.N.Z.*

To bring everyone up to date with matters arising at the Council Executive Meetings during the year:

There are now **41 Orchid Societies** in New Zealand, and we welcomed three new affiliates to the Council. The Cymbidium Society of Australasia, North Otago Orchid Society, and Taupo Orchid Society — the last mentioned doing a magnificent job in supplying such wonderful hospitality at the Executive Meetings which have been held in Taupo every three months. I must admit I think the newer, smaller and obviously keener Societies, seem to have what it takes — way ahead of the older, larger more established Societies in efficiency!

**Advertising:** the last date for submission can be extended to within a couple of weeks of printing, as long as it is already in set form.

**New Rates** were set for advertising:

Full page — \$57.50

Half Page — \$31.50

Half Column — \$18.50

Colour advertising using a slide on the front cover is set at \$200.00 per issue with a quarter page acknowledgement inside.

For contract advertising rates for six consecutive issues, a 10% discount will apply, charges to be paid in advance.

These rates are to be reviewed for each volume.

**Subscription Rates** for the Journal will also rise as from the first issue of Volume 10 (July/August):

Bulk purchase rates will be \$6.50 per year (minimum 15 copies).

Individual subscription rates will be \$8.00 per year.

**1985 Conference:** There is a very efficient Committee working for this big event, and the following speakers have been confirmed:

Athol Bell, Sydney — Paphs

Dan Hatch, Auckland — N.Z. Natives

Keith Andrew, England — Odonts and Phalaes.

David Brundell — Ag. & Fish, Pukekohe — Cymbids.

Andrew Easton, Rotorua — Cymbids.

Wally Upton, Australia — Dendrobis in Australia.

Frank Fordyce, California — Mini Cattleyas.

Regular advertising brochures are being sent out by the Committee and Societies have pledged over \$16,000 towards this great event for next year!! Thank you all for your generosity.

A delegation is just off to Miami to put our case for holding the **1990 World Conference** in Auckland. They are taking with them a magnificent brochure and other advertising material on New Zealand, and we all hope they are successful. By the time this article gets published, we shall know the results!

The Australian Orchid Council wrote a very generous letter of support for our case to the World Orchid Conference Committee which I am sure will add to our chances of success.

Ten new **Judges** had sat and passed their exams.

**Judging Seminars** are to be held later in the year, divided into two or three large groups, and a National judging seminar is proposed for Queens Birthday weekend, 1985.

The **Registrar-General** of Judging, John Mason, is to tour South Island Societies during May-June, subject to making arrangements with the Societies concerned, and the following awards were given during the year:

**Grammatophyllum Tiger's Paw 'Ellen'** —  
 L. & R. Orchids HCC/CCC  
**Phal. Frances Roberts x Lipperose**  
 'Topnotch' — R. Wells CCC  
**Paph. insigne** — P. Leahy CCC  
**Onc. tigrinum x Oda Feuerschein** — F.  
 Askin AM  
**Phal. Chanteloire x Red Fan = Phal.**  
 Apollinaire — E. O. Nass CCC  
**Paph. Jacqueline Kranz 'epsom'** —  
 Mabel H. Teal AM  
**Cym. Fairy Rouge 'Lavender Falls'** —  
 E. G. & G. V. Jones CCC  
**Paph. venustum var. pardinum** — Mrs  
 Shirley Gray HCC  
**Cym. Harold Willetts 'Mahogany'** —  
 Gronwall & Dawe Orchids AM/AD  
**Cym. (Wallara 'Gold Nugget' x**  
 Lunagrad 'Elanora') 'Moonlight' —  
 Gronwall & Dawe AD  
**Cym. Little Bighorn 'Yellow Hair'** —  
 A. R. Napper AM  
**Lc. Culinant 'La Tuilerie'** —  
 Mrs K. White CCC  
**Phal. Sylvania Fair** —  
 Mr R. W. Wells CCC  
**Cym. Marycano 'Tan'** — R. & N.  
 Armstrong AM  
**Cym. Waterloo Sunset 'Hazel Hanson'**  
 — F. A. Ballard HCC

**Membership of Council** is now 6340.  
 Magazine subscriptions for our Journal  
 'Orchids in New Zealand' stands at 1899.  
 This figure is very low considering  
 membership numbers. How about  
 doing some recruiting at your Society?  
 Remember, with more subscriptions, the  
 Magazine Committee has more money  
 to 'play' with, and the result can only be  
 — a better Journal!

Articles are still required —  
 continuously! Without articles, there's  
 no magazine!

We had **Paul Gripp's** tour of the  
 country, thanks to North Shore Orchid  
 Society who paid his travelling  
 expenses. It is contacts like these which  
 keep us in touch with world develop-  
 ments.

There is to be an **International  
 Centenary Conference** by the RHS in  
 London, March 1985, in which we hope  
 to have a display.

An **Asia and Pacific Orchid  
 Conference** will be held in Tokyo,  
 October 1984.

The **Ninth Australian Orchid  
 Conference** will be held in Melbourne,  
 12th-16th September 1984.

So for all your world travellers, there's  
 plenty to plan for. Anyone wanting  
 further details, please contact me.

The **Tourist and Publicity Department**  
 puts out a brochure asking for dates of  
 coming events. This is updated each  
 year, and dates are required by the end  
 of September. Their address is Head  
 Office, P.O.Box 95, Wellington.

Generous donations have been  
 received during the year:

The Bay of Plenty Orchid Society  
 gave \$100.00 for the Magazine  
 account;

North Shore Orchid Society gave two  
 donations of \$400.00 as a sub-  
 stantial contribution to the cost of  
 colour illustrations in the Magazine;  
 Canterbury Orchid, Begonia & Fern  
 Society gave \$100.00 towards the  
 South Island tour by the Registrar-  
 General, \$250.00 towards the Slide  
 Programme, and a further \$250.00  
 for general Council funds;

Nelson Orchid Society gave \$100.00  
 for the Magazine.

These donations are greatly  
 appreciated, without them the Council  
 would probably cease to exist as running  
 costs are increasing at an alarming rate.

The Trustees of the Orchid Founda-  
 tion Trustboard (N.Z.) have given  
 \$2,000.00 to be used in the promotion of  
 the World Conference application for  
 the proposed venue in Auckland 1990;  
 the Orchid Council has also donated  
 \$1,000.00 to the N.Z. Orchid Society, the  
 proposed hosts for 1990, for expenses  
 already incurred in this promotion. The  
 Council has also granted \$1,000.00  
 towards the 1985 Conference.

The commercial exploitation of New Zealand native orchids is a matter causing concern throughout the country, and this has now been taken up by the N.Z. Nature Conservation Council and the N.Z. branch of the World Wildlife Fund, who will be circulating an article on it shortly, to all Societies, and to 'Orchids in New Zealand'.

Since receiving this Report it has been confirmed that New Zealand is to host the 1990 world orchid conference. ed.

**WANGANUI ORCHID SOCIETY**

29 September, 10.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m.

30 September, 10.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m.

Set up 28 September.

Wanganui Memorial Hall.

## I Like Phalaenopsis

*Mr E. A. O. Nass, 15 Johns Road, Taradale*

Yes, I do like Phalaenopsis. I fell in love with Phalaenopsis the first time I saw them in Sri Lanka growing so gracefully in the trees. It was many years later that I tried my hand with them in New Zealand. They fascinate me and in spite of some disappointments I keep on, because they are so rewarding. With Phalaenopsis you can have some flowers all the year round and each flowering plant brings you joy and surprises. Each one of them is in some way different from the other. The flowers are mostly long-lasting, as long as four months. Now, as there are many new crosses coming from the hybridisers, there will be no end of surprises in store for those who grow them.

I grow mine now in a closed-off part of my glasshouse I built a few years ago after a storm wrecked my old one. The glasshouse is 8 m x 3 m. It is partitioned off and heated for warm growing plants, 2.5 m x 3 m wide, 3.5 m deep would have been better. A 3 kilowatt blowheater, reduced to 2 kilowatt,

governed by a relay cut-off in conjunction with a "Danfoss" thermostat set at 15°C minimum and 21°C maximum for night temperature, which I find sufficient. The warm part of the house is lined with 12 mm polystyrene, three-quarters up the side walls and fully on the end wall. I put a light coating of pink whitewash to the roof and partly to the sides, but I left clear the parts facing the afternoon sun. I also put a lining of bubble plastic on the inside and with this polystyrene and plastic I reduced the heating cost considerably. My locality is about 5 Km from the seashore and the same from the foothills of Hawke's Bay, south of Napier. There is always an afternoon sea-breeze.

My feeding of the Phalaenopsis is sheep manure diluted so that it looks like weak tea. I found this sufficient after having used other fertilisers. I feed mine this twice a month and at other times water only. In the winter I use tepid water. I am not saying how often one should water the plants as that depends on location, time of year, potting mix and type and size of containers used. One has to use one's own judgement. Sufficient to say, no plant should be looking wet.

I forgot to mention there are two cooper-louvres, 70 cm x 60 cm, in the warm compartment opposite each other, which I keep open during the day and the one opposite the heater, a fraction during the night. I have no fan at all and have not been troubled with botrytis. Phalaenopsis are fairly free from mites, etc. I am spraying about twice between November and February, with Folimat, one teaspoon to the gallon, no more, and not when the new young spikes are showing up.

The glasshouse is on a 60 cm concrete block foundation. The rest of the house is used mostly for young cymbidiums out of flask and in different growing stages. My older plants are in a converted chick-house, during the winter, and in a shade-house during the rest of the year after flowering.

## Second New Zealand International Orchid Conference October 1985

This is the first of several articles to involve you in the preparations and planning for New Zealand's Second International Orchid Conference, to share with you the fears and pleasures of the Steering Committee and its satellite working groups striving to produce New Zealand's biggest and best Orchid Conference and Show to date. We who attended the first Conference in Auckland in 1980 were very impressed with the organisation and success of that venture and the end result showed just how important positive and careful planning is and we have enlisted some of the experiences from the Auckland organisers to get ourselves on the right course from the beginning.

You will all be aware of the initial moves by Mr W. Ross-Taylor, President of the Orchid Council of New Zealand and Golden Coast Orchid Society at the time, and others to get some interested people with organising skills together to test the feasibility of such an undertaking in the greater Wellington area, drawing this nucleus from the Golden Coast and Wellington Societies who will prove able and generous hosts for this venture. The various functions, Secretarial, Programme, Show, Publicity, Hospitality, Accommodation and of course most importantly, Finance, have been allocated out to group convenors to select voluntary working committees to report progress regularly to the main committee.

Naturally the first and biggest decision to be made was just where to stage this extravaganza, as full N.Z. Orchid Society involvement was anticipated together with extensive commercial and overseas participation — we would need lots of good clean space, not too cold or too hot and suitable for the coming together of thousands of New Zealanders and overseas visitors. Many New Zealanders who live in other parts of our three islands are extremely critical of the climate of our engaging, exhilarating Capital but we have catered for every

conceivable activity here and have always done it well.

What can we say about Wellington — it is compact, rugged, beautiful, full of character, plenty of evidence of early pioneer settlement and now, multi-storey, modern high rise buildings strategically placed around its historic Port Nicholson. Although all these amenities and many more surround our City our chosen venue site needed to be near all main travel terminals with plenty of good parking, so that participants could be at the show yet close to the Capital to enjoy its scenic and cosmopolitan charm and share in its night life, shopping, restaurants and culture. We are fortunate that Wellington Airport is just fifteen minutes from the Civic Centre and our venue needed to be close to both.

At a meeting in February 1983 the decision was taken to secure the Wellington Show Buildings from 8-14 October 1985. This complex appears to have all the attributes required with resident support staff and has been the venue for many massive and superlative exhibitions over the past years. It is several minutes from the Airport and about ten minutes from the City Centre.

More about this venue and its advantages next edition.

# Collection of Native Orchids Could Endanger Wild Populations

*The following is a copy of a letter recently received from the Nature Conservation Council of New Zealand.*

The collection and sale of large numbers of New Zealand's native orchids is of great concern to those who do not wish to see these beautiful, and in some cases, rare plants disappearing from the wild.

The Nature Conservation Council is concerned that hundreds of native orchids, including the endangered *Cryptostylis subulata*, have been collected in recent months and are being offered by commercial growers, garden centres and shops for sale to the public. There is a real risk that some wild populations will be destroyed by such collection. Unfortunately, too many of these orchids do not survive in cultivation and most native orchids cannot be successfully grown from seed.

What makes these plants special, and what are their requirements for survival?

- New Zealand's orchids occupy a wide range of habitats, growing on mountain tops, on banks, in forest and scrub, in damp places, or perched on trees and rocks.
- So far, twenty-two genera of native orchids have been identified, representing almost eighty species. New discoveries are still being made. Only one genus, *Aporostylis*, is endemic. Six species are epiphytic, perching on trees but not parasitic on them, five species obtain their food from a fungus which is parasitic on the roots of forest trees, and many species are associated with a specific fungus which they require for growth and survival.
- About 10 orchid species, or 14 percent of our total orchid flora, are included in David Given's checklist of native plants at risk. These are:

SPECIES	THREAT CATEGORY
<b>Bulbophyllum</b>	
<i>tuberculatum</i>	Indeterminate
<b>Calochilus campetris</b>	Endangered
<b>C. robertsonii</b>	Vulnerable
<b>Chiloglottis</b>	
<i>formicifera</i>	Extinct
<b>Corybas</b>	
<i>unguiculatus</i>	Endangered

<b>Cryptostylis subulata</b>	Endangered
<b>Paracaleana minor</b>	Endangered
<b>Pterostylis nutans</b>	Extinct
<b>Thelymitra</b>	
<i>matthewsii</i>	Extinct
<b>Yuania australis</b>	Vulnerable

Only one of the orchids listed, *Yuania australis*, is confined to New Zealand, although another, *Bulbophyllum tuberculatum*, extends to Lord Howe Island and has recently been reported from the Australian mainland. The other species are regarded as Australian orchids which have migrated to New Zealand at various intervals. (\*1)

- Most native orchids cannot be successfully propagated from seed. The fine seeds require a mycorrhizal fungus to grow, and this fungus has not yet been identified for New Zealand species. Almost all of the native orchids for sale, therefore, have been collected from wild populations. One flower picked may be thousands of seeds lost.
- Unlike the tropical orchids, most native orchids have small, short lived flowers which are best appreciated with a hand lens. Orchid enthusiasts can play a leading role in the conservation of native orchids by adopting sensible guidelines for collecting, and by



making a conscious effort to record more of what they see with notebook, pencil and camera. (\*2)

- Several common epiphyte species of native orchid can be propagated by division, and are relatively easy to grow. One of these, *Earina autumnalis*, is also highly fragrant. If people wish to grow native orchids, these are the species to try first.

## PROTECTION SOUGHT

There is no legal way to stop people from selling native orchids, provided they have been legally collected. Those growing in National Parks, Forest Parks or Reserves are afforded the same level of protection as other species found in those areas. Those growing on private land are unprotected, though consent to collect them would have to be given by the landowner.

In some countries, legislation has been passed prohibiting the collection of wild orchids and their sale or export. In New Zealand, a revision of the Native Plants Protection Act is awaited, so that special protection can be given to rare and endangered plants, including those likely to be collected to the point of extinction. Without this, the existence of some populations, especially those growing on private land, is tenuous.

## Consequences of Collection

Internationally, wild orchids are regarded as one of the major groups of plants facing extinction. Habitat destruction and indiscriminate collecting of species for commercial reasons have hastened their decline. In Australia, orchids are one of the major plant families with the greatest number of species at risk. About 178 species, or 30 per cent of the Australian orchid flora are listed as rare or threatened.

The consequences of over zealous collection are well illustrated by the European lady's slipper orchid, *Cypripedium calceolus*. For centuries, people have picked the flower stems and dug up the plants for their gardens,

where they seldom survive. Although now protected by law in much of its range, the plant has become very rare. The few remaining wild plants in Britain are surrounded by tripwires and alarms and are guarded day and night while they are in flower to prevent people from digging them up and taking them home to "save" them.

## What can be done?

So far as we know, all native orchids being sold here have been taken from the wild. Propagating or growing them from seed has usually proved unsuccessful, except for a few species. The Orchid Council has suggested that this be investigated. In the meantime, continued collection means that some species may disappear from the wild, in the same way as the last of the now extinct huias reported in the North Island of New Zealand succumbed to the gun of a dedicated collector.

Dr. David Given's 'Code of Conduct for Conservation of Wild Plants' (\*3) is reprinted here as a guide to the conservation of all wild native plants:

1. Official permission must be obtained before taking specimens of any plants from reserves, national parks, state forests, forest parks and sanctuaries; the right of land-owners must be respected when collecting plants.
2. It is essential to preserve the habitat and conditions which wild plants grow in. This means watching, your step, not compacting soil, and taking care not to break off young shoots and branches.
3. If you want to collect material for growing, take seed or cuttings rather than uprooting whole plants.
4. "Rescue attempts" require knowledge of the biology and habitat requirements of plants and should be undertaken only following approval by an appropriate conservation and administrative authority.

5. If a wild plant is scarce in a particular locality, take only a photograph; if a voucher specimen is necessary take the minimum needed for identification.
6. Trampling and "gardening" before taking photographs of plants may reveal the site to others. After photographing repair any damage caused by toes, knees, tripod legs, etc.
7. The exact location of critically rare wild plants should not be disclosed indiscriminately; such sites should not be visited by large parties.
8. Inform the appropriate scientific and conservation authorities (\*4) should a previously unrecorded site for a rare plant be discovered.
9. Respect requests from conservation bodies and landowners not to visit particular sites at certain times.
10. Do not introduce plants into wild habitats without first getting the approval of appropriate private authorities. Introductions of native plants into wild habitats must use specimens propagated from locally derived materials to avoid genetic contamination.

David R. Given

- **Inform** the nearest office of the Department of Lands and Survey of New Zealand Forest Service of any native plants, orchids in particular, being taken from Crown Land or State Forest.
- **Press** for the reservation of unreserved areas where wild orchids are growing.
- **Discourage** people from buying native orchids known to have come from wild populations.
- For those interested in learning more about our native orchids, a New Zealand Native Orchid Group has been set up.

(For details of membership and subscription, contact:

Mrs Dorothy Cooper  
14 Avalon Crescent  
Lower Hutt)

- \*1 Johns and Molloy. *Native Orchids of New Zealand*.
- \*2 Op cit
- \*3 Reprinted from: *Rare and Endangered Plants of New Zealand*. David R. Given (Reed Puns., 1981).
- \*4 Including Department of Lands and Survey, Forest Service, Botany Division of DSIR.

## Thesaurus Masdevalliarum BOOK REVIEW

To accommodate a new species they found in Peru, two Spanish Botanists, Ruiz and Pavon, created a genus and named it in honour of a fellow Botanist and Physician, Jose Masdevall. This was in 1794, and the first species was published as *Masdevallia Uniflora*. By 1833 only four species were known, but by 1861 some 36 were listed and interest from then until about 1920 was very great. During this "Masdevallia boom" some very high prices were paid, especially in Great Britain and Germany.

For various reasons *Masdevallia* lost popularity and little were grown until about 1950, since then these fascinating plants have steadily gained the attentions of hobbyists world-wide.

Much was written during the early boom period, the three most important publications being Veitch's "Manual of Orchidaceous Plants", Part 5, printed in 1889, written by R. A. Rolfe, it covered 60 species. Next came Miss Woolward's "The Genus *Masdevallia*". It was issued in six parts from 1890 to 1896 and had paintings of 87 species.

At the end of the era F. Kraenzlin published his "Monography of the Genera *Masdevallia*, *Scaphosepalum*, *Cryptophoranthus*, *Pseudoctomeria*" in 1925, which contained some 266 species. Due to lack of drawings, its plant identification is difficult.

During the last twenty or so years a large number of new species have been discovered. The identification and naming has been done principally by Dr. Carlyle Luer, of The Marie Selby Botanical Garden, Sarasota, Florida; Rodrigo, Escobar R. of Colombia and Willibald Koniger of Munich.

Dr. Luer removed the section Chimaeroideae and created a new Genus called *Dracula* (about 70 species); the section *Echidna* is now *Porroglossum*; the *Rhombopetalae* section is now *Dryadella* and the *Triaristellae* section is elevated to the new genus *Triaristella*.

Despite "losing" all these species, well over 100, to the new genera, there still leaves approximately 350 species of probably genuine, valid *Masdevallia*.

The stage is set then for a modern revision.

Happily, just such a publication has appeared. It is utterly magnificent. No expense has been spared in producing a folio that matches any botanical work of the past, in any field. The new Monograph, called "*Thesaurus Masdevalliarum*" (lit. "A Treasure of *Masdevallias*"), has been underway since a meeting of enthusiasts in Switzerland in March 1976.

The main Editor is Willibald Koniger, of Munich. Co-Editors are B. Wurstle of Spielberg, Germany and R. Jenny of Bern, Switzerland. The beautiful accurate life-size paintings are done by Anne Marie Trechslin of Bern. Dr. Luer has supplied the clear, detailed line drawings and the botanical descriptions.

The format of the large, loose-leaf publication (300 x 420 mm) is as follows:

It is being printed in Series, at the rate of two or three per year. Each Series consists of 15 or 16 species. The treatment of each species is the same — one leaf on which is produced the painting, this is a double-folded leaf in the case of large species like *M. macrura* and *M. colossus*. The second leaf has on one side the etymology, synonymy, botanical description and interesting

notes for the particular species. The other side has the line-drawings, and the distribution maps marked where the species occurs naturally. It is printed in English and German.

The first Series was available in early 1983, the second in October 1983, the next in April 1984. There is no obligation in getting No. 1, but you are morally obliged to take the complete set if ordering No. 2. It is expected to take seven or eight years to finish the 350 species, when Dr. Luer and Rodrigo Escobar will give keys to the sections and species, and do a final revision. There will be about 700 leaves (1400 pages) and as the paper is of a heavy type the completed work will be about a foot high, and will weigh several kilograms. The binding is left to the Subscriber, either to put in the various Series, alphabetically or whatever.

Each series is costing me about \$38.00, the completed work will be over \$900.00 at present rates. I can only justify it as an investment. No, I will not lend it, but anyone can view my copy at home here. There are only two getting it in New Zealand, to my knowledge, and about 320 world-wide. Refer A.O.S. Bulletins April 1983 and particularly October 1983 for a brilliant review by H. Phillips Jesup.

It is only available from two sources — Verlag Helga Koniger, Von-Erckert-Str. 36, 8000 Munich 82, West Germany or Jane P. Luer, 3222 Old Oak Drive, Sarasota, Florida, U.S.A.

I would be pleased to hear from anyone else subscribing to this Publication or on any matter regarding *Masdevallia*.

Incredibly, or perhaps inevitably, Series One is out of date!! *Masdevallia herradurae* is shown only from N.W. Colombia, but in a recent note from Helga Koniger she says "Our last trip to Peru was very fine — we found one new species and two new species for Peru; *Masdevallia norops* and *Masdevallia herradurae*".

P. S. Mayhead, 360 Carrington Street, New Plymouth.

# Growing Orchids in Whangarei

*by Fred Brett, 63 Russell Road*

To people living further South, Northland and Whangarei almost sound like the tropics. I know they did to me when I was transferred from Invercargill to Whangarei about 14 years ago. One of our new, hospitable neighbours passed over a plant which she said was a cymbidium orchid — sounded most exotic to me, the only orchids I could recall were pictures on chocolate boxes! This new plant sat out in the garden for sometime and I occasionally looked at it sceptically until one day I was fascinated to find a gorgeous green flower had opened on a spike.

After seeing the spike open properly, I must admit I've never been the same since! For a start of course I didn't realise there were any orchids other than cymbidiums, but that was remedied when a group of local enthusiasts started an Orchid Society in Whangarei.

It was soon obvious that to indulge my new ideas, I would have to be careful in choosing new plants to cover a wider spread of the flowering season. I wasn't in the high income group, this was just a hobby idea, so I gradually picked up a supply of back-bulbs, mericlones and seedlings of the smallest size to give earlier and later blooming. I have a very understanding family and for years any Birthday or Christmas present has been a plant (my selection) or Orchid books.

As a result of this programme over the years, I found that I had lots of nice plants coming along. Of course I had the usual beginners problems and lost a few plants before I even knew there was such a thing as red spider! I also found during this period that there were lots of other types of orchids which flowered at different times.

The next step was natural, as I just had to have orchid flowers available all year round, so I expanded my ideas and collected a few plants of other genera to fill in the odd months when cymbidiums were not out. My main concern in obtaining new types of plants was to try to ensure that they could grow alongside the cymbidiums in similar conditions, without having to provide a glasshouse or heating.

My plants grow in two shade house areas and over the wet winter period — April to October — a plastic cover goes over the top to exclude surplus water but the ends and sides are not covered so that plenty of fresh air is still available. In the spring and summer they just love the warm rain and a bit of draught through the leaves.

We do get the odd frosts here, the last couple of years have produced white lawns on three or four occasions and we did get some blackened leaves and lost a few buds, but on the whole the plants came through well and fitted into the pattern of supplying year-round flowers.

Last winter I brought some of the cattleya type plants into the house to a glassed-in porch area — not much sun, but the exclusion of some of the cold night air seemed to be a help. This winter I intend to also bring inside some of the smaller plants to fill up the relatively small amount of shelf space.

Over the years I have gradually accumulated about 200 different cymbidiums and 120 plants of other genera. Of course quite a number of these are small and won't flower for a year or two, but it is fascinating to watch the spikes developing and the flowers opening — particularly with plants that I haven't flowered before.

I am often asked what plants can be grown that are compatible with cymbidiums, so the following is a list of those I have tried successfully:-

Cattleyas and hybrids. I prefer the smaller type of plants and flowers so the majority of these are *sophrolaelio cattleya* hybrids. They have the added advantage of being more resistant to cold conditions: *Angraecum veitchii*, thrives and flowers well: *Angulocaste*, grows vigorously but I haven't managed to flower one as yet: *Bletilla striata*, grows out in the garden in this area: *Brassia verrucosa*: *Coelogyne cristata* and *massangeana*: *Dendrobium* species: *Disa uniflora*, hasn't had a winter yet here but is making plenty of growth: *Epicattleya*: *Epiphronitis*: *Laelia anceps*: *Lycaste* species and hybrids, they like a little more shade so live under the bench: *Miltonia* hybrids, success here is patchy, some plants don't like living outside in the winter time while others do well: *Paphiopedilums*, three or four species do well under the bench but hybrids do not seem to like the conditions: *Pleione formosana*, seems to prosper as long as it is grown in a fairly shallow pot: *Pterostylis banksii* and *trulifolia* (N.Z. greenhoods) grow well in ordinary garden soil which has had a handful of lawn clippings mixed in. The potted plants and flowers seem to be at least half as big again as those growing wild: *Zygopetalum mackayi* does well, as do the hybrids *Helen Ku* and *Arthur Elle*: finally my present partiality is for the *Odontoglossum* alliance.

There are so many hybrids and species becoming more readily available these days that it is difficult to choose between them. They seem to like a little extra shade and need to be kept cool in summer — making sure there is plenty of air flowing through the shade house and keeping them a bit damper than the cymbidiums, seems to do the trick.

No doubt Whangarei is favoured by its mild climate, but I should imagine many of these plants would thrive with cymbidiums grown under cooler conditions without too costly an outlay for additional housing. The rewards for trying are great as it is now over three years since I had a period without some sort of orchid flowers on show in the lounge.

## Cymbidium Cultural Notes

*by Gordon Maney, Palmerston North*

### MAY—JUNE

The weather is getting much colder now and because of this we must water early in the morning if the plants are to dry out by nightfall.

From now on it can get very cold at night and if there is water down in the young growths you will lose them and possibly the new spikes will damp off. I'm still feeding with a liquid feed, Lush, Atlas fish emulsion, etc., every three weeks.

If you haven't already done so, nine months slow release Osmocote 18-2. 6-10 put round the top of the plants at the rate of one teaspoon to a 10 cm pot and two teaspoons to a 20 cm pot, is particularly valuable to those of us who are working all week and often find it difficult to liquid feed when we should.

Like everybody, I worry on those freezing cold mornings with a frost on the ground when I know the plants are getting dry and need watering. However, one shouldn't really worry as another day or so will not hurt the plants. Water the benches and the walks, this is more important and the humidity also helps to keep the red spider at bay.

Red spider can do a great deal of damage to flowers long before the buds open, it is therefore important to spray once a month with Kelthane over the next few months.

With the flower spikes getting longer it is most important to stake and tie them. For those spikes that tend to go parallel to the plant instead of vertical, place a label at an angle under the spike as soon as possible. This often helps to straighten stubborn spikes.

A word of warning, don't try and manipulate the spikes until the day has warmed up otherwise they will easily snap.

Keep that slug bait around the plants, Mesurool seems to last much longer than other makes. A good idea is to get a plastic container such as a Lux Liquid dispenser, make a hole in the top of the cap and fill with the bait. I put the bait in through a funnel as it doesn't pay to handle it if you can help it. It's very poisonous.

At this time of the year there still seems to be caterpillars around, I suggest you buy some Sumicidin or Rose dust and throw this around. There is an inexpensive duster available, you simply turn the handle and it certainly does a good job. However, I suggest you use a mask when doing this. Good luck for the early winter months.

**THIRD SOUTH ISLAND SEMINAR  
6-7 OCTOBER 1984**

For Particulars write to:

Secretary Nelson Orchid Society  
103 Point Road, Monaco.  
Stoke, Nelson.

**SOME ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM  
OTHER SOCIETIES  
NEWSLETTERS**

**Fertilisers and sprays:** (Capital City Orchid Society).

**A fertiliser of N.P.K.:** rating of 5.3.2. is very near to a balanced mixture.

**Magamp:** (7.17.5.) slow release fertiliser, may be slower releasing than claimed on the packet. It is safe and too much would not be harmful to the plant.

**Osmocote:** (12.2.8.) needs to be used with care. Low in phosphoric acid content, may also release fertiliser quicker than advertised.

**Brigitta Orchid Food:** (30.10.10.) used in summer, October to December.

**Alaska:** (5.1.1.) needs a high mix temperature to be effective, this would limit its use from mid-spring to mid-autumn.

**Lush:** (liquid 8.6.10.) (granules 18.8.15.) both are reasonably well balanced fertilisers.

**Liquiphos:** (8.5.10.) use from October to February.

**Nitrophoska:** (12.5.14.) needs to be well diluted for use with orchids.

**Ammophos:** (12.10.10.) use at half strength.

**Conqueror oil:** acts by smothering pests.

**Bravo:** a good general fungicide, would control most fungi affecting orchids.

**Thiram:** good general fungicide, probably better used in the glass house.

**Saprol:** good general fungicide for orchids.

**Benlate:** systemic fungicide. It will clean up problem fungus that other brands won't.

**Shield:** systemic insecticide and fungicide. Be careful when using, can be dangerous to you.

**Orthene:** good insecticide that can be used on plants in bloom.

**Maldison:** when mixed with oil gives a good insect control. Use carefully.

**Target:** a good insecticide, to be used carefully, dangerous to humans.

**Ambush:** good general insecticide especially against caterpillars.

**Carbaryl:** also good insecticide and against caterpillars.

**Sprayfix:** a good additive for your sprays to give a better hold to your plants.

**Care should be taken when using these sprays:** gloves and protective clothing are a must, you could endanger your health with a careless attitude to spraying.

---

## WINTER SHOWS

### NEW ZEALAND ORCHID SOCIETY

6th July, 10.00 a.m.-9.00 p.m.

7th July, 10.00 a.m.-6.00 p.m.

8th July, 10.00 a.m.-5.00 p.m.

Mt. Albert War Memorial Hall.

Setting up 4th July and Judging 5th July.

### WELLINGTON ORCHID SOCIETY

7th July, 11.00 a.m.-5.00 p.m.

8th July, 11.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m.

Queen Margaret College, Hobson Street, Wellington.

### GOLDEN COAST ORCHID SOCIETY

21st July, 9.00 a.m.-5.00 p.m.

22nd July, 9.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m.

Southwards Car Museum Complex Paraparaumu.

# SPRING SHOWS

## *HOWICK ORCHID SOCIETY*

1st September, 12 noon-6.00 p.m.  
2nd September, 10.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m.  
Howick Community Centre.

## *KAITAIA & DISTRICT ORCHID SOCIETY*

7th September, 10.00 a.m.-8.00 p.m.  
(Competitive Show)  
Yugoslav Hall, Kaitaia.

## *AUCKLAND ORCHID CLUB*

7th September, 10.00 a.m.-9.00 p.m.  
8th September, 10.00 a.m.-6.00 p.m.  
9th September, 10.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m.  
Council Chambers, Henderson.

## *CAPITAL CITY ORCHID SOCIETY*

8th September, 11.00 a.m.-5.00 p.m.  
9th September, 11.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m.  
Khandallah School Hall.

## *WHANGAREI ORCHID SOCIETY*

14th September, 12 noon-8.30 p.m.  
15th September, 10.00 a.m.-5.00 p.m.  
16th September, 10.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m.  
Forum North.

## *MARLBOROUGH ORCHID SOCIETY*

15th September, 1.00 p.m.-8.30 p.m.  
Held in conjunction with the local horticultural Show. Blenheim

## *POVERTY BAY EAST COAST ORCHID SOCIETY*

21st September, 12 noon-9.00 p.m.  
22nd September, 10.00 a.m.-6.00 p.m.  
23rd September, 10.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m.  
Venue will be advised later.

## *CANTERBURY ORCHID SOCIETY*

22nd September, 1.00 p.m.-9.00 p.m.  
23rd September, 9.00 a.m.-5.00 p.m.

## *HUTT VALLEY ORCHID CIRCLE*

22nd September, 2.00 p.m.-6.00 p.m.  
23rd September, 11.00 a.m.-5.00 p.m.  
Held in conjunction with local Horticultural Show. Horticultural Hall, Lower Hutt.

## *SOUTH AUCKLAND ORCHID SOCIETY*

22nd September, 1.00 p.m.-5.00 p.m.  
23rd September, 10.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m.  
Papakura Community Hall.

## *TAURANGA ORCHID SOCIETY*

22nd September, 10.00 a.m.-5.00 p.m.  
23rd September, 10.00 a.m.-6.00 p.m.  
24th September, 10.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m.  
Tauranga Town Hall.

## *SOUTHLAND ORCHID SOCIETY*

27th September, 10.00 a.m.-5.00 p.m.  
28th September, 10.00 a.m.-8.00 p.m.  
State Insurance Building, Invercargill.

## *HAWKES BAY ORCHID SOCIETY*

28th September, 1.00 p.m.-8.00 p.m.  
29th September, 10.00 a.m.-8.00 p.m.  
30th September, 10.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m.  
Indoor Stadium, Hastings.

## *NEW ZEALAND ORCHID SOCIETY*

28th September, 10.00 a.m.-9.00 p.m.  
29th September, 10.00 a.m.-6.00 p.m.  
30th September, 10.00 a.m.-5.00 p.m.  
Setting up 26th and Judging 27th. Mt. Albert War Memorial Hall.

## *SOUTH TARANAKI ORCHID SOCIETY*

29th September, 1.30 p.m.-5.30 p.m.  
30th September, 10.00 a.m.-5.30 p.m.  
Hawera Community Centre.

## *WAIRARAPA ORCHID SOCIETY*

29th September, 10.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m.  
30th September, 10.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m.  
Town Hall, Greytown.

## *GOLDEN COAST ORCHID SOCIETY*

4th October, 9.00 a.m.-8.30 p.m.  
5th October, 9.00 a.m.-5.30 p.m.  
6th October, 9.00 a.m.-4.30 p.m.  
Coastlands Shopping Mall, Paraparaumu.

## *THAMES VALLEY ORCHID SOCIETY*

5th October, 10.00 a.m.-8.00 p.m.  
6th October, 10.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m.  
Thames War Memorial Community Centre.

## *MANAWATU ORCHID SOCIETY*

5th October, 2.00 p.m.-8.00 p.m.  
6th October, 10.00 a.m.-5.00 p.m.  
7th October, 11.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m.  
Girls High School Hall, Fitzherbert Avenue, Palmerston North.

## *TARANAKI ORCHID SOCIETY*

5th October, 1.00 p.m.-8.00 p.m.  
6th October, 10.00 a.m.-6.00 p.m.  
7th October, 10.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m.  
Queens Hall, New Plymouth.

## *DANNEVIRKE & DISTRICT ORCHID SOCIETY*

12th October, 1.00 p.m.-8.00 p.m.  
13th October, 10.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m.  
Anglican Church Hall, Dannevirke.

## *WELLINGTON ORCHID SOCIETY*

20th October, 11.00 a.m.-5.00 p.m.  
21st October, 11.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m.  
St. Oran's College, High Street, Lower Hutt.

## *TAUPO ORCHID SOCIETY*

26th October, 10.00 a.m.-7.00 p.m.  
27th October, 10.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m.  
28th October, 10.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m.  
Memorial Hall, Tongariro Street, Taupo.

## *STRATFORD ORCHID CLUB*

27th October, 10.00 a.m.-7.00 p.m.  
Avon School Hall, Stratford.

# DISA UNIFLORA — FLOWER OF THE GODS

by F. Cochrane of Hikurangi

While in South Africa for the 10th World Orchid Conference, these notes are some information I obtained, of the early history of this beautiful orchid, *Disa Uniflora*.

First it was seen by the early settlers on Table Mountain and for many years it was believed that it grew there only, and no-where else. It was not, in fact, until 1869 that a Botanist, J. McGibbon, wrote that the *Disa* had been found beside streams and waterfalls of other Cape Mountains. To this day it has never been recorded further than 110 miles from Cape Town. The *Disa* is, however, not only found at high altitudes, but there is a place within 80 miles of Cape Town, where it may be seen beside a waterfall, only a few feet above sea level, and within a mile or two of the ocean. The inaccessibility of this spot, though it is within a few yards of a main road, is the reason for the survival of this beautiful *Disa* here at Betty's Bay.

*Disa Uniflora* thrives in mist belt conditions, and is kept moist by the south-east winds, e.g. the famous table cloth of the Table Mountains. It is not easy to duplicate these conditions, fresh water which is chlorine free is most essential. Of the 434 indigenous species of orchids found in Africa at least 100 of them are *Disa* species, ranging in colour from pink, red, bright scarlet, deep crimson, orange, white, blue and yellow. Seventy percent of African species occur no-where else in the world, somewhere in the Republic of South Africa, an orchid can be found in flower, every day of the year.

*Disa Uniflora*, also known as *Pride of Table Mountain*, *Flower of the Gods*, is the largest of all South African orchids, its specified name, often over half a metre tall, carrying five or more flowers, was given by a Swedish Botanist Physician Petrus Bergius in 1767. *Disa* — derived from the latin word meaning rich, is very apt. Dr. Bergius never saw

the *Disa* in nature, and so presumably he did not know, that two, three or sometimes even more flowers are found on a single spike, so that it is a pity he used the word *Uniflora* — he must have been misled by the pressed single flower specimen sent to him by the German gardener, Auge, who was at that time in the employ of the East Indian Co., Linnaeus, the younger used the name *Disa Grandiflora*, and it is the name used in the nineteenth century books. Modern botanical rules demand, that the original name be maintained. There were of course many famous collections in Europe in the past, and it is interesting to note that 100 years or so ago, there was a fine show of *Disas* produced in Eire. In 1886 there were some fine specimens grown at Straffan House in Kildare. A group of *Disa Uniflora* carrying no less than 156 spikes, which stresses the fact that *Disa* culture was well known at Straffan House. It is a sad fact, I believe that nothing remains of the beautiful gardens and glass houses in those far off days at Straffan. In 1920 at the Royal Horticultural Society's show in London, there were hundreds of *Disa Unifloras*, all standing two feet high, each bearing three large blooms. In Sweden at the Gothenburg Botanic Gardens, *Disa Uniflora* has been grown since 1930.

The first *Disa Veitchii* was registered in 1891. *Disa Kewensis* in 1893, by 1922 eleven *Disa* hybrids had been registered, after which the Nature Conservation Authorities enforced the strictest measures to protect their magnificent floral heritage. Then in 1962 Mr K. Johnson of Somerset West was the first to remake *Disa Veitchii* by crossing *Dracemosa*, and *Disa Uniflora*. Dr.



Vogelpoel of Rondebosch is one of South Africa's top *Disa* growers. We were fortunate enough to visit his nursery, it gave us an insight, on how to grow *Disas*, from their natural environment. By selective breeding the *Disa* hybrids being grown, are improving each year, this dedication has been appropriately rewarded to a new hybrid, *Disa Kirstenbosch Pride*, the first time an orchid was awarded an African name, made by crossing *Disa Uniflora* and *Disa Cardinalis* — *Cardinalis* is very red. Three more interesting crosses, *Disa Kewensis*, from *Disa Tripetaloides* a yellow, and *Disa Uniflora* result in a vivid cerise colour. *Disa Watsonii* from *Disa Kewensis* and *Disa Uniflora*, result in a bright pink. *Disa diores*, from *Disa Uniflora* (a pink form) and *Disa Veitchii*, result in rose pink. The first *Disa Show*, staged by the Cape Orchid Society, was at Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens in December 1980.

## Around the World

by J. Bradley

### RATCLIFFES — OCTOBER 1983

The growth method employed is as follows — the species *paphiopedilum* are maintained at 55° F. (12.7° C), the hybrids at 60° F. (15.5° C.), with a 10° F. fluctuation allowed with the bitter English winter it is not surprising that the yearly heating bill is in the vicinity of \$10,000NZ. Oil burners are used for such heating as normal now in most nurseries the houses are all completely lined with polythene double skinning to improve insulation. Shelter belts situated around the houses also prove beneficial in reducing heat loss by wind convection, however, they are placed at a distance that does not allow shading of the houses.

The plants are grown in a bark (*Sequoia* from America), perlite, charcoal media with lime added to counteract the acidity induced by the gradual

breakdown of the bark. As this composition has no capacity for retaining nutritive compounds, the fertilizer is folia applied. A weak solution of Maxicrop and similar organic solutions are sprayed over the leaves.

Watering is applied by hand and only rain water is used due to the mineral content of local water which may affect the delicate balance within the plant.

Disorders of the plant experienced within the nursery include funilia bacterial disorder which is controlled by restricted watering and chemical spraying with benanyl R. Red Mite is controlled by Dicofol and any sign of mealy bug or scale is isolated and treated accordingly.

Approximately 1000 pods of paph seed is sown per year in the laboratory which is presently adequate to keep up with plant demands. The seed is sown on horizontally set hile agar in plastic bottles — later transferred to vertical bottles for final growth which takes 10 months. All bottles are sealed with a rubber bung with gas exchange allowed through sterilized cotton wool — for extra security a plastic film is tied over the bung. The growing on room is situated underground thus heat loss is minimal. All flasks are in racks 5-6 high, individually lit by fluorescent tubes. At deflasking the tiny plants are shaken out of the media, not washed by placed directly into small community pots which have been found to be more economical on room than trays as the plants grow at differing rates. Also, in the trays the roots tend to become entangled thus at re-potting much root damage may occur. The community pots are kept at 70° F. (21° C.) until well established and only then transferred to the main houses.

to be continued



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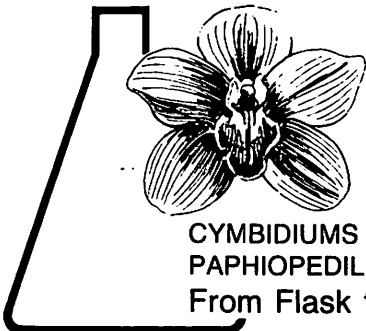
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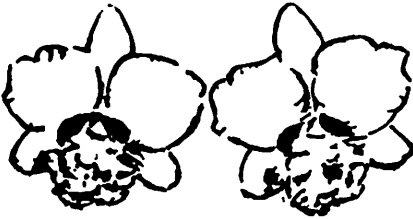
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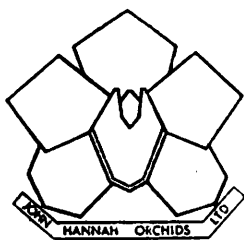
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