



THE SOUTH COAST ORCHID CLUB OF SA INC.

Gazette

February 2021

Patron: Coralie Hills FAOC
President: Michael Willoughby



Shirley Greig with her
beautiful specimen of
Habenaria medusa



DEADLINES FOR NEXT GAZETTES
21 February and 28 March



Website: <http://www.scocsa.net>
E-Mail: lucys18@bigpond.com
Phone: Lucy (08) 8381 4420
Mobile: Lucy 0409 642 352
Address: PO Box 314, Oaklands Park SA 5046
ABN 83 245 384 076



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Affiliated with The Australian Orchid Council & the South Australian Regional Orchid Council

AT A GLANCE

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the South Coast Orchid Club of South Australia will be held on Monday 8th February 2021 at 8.00 pm. at RSL Hall, 4 Prince George Parade, Colonel Light Gardens. Business will include Election of Office Bearers and Committee Members for 2021, consideration of the nomination of Donna Meeuwsen for Life Membership, and the financial statement for 2020.

The February General Meeting of the Club will follow the Annual General Meeting. Our Guest Speaker will be Jane Higgs who will talk on "Taiwan - **Not** the World Orchid Conference" Please don't miss this great presentation. The meeting will finish a little later than usual at 10.00pm.

LEARNERS' GROUP: There will be a Learners' Group Meeting at the February Meeting at 7.15pm.

JUDGING: Please have your plants benched by 7.40pm so Judging can commence at 7.50pm. If you are running late due to work commitments please phone Phil on 0438 891 612.

DAYTIME CHAPTER: The next meeting will be held at Lou Kesting Hall, off Broadway, South Brighton on Thursday 11th February 2021 at 2.00 pm. Our Guest Speaker will be Malcolm Mangelsdorf speaking on Orchids.

SOUTHERN REGION: The next meeting will be held at 2.00 pm on Sunday 21st February 2021 in Carrickalinga House, 17-19 Torrens Street, Victor Harbor. Our Guest Speaker will be Jane Higgs speaking on "Taiwan - **NOT** the World Orchid Conference. Learners Group will be taken by John Gay at 1.15 pm.

LUCKY NAME BADGE: Make sure you wear your Name Badge to meetings, you may win a prize.

PUBLIC LIABILITY: Under Insurance Guidelines all members and Committee attending any function or meeting held by the Club must sign and print your name on an Attendance Sheet.

HELP WANTED FOR WORKSHOPS IN 2021

We are seeking members with a shed or covered outdoor area to hold workshops for the months of April, June, August, October and December. It is anticipated that workshops would be of two and a half hour duration.

- The first half hour would be for socialising with a cuppa and biscuits.
- The second half hour would be for showing your collection.
- The last hour and a half will be discussing growing orchids, questions and answers and any orchid information.



Happy Birthday

LUCY SPEAR, KEVIN WESTERN,
ROWAN CROWHURST, BEV GAY, JANE HIGGS,
SUSAN CARTER, SUE RUXTON,
WARREN YELLAND, BERYL WILSON,
BETH STRONACH, SHIRLEY GREIG,
REGINA LINGEN, BILL TREVASKIS



Is your name in the Birthday Book ??



President's Annual Report

2020 a year like no other that any of us have experienced in our lifetimes. The year saw the usual start of meetings in late January (Southern Region) and February, although those who keep up with world news would have been aware of the murmurs of a new potentially devastating virus since December 2019.

March arrived and our world changed as we all knew it. The COVID-19 virus pandemic had immediate effect (lockdown and physical distancing). This affected all three sections of the Club with the Southern Region managing two meetings for 2020. The main group and daytime chapter managed to hold meetings from September albeit the Main group at a different location (RSL Colonel Light Gardens). If not for the change of location the main group would not have been able to hold any meetings in 2020. There were no shows organised in 2020, however at the Seaford Central Shopping Centre we were able to put on a club display of three days and a trading table which proved very successful.

During the lockdown it was decided to give you the best possible Gazette and asked you the members to become involved and send photographs of the flowers you had bloomed during the five months without meetings. I thank each and every one who contributed as I believe the high quality of the Gazette published by Christine Robertson our editor was helped by your contribution and Christine's researching, finding interesting and relevant articles made the Gazette something to look forward to and in a small way keep us the members connected during isolation.

Our thoughts are with those members that we lost during the year and their families, they will be missed terribly. Our members who are unwell and recovering from illnesses are also in our thoughts..

Many thanks to Barb Almond, Lucy Spear & Patty Abell for the support of the Daytime Chapter. There are always interesting plants that have been benched for us all to enjoy. Thank you to our convenors for all your hard work as some of the older members would never miss this meeting.

SOUTHERN REGIONAL GROUP – The Southern Region Group were the most effected by the restrictions brought about by COVID-19 and we hope that 2021 will see more meetings for Southern Region members who look forward each month to their meeting.

Thank you to all the judges, committee and all members for supporting the club throughout the year. To Phil Steer as Registrar in continuing to do great work for the club, our editor, Christine Robertson the effort you put into the Gazette is there for all to see, a most outstanding effort during the early times of the restrictions that were imposed. Our Treasurer Anne Steer for your continuing efforts throughout this very difficult year and our Secretary Lucy Spear thank you for all your work and great organization in 2020. Finally, I would like to thank Vera Bastian for all that you have done in the Kitchen preparing the supper that the members enjoy after the meetings. My sincere thanks on behalf of the membership.

Thank you to all who gave up their precious time to assist with the Spring Display and meetings during 2020. Finally, I hope that 2021 will prove to be a more settled year that all members can enjoy meetings and shows, things we all missed in 2020.

May your hobby give you the pleasure that it does me.

Michael Willoughby

YOUR COMMITTEE FOR 2020

PRESIDENT:	Michael Willoughby	0479 162 527
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT:	Malcolm Mangelsdorf	
VICE PRESIDENT:	Kevin Western	
SECRETARY:	Lucy Spear	0409 642 352
TREASURER:	Anne Steer	
COMMITTEE:	Donna Meeuwsen, Oui Ju, Christine Robertson, Jim Fogarasi, Craig Humfrey, Geoffrey Spear, Craig Dicker	
NON COMMITTEE POSITIONS:		
Registrar	Phil Steer	
Editor	Christine Robertson	
Web Master	Craig Dicker	
Librarians	Vacant (Main Meeting) Diane Cawley (Southern Region)	
Photographer	Neil Cooper	
Convenor S. R. Group	Geoff Spear	
Convenors Daytime Chapter	Barbara Almond, Patty Abell	
Convenor Main Learners' Group	Craig Humfrey	



LIFE MEMBERS

* denotes Member who has passed away.

1978 Dulcie Grave *	1986 Harry Viney *	2009 Don Biebrick
1978 Leora Harvey	1986 John Nicholls	2009 Henk Van Leuveren *
1978 L. & H. Poole*	1989 Helen Edwards	2010 Dorothy Carassai
1978 Ellie Shaw*	2003 Norman Gitsham *	2011 John and Bev Gay
1979 Syd Monkhouse	2005 Merve Steele *	2012 Noel Oliver *
1979 Bernie Hanson*	2005 Shirley Steele *	2015 Lesley Fenton
1981 Lois Hanson*	Circa Tony and Toshie Deonno *	2015 Rod McRedmond
1981 John Leeder*	2007 Ron and Irene Parish	2018 Kevin Western
1985 Brenda Lynch	2007 Murray Baulderstone *	2020 Malcolm Mangelsdorf
1985 Bubs Gready *	2008 Geoff and Lucy Spear	This list is still being compiled.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Subscriptions for 2021 are due now. There will be no increase in subscriptions for 2021. We do value your membership and seeing you at meetings each month.

RATES – One membership covers all groups

Family Membership	\$38.00
Single Membership	\$30.00
Junior Membership	\$22.00

Rural and Interstate Membership

Family Membership	\$34.00
Single Membership	\$28.00

Account Details: BankSA Glenelg. BSB: 105-145
(Use your grower number for Reference)

Account No.: 545457040



ORCHID CALENDAR 2021



[These dates are subject to COVID-19 directives]

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Monday 8th February 2021 8.00 pm
RSL Hall 4 Prince George Parade, Colonel Light Gardens

GENERAL MEETING

Monday 8th February 2021 8.30 pm
RSL Hall 4 Prince George, Parade Colonel Light Gardens
Guest Speaker: Jane Higgs "TAIWAN - **NOT** THE WORLD ORCHID CONFERENCE"

COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday 10th February 2021 7.30 pm

DAYTIME CHAPTER

Thursday 11th February 2021 2.00 pm
Lou Kesting Hall, Dover Square, Brighton South
Guest Speaker: Malcolm Mangelsdorf "Orchids"

SOUTHERN REGION MEETING

Sunday 21st February 2021 2.00 pm
Carrickalinga House, Victor Harbor
Guest Speaker: Jane Higgs "TAIWAN - **NOT** THE WORLD ORCHID CONFERENCE"

MEMBERS' PHOTOGRAPHS



Phalaenopsis Unknown
Grown By Sue & Laurie Carter



Paph. superbians
Grown By Michael Willoughby & Oui Ju



Disa Kalahari Sands
Grown by Kevin Western



Disa Auratkew 'Tassie Gold'
Grown By Kevin Western



Stan. wardii
Grown By Lucy & Geoff Spear



Epi. Corona 21 'Seiki'
Grown by Ruth Tugwell



C. Ida Elizabeth 'Enchanting'
Grown by Beth Stronach

Editor's Note: I would like to continue with this segment on Members' Orchids, but I need members to send me photos of their beautiful orchids, thank you.

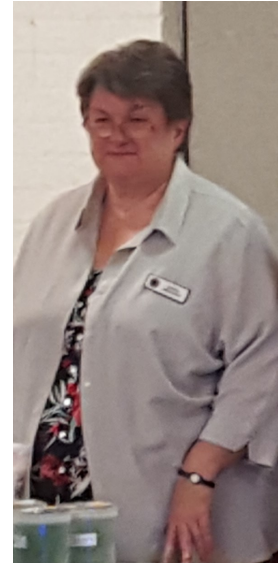
Nomination for Life Membership

Donna Meeuwsen

Donna has been associated with the South Coast Orchid Club of SA for a considerable number of years and whilst not an active Orchid grower she has been heavily involved in the administration and management of the club.

Over the period of 17 years Donna has given the club distinguished and valued service. She has during these years seen the club grow and prosper into what we now have. Her business background has been invaluable to the successful management of the club over this extended length of service.

Donna was elected to the Committee of Management in 2004 and has been a committee member since then. Her timeline reads as follows :-



2004	Committee member & Minute Secretary	2013	Senior Vice President
		2014	Senior Vice President
2005	Committee member	2015	Committee member
2006	Committee member	2016	Vice President
2007	Committee member	2017	Vice President
2008	Minute Secretary	2018	Committee member & Minute Secretary
2009	Minute Secretary		
2010	Senior Vice President	2019	Committee member & Minute Secretary
2011	Vice President & Minute Secretary	2020	Committee member and minute Secretary.
2012	Senior Vice President		

I hereby nominate Donna for Life membership. **Phillip G Steer**

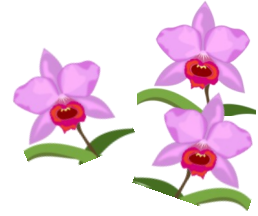
VALE GEORGE ABELL

It was with great sorrow that the committee learned of the passing of George Abell. George was a great member of the South Coast Orchid Club with his wife Patty, and a grower and breeder of Sarcophilus orchids. They sponsored the Trophy for the Champion Sarcophilus at the November Club Sarcophilus Show each year.

George will be sadly missed especially by the Daytime Chapter and our sympathy goes out to Patty and their family.



RIP



December Results List

Ref. No.

Points Awarded

Open Division

Orchid Genera not listed elsewhere - Hybrid

2686	Disa Kalahari Sands	Kevin Western (155)	3
2687	Disa Auratkeu 'Tassie Gold'	Kevin Western (155)	2
2688	Phal. Unknown	Vicky & Neil Cooper (1119)	1

Orchid Seedling - any Genera

2689	Paph. superbians	Michael Willoughby & Oui Ju (1252)	3
2690	Paph. (Cross-Bow x Winston Churchill)	Vicky & Neil Cooper (1119)	2

Paphiopedilum - Species

2692	Paph. hirsutissimum 'Grand Prix Fever'	Michael Willoughby & Oui Ju (1252)	3
2693	Paph. superbians	Michael Willoughby & Oui Ju (1252)	2

Paphiopedilum - Standard

2691	Paph. (Cross-Bow x Winston Churchill)	Vicky & Neil Cooper (1119)	2
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First Division

Cymbidium under 60 All Colours inc Non-std

2684	Cym. Cricket 'Howzat'	Laurie & Susan Carter (1303)	3
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Laeliinae - Cluster

2682	Ctt. Chit Chat 'Tangerine'	Laurie & Susan Carter (1303)	3
2683	Ctt. Adelaide Ablaze 'Beverley'	Laurie & Susan Carter (1303)	2

Orchid Genera not listed elsewhere - Hybrid

2685	Phal. Unknown	Laurie & Susan Carter (1303)	3
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Second Division

Australian Native Epiphyte - Species

2679	Cym. madidum 'Purity'	Beth Stronach (836)	3
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Oncidiinae - Hybrid < 60mm

2680	Onc. Sharry Baby	Coral Tillmanns & Trevor Kenny (212)	3
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UNUSUAL PLANT OF MONTH - *Coelogyne usitana*

A specimen of *Coelogyne usitana* was displayed at a recent South Australian Orchidaceous Society meeting. *Coelogyne usitana* is found only on the island of Mindanao in the Philippines at elevations of 800m.

It is a small to medium sized epiphyte or lithophyte with close set, ovoid, four angled pseudobulbs. There are several bracts surrounding the base of the pseudobulbs and each pseudobulb has a single broadly elliptical leaf, which is erect then pendulous up to 30cm long. The inflorescence is successive with a single flower or a few and up to 22 flowers. The flowers are 7cm across, widely spaced and downward facing. The sepals and petals are white and the labellum is a deep red.

This species has been fairly widely used in hybridising since 2006 being used as a pollen parent 7 times and a seed parent 5 times. Three of the offspring have been awarded. The species has been awarded 13 times in USA (12 times) and Germany (1) with 1 FCC, 4 AM, 1 HCC, and several cultural awards.



PLANT COMMENTARY - DECEMBER 2020

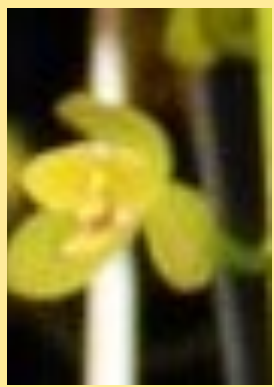
This was our final meeting for the year and our Christmas Dinner. There were only a small number of plants tabled but that certainly did not detract from Quality.

Orchid of Second Division and Plant of the Night

The plant chosen by the Judges was an outstanding Cymbidium, *Cym. madidum* 'Purity' beautifully grown by Beth Stronach. This is a lovely species that is an Australian native.

The plant shown by Beth had 6 long pendulous inflorescences each carrying multiple dainty flowers of the yellow/green form. The flowers were all clean and fresh and well flowered. Beth grows this plant successfully.

Congratulations Beth.



**Orchid of Second
Division / Orchid
of the Night**
Cym. madidum 'Purity'
Grown by Beth Stronach
Photos Neil Cooper

Seedling of the Night *Paph. superbiens*

Grown by Michael Willoughby & Oui Ju
Photo Neil Cooper





Orchid of First Division

Cym. Cricket 'Howzat'

Grown By Laurie & Sue Carter

Photos Neil Cooper

Orchid of First Division

The plant of First Division was grown by Laurie & Sue Carter and was a lovely *Cymbidium*, *Cym. Cricket 'Howzat'*. The plant was carrying four lovely pendulous inflorescences with small attractive brownish flowers with contrasting red labellums.

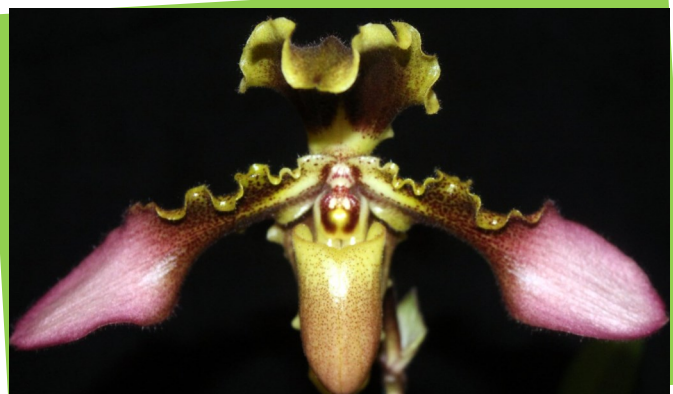
A very well grown plant in a smallish pot.

Well Done Laurie & Sue.

Orchid of Open Division

The plant of Open Division was *Paph. hirsutissimum* grown by Michael Willoughby and Oui Ju . This was a well grown plant with 3 striking flowers evenly spaced around the pot. This is a species and had attractive curly dorsal sepal and petals of a dark pink colouration with contrasting light brown labellum.

Congratulations Michael & Oui.



Orchid of Open Division

Paph. hirsutissimum

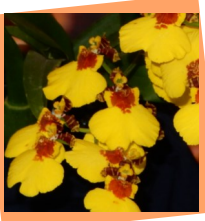
Grown by Michael Willoughby & Oui Ju

Photos Neil Cooper

A **BIG** Thank you to our Judges, Associates, Typists and helpers for their support and efforts!

Good Growing and keep looking for that potential winner!

Phil Steer
Registrar



DAYTIME CHAPTER



Hi Everybody,

Our Dinner for the Christmas breakup was a happy affair with Patty and George Abell and Barb and Max Almond and various friends present.

Our next meeting will be on Thursday February 11th 2021, at 2.00 pm. Our Guest Speaker will be our Senior Vice President, Malcolm Mangelsdorf, who will talk on anything to do with Orchids. If the temperature is over 35 degrees the meeting is cancelled.

The Daytime Chapter Christmas Dinner

Photo Andrew Dean

Andrew



The first meeting for the year was held on Sunday 17 January 2021. Malcolm Mangelsdorf, our Senior Vice President, welcomed 22 members, one new member Barb Semmens, and our Guest Speaker Roger Herraman. We had three Covid Marshalls present to keep us on the straight and narrow. Phil Steer spoke on the judging into the future. John Gay has agreed to still be a judge and to manage the Learners Group which will start next meeting at 1,15pm. Malcolm gave an update on Lucy's condition and an apology was accepted from Geoff and Lucy Spear.

Name Badge: Don Greig

Door Prize: Dudley Huxtable

Our Guest Speaker Roger Herraman gave an interesting talk on Oncidiums and Intergenerics, outlining his methods of cultivation including a dose of sugar twice a year especially of the molasses kind. He showed some lovely photos of Oncidiums he has grown and is still growing. Thank you Roger for an interesting talk.

The popular plant competition had some lovely plants on display but it was won by Ruth Tugwell with her plant of *Stanhopea tigrina* var, *nigroviolacea*. Congratulations Ruth.

The next meeting will be held on Sunday 21 February when our Guest Speaker will be Jane Higgs who will speak on the Taiwan Orchid Conference that was cancelled at the last minute. Jane and Don went and saw many lovely orchids in the unfinished displays as well as visiting some lovely nurseries and places on the way. Don't miss this interesting talk. The Learners Group will restart at 1.15pm with John Gay.

Christine Robertson



Popular Vote
Stanhopea tigrina
var. *nigroviolacea*
Grown by Ruth Tugwell
 Photo Christine Robertson



Some of the Southern Region Members practising social distancing at the meeting 17 January 2021

GROWING RESTREPIAS by Brian Milligan

[First Published in *Orchids in Victoria* by OSCOV]

Are you looking for orchids that can withstand temperatures close to freezing, will grow from simple leaf cuttings and reach flowering size in two or three years, and will then flower repeatedly from each mature growth? Then *Restrepias* are the orchids for you. Their flowers range in colour from yellow through orange, brown, pink and red, some also with spots or stripes. Mostly their flowers are small but *Restrepia antennifera* 'Goliath' has flowers in which the fused lateral sepals are approximately 50 mm in length. The flowers are best described as curious, rather than beautiful, their filament-like petals and dorsal sepal giving them the appearance of insects; some unfeeling cymbidium growers refer to them as cockroach orchids! Most *Restrepia* species grow into specimen plants in as little as five years, provided of course, that one is able to resist the temptation to take leaf cuttings to grow into divisions to swap or sell!



Restrepia antennifera

The genus *Restrepia* is one of 26 different genera that comprise the sub-tribe Pleurothallidinae. All are natives of tropical and sub-tropical America, the most widely grown genera, apart from *Restrepia*, being *Masdevallia*, *Dracula*, *Pleurothallis*, *Stelis* and *Octomeria*. The genus *Restrepia* commemorates José E. Restrepo, a Colombian explorer of the Andes. *Restrepia antennifera* (the type species) was found by Alexander von Humboldt in the early 1800s in the Colombian Andes, where it grew on tree trunks at an elevation of 3000 m. Humboldt and Kunth described it in 1815. Ever since that time there has been much mis-identification and confusion of the genus as a whole, and identical species are still frequently exhibited under different names.

The flowers of *Restrepias* are easily distinguished from those of other Pleurothallids by their dominant fused lateral sepals (sometimes referred to as a synsepalum). Their petals and lateral sepals are narrow and filament-like, while the lip sits flat on the synsepalum and is so well camouflaged that it is often overlooked. In fact, the shape of the labellum is an important factor in distinguishing one *Restrepia* species from another. The flowers are borne singly on inflorescences that emerge from stem sheaths behind the leaves. Each mature leaf produces four or five flowers over a period of several months. Under favourable conditions of temperature & humidity individual flowers may last for several weeks but it is uncommon for two flowers to be produced by the one leaf at the same time.

In nature, *Restrepias* are found from Mexico to Argentina, always growing in mountainous country where the humidity is high and temperatures cool to temperate. *Restrepia antennifera* grows in Colombia and Venezuela at altitudes ranging from 2100 to 3600 m, while *Rstp. trichoglossa* has been found on mossy tree trunks near Tovar (Venezuela) at altitudes of 1500-1800 m.

Under cultivation *Restrepias* are able to withstand a large range of temperatures (0-40°C), provided that exposure to the extremes is not prolonged. I grow most of my *Restrepias* in a temperature-controlled glasshouse in Melbourne, the main advantage being that I can limit the



Rstp. trichoglossa

temperature in summer to a maximum of 30°C by use of an evaporative cooler. The minimum temperature of 11°C in this house is unnecessary for *Restrepias*, as other Melbourne growers have equally good results when their plants are grown under shade-house conditions, where temperatures occasionally fall near to freezing point in winter.

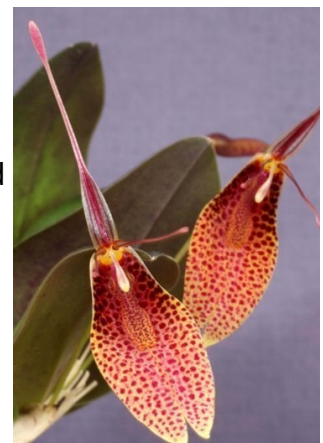
As for *Masdevallias* and other Pleurothallids, *Restrepias* must never be allowed to become totally dry. A variety of potting mixes may be used, provided that they drain well, yet retain some moisture. Sphagnum moss, used either alone or mixed with polystyrene foam or perlite, gives good results. It's advisable to re-pot every year or two, because the moss seems to deteriorate if left longer. In my experience, plants in large pots seem to grow better in a well-drained mix, rather than in moss alone. *Restrepias* respond well to the occasional application of liquid fertilisers, provided that the concentration is not so high as to kill the moss.

Restrepias have no definite resting period but in cultivation they seem to grow fastest in autumn and spring, probably because the temperatures and humidity during these seasons are more favourable. They would probably grow at the same rate all year if a temperature range of 8-20°C, like that of their natural habitat, could be maintained throughout. The main flowering season is winter and spring, although a few flowers are produced at other times. Again, they would probably flower continuously given better temperature control.

Restrepias grow so rapidly that their plants may be divided every few years. An alternative way to produce extra plants is by taking leaf cuttings. Simply remove a leaf with 25-50 mm of stem attached and push the stem into some Sphagnum moss in a small pot until the blade of the leaf touches the surface of the moss. Within a few months a new growth will emerge from the sheath at the base of the leaf; in most cases the new plant will produce its first flowers within a year or two. Mature leaves that have flowered once or twice give best results; those that have flowered repeatedly and exhausted all their growth buds may fail to produce new plants. Leaf cuttings taken in spring seem to produce new growths most rapidly. Occasionally, new plants (complete with roots) emerge from the stem sheaths of mature *Restrepia* plants. These keikis grow very rapidly if carefully removed and potted separately in moss.

When preparing *Restrepias* for a show, carefully cut off the old flower stems, which otherwise detract from the overall appearance. Then insert the pot in a larger squat pot packed with damp moss – this helps to maintain a higher level of humidity around the plant and thereby reduces the risk of the flowers collapsing during the show. Remember to hide a few pellets of snail killer in the moss, just in case a slug or snail is lurking there ready to destroy your masterpiece overnight; *Restrepia* flowers seem to be particularly attractive to these pests.

Maybe cockroach orchid isn't such a bad name for *Restrepias* after all – certainly, both cockroaches and *Restrepias* multiply and grow rapidly and are hard to kill! Under favourable conditions a small plant will develop from a leaf cutting into an attractive specimen plant carrying twenty or thirty flowers within four or five years. And a further advantage for aging cymbidium growers is that these specimen plants fit into 100 mm pots!



Restrepia contorta



Orchid Culture Notes for February

It's the start of another year in the orchid house. This year we have been dealt very varied weather ranging from baking and orchid killing 40°C plus heat to high humidity and high winds and then cooler days but scant rain. A normal cycle should start soon ?? and as the saying goes, it will get hot when the kids go back to school. Note that any heat damage will come out over the next few weeks with leaf marks becoming more evident and leaf drop occurring. The recent humidity will create some fungal issues in the shade house as well, so keep an eye out for any outbreaks and have some fungicide ready in case. Heat damaged plants with damaged leaves and stress are prime targets for pest and disease attack. The physical side of heat damage is easy to spot but remember that heat also damages the plants roots as well. Black pots exposed to the sun overheat and cook the roots. Whilst the top of the plant may come through ok, underneath things are not so good. Then sometime later the plants start to shrivel as they do no longer have a functioning root system. Most of us will put down root loss to poor culture such as over watering or a broken down mix. Just remember, heat can be added to this. Even slugs and snails will be in good numbers awakened by the sudden change in weather.

February is usually the hottest month and with it often comes an increase in the intensity of the north winds, so there is much heat left for us yet. In fact you can still have temperatures nudging the old 100 degree mark as late as the equinox. That's March 21 and the long range forecasts are pointing towards an Indian summer.

I said earlier on that prevention is a key if we are to avoid damage to our plants. It's no use after the event. I have learnt from previous heat events those plants that struggle, and I have provided them with the additional support they needed this time round. The result was only a very small number of plants suffered any damage and there were no losses. Same rules apply to pests. Spray when the moths are active for caterpillars for example. By the time their crop of loopers has started chomping on your orchids half the damage has been done. Get them as they hatch. When the rain stops inspect the orchid house and surrounds for slugs and snails. Be prepared for the next heat event. For some of us, be it age, disability, size of orchid house, whatever, we cannot go to extraordinary lengths to save our plants from the heat but there are some ideas that may lessen the damage. Humidity is your ally and keeping it up high will help. Wet the floors as often as you need to on extreme days. We have two large rubbish bins full of grey water for this purpose. Just don't water the orchids with it but using it for splashing on the shade house sides and floor is a better option than tipping it down the drain. Extra shade will help reduce burning caused by intense light. It will not reduce the damage caused by heat. A wet floor or sides of the shade house will evaporate water. With evaporation there is a release of latent heat. The air cools. Wet your hand and blow on it....it feels cool!

Basically, shade reduces damage by light and the humidity reduces damage by heat. For those with 50% shade cloth, especially the white one the damage this year would have been severe. It's looking like the extreme heat we have experienced the past couple of years may be with us for good each summer. A secondary layer of shade we can roll out over the base layer for a few days whilst the heat is at its worst may become a required item. Otherwise we may have to rethink colours. Of course aspect and location will also have a bearing. My area is very open, no trees or neighbours to shade my yard, so I have to make allowances for that.

Another thing is that we may be forced to stop growing genera that can't handle the heat and concentrate on those that are heat tolerant. My hot house for example apart from foggies has nothing to control the temperature so now only the hard cane Dendrobiums, Cattleyas and a few of the more tolerant Oncidiums spend summer in there, for everything else it is too hot. I have lost some of the real cool growing stuff that I won't replace until I can provide the artificial conditions to keep the temps below 30 all year round.



Orchid Culture Notes for February cont..

Enough of the doom and gloom. Autumn is coming! But it is not here yet. The obvious task is to keep plants moist and ensure all pots are checked regularly to make sure all plants are getting enough water. I lift and feel my pots occasionally. With practice you can tell by the weight of the pot whether or not it is dry. The old finger in the mix test works to test for moisture and of course we can buy moisture meters. By now many genera are completing their growth stage and will be in the process of maturing their growths. Some in readiness for immediate flowering over the autumn and others for winter and spring. These maturing plants should have their diet changed to one with a higher potassium content to help mature the plant as well as strengthen the raceme and improve the colours.

Might be a good idea to look at the presentation of these plans and start working on them now. For example I have a nice *C. Hawaiian Wedding Song* with several new growths all over the place in the pot. They are in sheath but not yet filling out with buds. If I leave it too long the presentation will be like a dogs breakfast and if I try and fix it too late then there is risk to the blooms so I work on it now to straighten the growths up and get them spaced correctly around the pot.

Spraying with a stress guard type preparation is also beneficial as these products reduce the amount of evaporation through transpiration. You will not stop the damage completely but a bit of forethought and action will lessen the damage.

Lets have a look around and see what's on in the shade house this month. By now our autumn flowering *Laeliniiae* complex (*Cattleyas* and *Laelia's*) will have rapidly maturing growths and some already showing emerging spikes. Make sure these spikes and growths are well supported with a stake. Keep water out of the sheaths to avoid fungal rots and spots and make sure the snail baits are on the pot. It often rains this month and it will wake up those slimey fellows. Keep well watered so the spikes remain plump. As some of these developing spikes will excrete a sugary substance you will find ants will be attracted to the spike. They can do a lot of damage as they will eat into the developing spike and they usually bring in a few soft scales as well. Extreme weather can cause buds to abort so bring them inside if it gets real hot (or unseasonably cold) at this stage of initiation.

Oncidiums as a rule will be filling out their pseudobulbs and the odd spike or two will be starting to show. Similar culture to the *Laeliniiae* complex should apply. For those with terrestrials this is the last month for re potting. Still aim to keep them on the dry side after re potting as the disturbance of re potting plus being too eager with hose will have them out too early. Wait till the cooler weather in April for this although there will be early varieties flowering in March. Like any orchid, a knowledge of the species itself or that in the hybrid is important when determining what needs to be done and when.

Native epiphyte growths as usual are all over the place. I even had 2 *Den. speciosum* flower in January. (note *Den. speciosum* var. *capricornicum* can flower very early in the year but these are not that variety) Some are maturing yet others are only buds. As a rule keep the water and feeding up. Watch out for caterpillars as they love new soft growths. Many will have a burnt leaf tip or spot. Leave them until the leaf matures before trimming them. Inspect the new growths and if they are floppy then some part of your culture is not quite right. Too much shade and high nitrogen in the feed are the two main culprits. Don't move them yet to a brighter place as they will burn. Leave that to April. They still may flower in spring.

Zygopetalums will have new growths maturing and evidence of new growths will be evident from the base of these maturing ones signal the start of a new flowering season. Keep moist, feed with a balanced to high potassium based feed and watch out for loopers, especially



Orchid Culture Notes for February cont..

on the undersides of the leaves. They don't eat through, rather they skeletonise the leaf and when that dries looks rather unsightly. A spotted, half eaten Zygo on the show bench doesn't have that appeal. Again place a few snail pellets on the surface of the pot.

Keep Paphiopedilums moist and keep an eye out for mealy bugs. High humidity and fresh air movement is important this time of year. Keep light levels fairly low. As a rule hold your hand about 12 inches above the plant and you should only just see a slight shadow. Full shadow too much light, no shadow a bit dark. This is only a rule of thumb for newer growers of this genus. Feeding is usually a balanced feed at half or less of the manufacturer's recommendations. If you can, try and flush your Paphs out occasionally with rainwater to remove salt build up from tap water and fertiliser. Adelaide water is loaded with extra salt over the summer. They will love you for it. A flush is usually two or three waters say an hour apart. The first softens and dissolves some of the salts, the second and third gets the rest. Collect the waste water and use that to wet your floors later when it's hot.

For other genera it's a matter of treating them in accordance with their growth habits although in most cases they will be in a growth mode.

February is a dry month on the show bench and apart from a few plants there won't be much else out. Even with my collection, finding enough to show will be difficult, even more with many that have flowered showing the affects of the heat. Bring in what you can. If it has a burn or a spot I am sure your plant won't be alone.

February will end and the extreme heat of summer maybe a couple of weeks later. March will be upon us and with it those cooler nights. Most of our plants will survive this summer and we need to be a little more caring to see them through it and help in the recovery stakes.

Steve Howard

STAKING CYMBIDIUMS by Alan Hope

[First Published in *Orchids in Victoria* by OSCOV]

Those of you who have cymbidiums in spike will have noticed that many of the spikes are now extending at a fairly rapid pace. Once they reach a length of about 200 mm they may be staked. However, you must use your discretion, because some spikes need to develop more fully to provide enough flexibility to allow staking, tying and training. In fact, some varieties cannot be effectively trained at all, and you will need to allow the spike to follow its natural inclination.

Flower spikes seem to fit into three categories; those that grow relatively **straight** and upright, those that have an **arching** habit and those that are **pendulous**. Many of the *Cymbidium devonianum* hybrids, such as *Cymbidium Bulbarrow*, fall into the last category, as do some of the good green and red large- and intermediate-flowered *Cymbidium* hybrids. The only advice that can be given is to let the spikes do their own thing and allow them to cascade. Sometimes the emerging spike will decide to follow the surface of the compost or to try to burrow into it and you will need to correct this problem. An effective solution is to place one end of a plastic label under the emerging spike and the other end on the rim of the pot. This creates an upward-sloping ramp that the flower spike will follow over the rim.



Cymbidium Bulbarrow

For relatively **straight** spikes insert a stake away from the edge of the pot and in a position where you imagine the flowers will be seen to their best advantage. Try to work from a position either in front of or behind the spike to reduce the chance of catching a sleeve on the buds and breaking them off. Start tying at the base of the spike using one of the soft plastic-and-wire twisty-ties and progress towards the top. Avoid forcing the spike at this stage, as you may break it. Do not use any more ties than you feel are necessary, as the judges may penalise excessive tying. You may consider removing some of the ties once you have transported your plant to the meeting or show.

An effective way of straightening a leaning spike into an upright position is to use a long piece of twisty tie, which you can tighten gradually every few days. Some growers attach a piece of hat elastic to the spike below the topmost bud and fasten the other end of the elastic to a clothes peg clipped onto a long stake. The clothes peg is slid up the stake until the elastic is just taut, so that the spike is gradually straightened. The clothes peg needs upward adjustment every few days. When the spike has stopped growing, tie it as described above.

Other growers place a horizontal wire above the plants and hitch the spike to this with elastic or with spring-loaded 'yo-yos'. In either case care is required as the topmost buds can easily be broken off if too much force is applied. Leave the spike to 'set' in its final position, otherwise it will have little strength and may droop, or even break, when the elastic is eventually removed.



Cymbidium One Tree Hill
'Beenak' HCC/OSCOV

For those spikes with an **arching or decorative habit**, insert the stake at the desired angle and tie only up to the start of the curvature or arch. Keep the tie at this point looser than usual to allow the spike to move around a little as it grows, otherwise the weight of the developing buds may cause the stem to kink at the position of the last tie and eventually to snap. With arching spikes it is necessary to let the spike develop its own strength, that is, to be largely self-supporting. However, it's a good idea to position and tie a temporary stake away from the main stem to support the arching section before transporting such plants to a meeting or show, as arching spikes are easily broken in transit.

Finally, remember to stake your spikes late in the day when the sap is flowing, rather than early on a cold morning when the stems will be brittle and easily snapped.



Cymbidium Careless Heart 'Cutie Pie'
HCC and CC/OSCOV

ORCHID CLUBS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA **General Meeting Times**

THE SOUTH COAST ORCHID CLUB OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA: Whilst COVID restrictions are in place the Club meets on the Second Monday of the month at RSL Hall, 4 Prince George Parade, Colonel Light Gardens. at 8.00p.m.

THE DAYTIME CHAPTER: meets at the Lou Kesting Hall, off Broadway, South Brighton on the second Thursday of the month at 2.00p.m.

THE SOUTHERN REGION: meets at Carrickalinga House, 17-19 Torrens Street, Victor Harbor at 2.00p.m. on the 3rd Sunday of the month.

THE ORCHID CLUB OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA: meets at 8pm in The Enfield Community Centre, 540 Regency Road, Enfield on the 1st Thursday of the month.

Daytime Group: meets from 2.00p.m. to 4.00p.m. in the Enfield Community Centre, 540 Regency Road, Enfield on the 2nd Friday of the month.

THE MURRAY BRIDGE AND DISTRICT ORCHID CLUB: meets at 1.45pm in the Seventh Day Adventist Hall, corner Myall Avenue and Standen Street, Murray Bridge on the 4th Sunday of the month.

NORTHERN AND EASTERN DISTRICTS ORCHID SOCIETY: meets in St. Philip's Church Hall, Galway Avenue, Broadview from 7.30p.m. on the 3rd Thursday of the month.

THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ORCHIDACEOUS SOCIETY: Meets at the Adelaide West Uniting Church Hall, 312 Sir Donald Bradman Drive, Brooklyn Park from 7.30p.m. on the 3rd Wednesday of the month.

THE NATIVE ORCHID SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA: meets at 7.30p.m. at St. Matthew's Church Hall, Bridge Street, Kensington on the 4th Tuesday of the month.

THE CYMBIDIUM CLUB OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA: Meets at 7.30p.m. at Burnside Community Centre, 401 Greenhill Road, Tasmore on the 4th Wednesday of the month.

Our Affiliated Clubs:

The Murray Bridge and Districts Orchid Club.

The Orchid Club of S.A. Inc.



AFFILIATED CLUBS

Murray Bridge and District Orchid Club Inc.
Orchid Club of South Australia

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E. & O. E.**