



Cultural Hints for November and December

(By Brian Steven)

This is a cultural hints guide for tasks that should be undertaken during this period.

The following guide may help Clivia enthusiasts during the months of November-December

HARVESTING SEED -- Growers will have harvested all of their seed from the 2017 spring Clivias and are now watching the germination intently. Don't forget to keep the fungus away from the seed with a suitable fungicide.

PLANTING SEED -- Seed planting will have finished by now. Remember when the seed has sprouted help it by making sure the radicle (root) is growing downwards. (Make a hole in your potting mix for the radicle).

PESTS AND DISEASES -- Now is the time to make inspections of your Clivias at least once a week, looking out for mealybug. I have noticed a couple of big plants in my collection have borne plenty of mealybug right through the winter, despite a couple of sprayings. It is very easy to miss mealybugs on large plants, so examine them often. Use a systemic pesticide spray. Make sure the spray reaches down between the leaves at the base of the plant and even the growing mix. Keep a lookout for ants and slugs and snails and treat accordingly.

Another little nuisance I have found on a couple of Clivias is a little green caterpillar set between two leaves joined together.

WATERING -- October has not been a warm month around Toowoomba. Although most of the Clivia growers have benefited from good rain, don't forget as the temperatures rise (hopefully!), more watering should be undertaken, especially the younger Clivias in small pots. If you want nice healthy, well-grown seedlings don't let the pots dry out. Of course, the best time to water is very early in the morning before the temperatures rise or late in the cooler afternoons.

FEEDING -- Feed all the Clivias now with slow release or animal fertilizers. The six-month Osmocote Plus fertilizer seems to do the job. With the liquid fertilizers the ideal is to fertilize frequently using a half strength mixture. Some growers will give their large mature Clivias a boost during the summer by giving them a good fertilizing of Tropic or similar fertilizer. Don't forget to feed your large potted Clivias with Potash for healthier growth and stronger flowering. Follow the manufacturer's directions. I found that using Potash a couple of times during the summer months really benefited my flowering size Clivias, resulting in larger umbels and very strong scapes. Potash can be bought in liquid, powder and granule form. I use the granule form, as I found that it dissolves slowly and lasted quite a while on the surface of the pot.

PLANTING OUT SEED-LINGS -Young seedlings from last season consisting of at least 2 or 3 leaves can now be planted out into pots using a suitable Clivia potting mix. Some growers use comp pots, with three or four young plants to the pot. Clivias planted this way tend to grow well and seem to thrive on the closeness in the pot. Use only weak strength fertilizers.

POTTING ON -- If you have seedlings at least 15 months old *and* are growing well and look healthy, pot them on to bigger pots (150 or 200mm pots.) Larger plants can be potted on into 250mm pots. Remember not to disturb the roots of the plants excessively. Don't over-pot.

DIVIDING AND TRANSPLANTING --The general opinion is that mature clivias in warm climates can be divided and repotted any time of the year without detrimental effect. This is an ideal time to divide your plants and remove any "pups" you may require. Remember to douse any cuts with a suitable fungicide. Do not overwater divided plants.