



South Coast Orchid Club of South Australia

Affiliated with the Orchid Club of South Australia Inc. and with The Australian Orchid Council

PATRON: Mr. L.R. Grey (Mayor of Marion)

MONTHLY NEWS SHEET
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Written by Mr. B. Hansen. Printed and edited by Mrs. I Nash.

The next meeting of the South Coast Orchid Club will be held in the R.S.L. Hall Morphett Vale on Tuesday April 8th. at 8 p.m.

Members are requested to bring any plants they have in flower, this is an interesting part of the evening as we can see what is in flower at this time of the year.

New Member - Mr. John Harris, 38, Princes Road, Torrens Park.S.A. 5062.

Subscriptions - These are now overdue. This will be the last month you will receive your bulletin if you are not a financial member.

Our judge for the monthly competition will be Mr. Mick Chenoweth.

The programme for this meeting will include a short slide sequence on loan from the Orchid Club of S.A., of the publicity release for the 4th. Australian Orchid Conference to be held in Sydney this year from Sept. 14th. - 20th., entitled "Scenes and Orchids of Sydney".

Again we shall be going "Potty" with a demonstration by Mr. Les. Poole. This will be particularly helpful to our many new members, who have any doubts on breaking up, potting on, or types of compost used.

This will be an opportune time to bring forward any problems you may have with your present culture. We have growers at these meetings who have had the same problems that you are experiencing, and will be pleased to remedy any of your missgivings. If you have any questions do not hesitate to bring them forward. Write them down if you prefer, and place them in the box provided on the library table.

A suggestion box is placed on the library table in which to place any ideas you may have, or any copy for inclusion in the monthly bulletin.

LADIES please note:- The floral art section will again be in operation for our Winter Show on July 8th.

At the Management Committee's meeting this month the amendment to By-Law 1 (B)(ii) as published in the bulletin last month was affirmed, to which was added a rider - Any member exhibiting in the Novice section, and wishing to move permanently to the Open section at any time, may apply in writing to the Management Committee for consideration to do so.

For those of you missed the March meeting, the film "Leave them a Flower" was well received by all members. It must have been interesting as there was no chatting from members.

SHOW TALK.

At the next General meeting in April, a preliminary plan of the Marion Shopping centre will be on display. Every year the Show Marshall has had to beg members to tell him if they are going to need

- (1) An area for themselves and what size.
- (2) An area for their own little group.
- (3) Whether they have only one Orchid that they can bring in.

So if you are a novice and you have spikes showing on your plant or plants, we would like you to show them at Marion, in doing so you help the Club, you will get to know the members better, and in helping at the show you will learn how to display your orchids and how to arrange an exhibit.

A book will be passed around at the next meeting and I would like you to write in your name, what space you require, or if you only have one or two we have a Composite exhibit to handle these plants.

We also need helpers and for those of you who would like to be in it but do not have any Orchids or indoor plants, there will be various jobs that will help exhibitors by leaving them with only their exhibit to worry about.

Finally the next little bit should be read by all members.

'DEM BONES'

It has been said that any organisation is made up of five different kinds of bones:-

1. There are the Wish bones who spend all their time wishing someone else would do the work.
2. There are the Jaw bones who do all the talking and nothing else.
3. There are the Knuckle bones who consistently knock everything that someone else tries to do.
4. There are the Lazy bones who cannot be stirred into participating in the work which is being done, and never seem to be particularly concerned with responsibility.
5. Finally there are the Back bones who get under the load, and do the work.

Judging results for March:-

OPEN SECTION

Cymbidium	MINUET	Mr. & Mrs. R. Gowling	3 pts.
	MINUET	Mr. & Mrs. L. Poole	2 pts.
Cattleya	GENTLE MOMENTS	Mr. & Mrs. J. Hoffner	3 pts.
	C.REX x C.FORBESII	Mr. P. Speer	2 pts.
Paphiopedilum	TRANSVAAL	Mr.& Mrs. B. Hansen	3 pts.
	MAUIAE MAGNIFICUM	Mr.& Mrs. B. Hansen	2 pts.
Species	Paph. 'SUKHAKULII'	Mr. & Mrs. J. Hoffner	3 pts.
	" 'LIEMIANA'	Mr. & Mrs. J. Hoffner	2 pts.
	" 'haynaldianum'	Mr. & Mrs. B. Hansen	1 pt.
Misc.	Den.ROBT. REILLY x Den.		
	COMPACTUM "BLUE MOON"	Mr. & Mrs. J. Hoffner	3 pts.
	Den. SARIE MARITIS	Mr. & Mrs. J. Hoffner	2 pts.
	Lyc. HYBRID	Mr. & Mrs. B. Hansen	1 pt.

Popular Votes

Orchids	MINUET	Mr. & Mrs. R. Gowling
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Once again there were no entries in the NOVICE section or the Indoor plants. Come along you novices show us what you can do.

When I stand around chatting after our meetings, the long - short - and tall stories I hear about things members have done - "to their orchids" - amazes me, we have some very unique growers in this club, but in chatting like this it takes months for the stories to circulate around to all club members, and by the time the stories have done the rounds by word of mouth they have been distorted so prolifically that the originator often listens in amazement at the new story. So for the sake of keeping the records straight and the stories feasible, how about writing your story - hardship-good luck - revolutionary new idea or growing technique on a piece of paper and handing it in at the next meeting, as you will probably realise from reading my ramblings, I am really stuck for bulletin material and your help is needed. You may think if your articles are written that you will have nothing to read in the bulletin but rubbish. "How do you think I feel"?, so please just don't laugh, "Do it"

Now that the Autumn is here, keep an eye open for falling Oak leaves etc. These can be gathered and stored in open weave bags (so they won't rot) and they are invaluable for ground and pot cover at the show. Now is also a good time to pot on your background shrubbery, indoor plants etc. so they will be established for use at the Spring show.

For those members who use an actual compost to grow their Cymbidiums in, now is the time to start looking for a supply of Hardwood Sawdust and or buzzer chips.

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As this type of mix requires pre-composting, make sure you have your mix ready so that repotting can be done as soon as flower spikes are cut. Dividing and potting as you go is much easier than leaving it all to the end of the flowering season. Besides, the early flowering types will then be well away and they need not be disturbed when they are in full growth in Spring.

As I write this bulletin,
The rain is teaming down,
I should imagine that slug and snails are around,
Mustering ready to march forth,
On our lush green patch of Orchids,
So don't Hesitate - "Scatter Bait".

By William Words for what they're worth.

Each year you hear the growers lament, I had a lovely spike on my "thingamebob" but the snails enjoyed it first. So try to be first and maybe you might flower your good orchid well enough to win a prize.

The following article was cut from the newspaper and sent in by Mr. Vic. Martin. It will probably interest quite a number of members.

STAGHORNS

To propagate staghorn plants from spores, half-fill a 4" pot with charcoal or gravel, then fill to within 1 in. of top of pot with finely sifted soil and very small pieces of crushed brick.

Tamp the soil down to produce an even surface, and water. Allow excess water to drain away.

Cut away a piece of the frond, say 2" x 1" with brown spore cases underneath, and cut this into three small strips.

Lay strips on the surface of the soil and cover pot with a piece of glass. Stand pot in a dish of water and keep in a shady place. Germination may take a considerable time.

After spores have germinated and while still very small, each plantlet should be transferred to its own small pot.

THIS MONTH'S SELECTION

Industrial Safety

Sign in machine shop: "Girls, if your sweater is too large for you, watch out for the machines. If you are too large for your sweater, watch out for the machinists."

The following article on Oncidiums was written by Mr. Bob Deane of the Orchid Society of N.S.W. and is reprinted from the First Australian Orchid Conference .

ONCIDIUMS

The Oncidium is a large and varied genus of epiphytical orchids distributed throughout Central America from Florida, through Mexico, the Panama Peninsular and south to Argentine and Chile. Many species of the smaller growing types as well as some of the larger ones are found on all the West Indian islands.

The name of the genus is derived from the Greek 'ONKOS' for tumor or swelling, in allusion to the warty callouses on the lip of all the species in the genus. There are about 600 species recorded but there is considerable doubt that all are true species or merely varietal forms. This is particularly so with the so called 'miniature' group of Oncidiums. These are found on small islands and there is considerable variation between the forms found. Apart from this the genus is very closely related to Odontoglossum, Miltonia, Brassia and about twenty other lesser genera. The most constant characters used to differentiate the genus are the short column, with a petaloid wing on either side of the stigma, a protuberance below the stigma, and the callouses or deeply toothed crest on the lip.

The plants vary greatly both in form and size. We can, however, conveniently classify them into two groups, those with and those without pseudo-bulbs. A third group can then be made of the so called miniature Oncidiums. The distinguishing feature of this group is the equitant (three edged) foliage, which is common to most. These plants are grown extensively in Hawaii and Florida as these areas have a climate similar to the West Indies where most of this group is found. Some of the Sydney growers in the seaside suburbs are now growing them very well but I have not had any success as I do not have the right conditions. Thus, I must confine my remarks to the larger growing types and the botanicals.

My plants are grown at Cheltenham, a Sydney suburb about 15 miles inland and at an elevation of 400 feet above sea level. The temperature ranges from below 40°F, with a few frosts, in the winter to well in excess of 100°F during the summer. I have been able to divide my plants into three groups as far as culture is concerned.

Group 1. These plants are grown in a glasshouse heated to a minimum of 65 degrees F. during the winter as I grow other genera in the same house. Possibly a lower temperature would suffice quite as well as far as the Oncidiums are concerned but I cannot try this without damage to the other plants. The glasshouse is covered on the outside with 64% saran cloth, the glass being left clear. All the plants in the house are potted in flat terra-cotta pots in fir bark. Having them all in the same potting medium facilitates watering. All plants are fertilised each week with an organic rather than an inorganic fertiliser to avoid excessive salt build up in the pot. Watering is every day during the summer reducing to two or three times a week in the winter.

ONCIDIUMS cont.

Group 2. These plants are potted similarly to Group 1 but they are grown out in the shade house under 30% saran cloth. Watering is also similar to those in group 1, but they are not fertilised as much and not at all during the winter months.

Group 3. This group comprises the greater part of my collection and these plants are grown on fibre blocks (*Dicksonia antarctica*) under shade house conditions. The fibre used is the brown variety as I find it much easier to get and to use. Some growers think this is far too acidic but I have not found it so. Mostly I like to dry it out completely before storage or use. This probably reduces the acid content considerably. I use very small blocks and this avoids excessive moisture retention which is one of the main objections some growers have towards this fibre. Nylon fishing line or stainless steel wire is the best for attaching the plants to the block. The wire is far quicker but only suitable for plants with a tough rhizome. For small plants or seedlings I use a very small piece of fibre and put the roots in between like a sandwich. Galvanised wire is not suitable as the fibre acid reacts with the zinc. As well as ruining the galvanising the plant is subjected to a large dose of a zinc salt which is harmful as zinc is only a trace element. The plant must be tied very firmly so that it cannot move in relation to the fibre. If it can, then the roots will most likely be damaged while trying to attach themselves to the block. As the plant grows it can be attached to progressively larger blocks of the fibre without removing the previous one. These plants are watered every day during the summer and as required during the winter. This varies as we are sometimes subjected to quite strong winds which dry out the blocks very quickly. However, we water in the mornings during the colder months so that the plants will be dry by night just in case there is a frost. In summer they are watered in the evening so that they will retain the moisture for as long as possible. During the growing season a few applications of an organic fertiliser are beneficial but too much is dangerous as the plant will become very soft and subject to fungal attack. Large soft growths are very prone to attack by *Rhizotonia repens* which will destroy the growth completely in one day. If inorganic fertilisers are used they should not be used more than two or three times a year, as the excess salts are very hard to leach out of the fibre. I find that 'Formula 20' is beneficial for freshly attached plants.

Having told you how I grow them, these are some of the species I am growing:-

Group 1.

O.lanceanum. No pseudo-bulbs but has thick leathery leaves up to 15 inches long. They are deep green with purple spotting. The flower spikes are branched, to 30 inches high. The flowers are large, fragrant with yellowish petals and sepals, spotted with chocolate brown. The lip is large and a beautiful rose-purple colour. Flowers mainly in summer and autumn.

O.splendidum. Very heavy pseudo-bulbs 3 ins. high with very thick fleshy leaf. Tall upright spikes of very large flowers. The petals and

ONCIDIUMS cont.

O.splendidum cont.

sepals are yellow barred with brown. The lip is large, flat and clear yellow. I understand that this particular Oncidium is cultivated overseas for the cut flower trade as the flowers are very long lasting and it flowers in mid winter, Xmas overseas of course, when flowers are scarce. I have also found that this particular species is very prone to attack by *Rhizotonia repens*, which, in this case, takes two days to destroy the leading growth. The thick fleshy leaf the first day and the pseudo-bulb the second.

O.cebolleta. This plant has very small pseudo-bulbs which form a base for the terete leaves. It has a long branched spike with smallish yellow flowers spotted with brown. It normally flowers in late winter and is very long lasting.

O.altissimum. Large pseudo-bulbs usually flattened. Narrow pale green leaves to 15 inches long. The flower spikes are over six feet long with many short branches, each with about 12 flowers. The flowers are about 1½", yellow; barred and blotched with brown. This variety flowers in spring.

Group 2.

O.ornithorhynchum. This plant has oval oblong pseudo-bulbs about two inches high; dull green leaves 6 to 12 inches long. The flowers come on thin, wiry, pendulous spikes which are branched and several feet long. The flowers are nearly an inch across; soft rose-lilac in colour and very fragrant. The plant, once established, is very free flowering, most growths sending at least two spikes and I have had four. This species strongly resents fibre block culture. Flowers late autumn and into winter.

O.incurvum. The plant is similar to *O.ornithorhynchum* but more robust and a brighter green. It produces upright spikes to seven feet long. There are many branches but with few flowers on each. The basic colour of the flower is white, the petals and sepals being barred or spotted with rose-pink. The lip is white with a yellow crest. Different clones of this species flower at different times for me but mostly in the summer. This is also a very fragrant one. The flower spikes have the habit of reaching their full length and staying in this condition for sometimes months before the branches appear. Once the branches do appear the buds develop rapidly and open in a few weeks.

O.leucochilum. I find that this species grows best in a pot but some growers prefer the fibre block. The pseudo-bulbs are up to 5 inches high with leaves to 12 inches. It has very long branched sprays with many flowers. The flowers vary greatly in both size and colour but they are found up to two inches across. The petals and sepals are a yellowish green, barred and blotched with brown. The lip is pure white but often with a small red spot. This is a spring flowering variety and is very long lasting.

O.sphacelatum. This is very similar to *O.altissimum* to which it is related. The plant is not quite so robust and the flowers are smaller with fewer on each branch. This is also a spring flowering variety.

ONCIDIUMS cont.

Group 3.

O. varicosum. This is perhaps Sydney's most grown species *Oncidium*. It has oval pseudo-bulbs, deeply furrowed while in flower. The sprays of flowers are 3 to 5 feet long and branched. The petals and sepals are very small; yellow and barred with light brown. The lip is large, bright yellow and often with a red or brown marking in front of the crest. Variety 'Rogersii' is a type much superior to the form and this name is often incorrectly used when staging plants. According to Sander the labellum is 2 to 3 inches across, while Williams describes it as a separate species with up to 170 flowers $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches across. Very few of these exhibited would measure up to these standards.

O. crispum. Pseudo-bulbs are 3 to 4 inches high, usually brownish in colour and sometimes slightly flattened. The flower spikes are upright and two to four feet long with few branches. The flowers are large with the petals and sepals of nearly equal size to the lip. They are chestnut brown in colour; the lip is brown with yellow spots and red near the base. Variety 'Grandiflorum' is similar but much larger and with a narrow yellow margin to the petals and sepals. Both these flower in early autumn.

O. gardneri. This is probably a natural hybrid between *forbesii* and *dasstyle* and is vary variable. Most of those I have seen have only a short spike with but few flowers although it is described in several books as having long spikes with many flowers. However, the lack of flowers is made up for in the size and shape. The sepals are a rich brown barred with yellow; the petals brown with marginal yellow markings. The lip is very large, bright yellow with red-brown markings. It usually flowers in late summer or early autumn.

O.marshallianum. Another reasonably large grower with long branched flower spikes coming in late spring. The petals and sepals are reasonably large, bright yellow with brown markings. The lip is large, bright yellow with the base and crest spotted with red.

O.sarcodes.This one looks a little different; the pseudo-bulbs are cylindrical, about 6 inches high and quite a deep green. It usually has two thick leathery leaves of the same colour. Here again the flowers are very varied, coming in long pendulous spikes with short branches. The sepals and petals are chestnut brown; the lip is bright yellow with a few brown spots near the crest. Some I have seen have almost green petals and sepals. This is another spring flowerer.

O. flexuosum. A smaller flowered variety that usually manages to be in flower for a show which makes it very desirable. It has rather flattened pseudo-bulbs carried on a stout ascending rhizome. The flower spikes are thin and wiry, usually with many short branches. The flowers are yellow and brown and about half an inch across.

To be continued.

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Owing to the length of the above article, it will be completed in next months bulletin