



# 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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Our next meeting, an EXTRA-ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING, will be held at the R.S.L. Hall, Morphett Vale, on Tuesday April 9th. at 7.45 p.m.

At our last Committee meeting it was passed that the present Committee should be dissolved, therefore all offices will be vacated at the opening of the meeting and a re-election will take place. Nominations are called for President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and five Committee members. Nomination forms are enclosed and should be in the hands of the present Secretary, Mr. Lou Carr before the start of the meeting on April 9th.

Our guest speaker for the night will be Mr. Graham Marks from Ansett Pioneer, who will be speaking on 'General Tourism'.

We will have a potting demonstration by Mr. Bernie Hansen, who will also deputise for Mr. Syd Monkhouse this month, giving a short talk on the Culture of Orchids.

Bernie is a very valued member and Past President of our club and recently became a Life Member of the Orchid Club of South Australia. This is the highest honour which a club can give to a member, for the years of service to the club and the Fellowship of Orchid Growers generally.

Our Judge for the night will be Mr. Mick Chenoweth, we are looking forward to seeing him again, as it has been some time since he was able to attend one of our meetings.

The LIBRARY will be open as usual and Mrs. Ellie Shaw, our librarian, has just purchased a new book "Home Orchid Growing". This is now available for members. Ellie is doing a wonderful job for the Club, and members are asked to help by returning books promptly to give others a chance.

## TRADING TABLE

This will again be a focal point for our new members. You will have a chance to purchase good plants at reasonable prices, at the same time helping our Club funds. Members are asked to bring along any plants they wish to sell, including foliage plants. Our club will benefit by 20% of all sales made.

OPEN SECTION

PAPHIOPEDILUM ALBION FCC.RHS.		No name	3 pts.
SPECIES	P.charlesworthii	M.R. Chenoweth	3 pts
	P.javanicum	M.R. Chenoweth	2 pts
	Stenoglottis longifolia	J.& A Hoffner	1 pt
MISC.GENERA	Den.LIPSTICK X URSULA 'GOLD FLUSH'	J.& A. Hoffner	3 pts.
	Den.LIMBERLOST BEAUTY	Wes. Harris	2 pts.
	Den. PAULINE	J.& A. Hoffner	1 pt.

NOVICE SECTION

NOTHING EXHIBITED

INDOOR PLANTS

ADIANTUM (Maidenhair fern)	D. Grave	3 pts.
ALOCASIA cuprea	Wes. Harris	2 pts.
CODIAEUM (Croton)	Wes. Harris	1 pt.

Well, the new committee held it's first meeting at Mr. Les Poole's place and a mighty lot of business was put through.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Peter Summers on his election to fill the vacancy on Committee, and also to thank Mrs. Lynch & Mr. Peter Speer for also making themselves available for election.

Peter Summers has an unenviable task as Show Marshall due to the lateness in the year, so all support that Club members can give, will certainly be appreciated.

The Committee now stands at:-

President	Mr. Les Poole and Assistant Show marshall
Imm.Past Pres.	Mr. Keith Shaw and assistant show marshall and Host
Vice president	Mr. Bernie Hansen
Secretary	Mr. Lou. Carr
Treasurer	Mr. John Leeder
Committee	Mr. Peter Summers and Show Marshall
"	Mrs. Ellie Shaw and assistant show marshall and Librarian
"	Mr. Wes. Harris
"	Mr. Dick Styles

Mrs. Leora Harvey is continueing as Hostess, Mrs. Dulcie Grave will supervise supper arrangements.

Our spring show date has been finalized, it will be held at the Marion Shopping Centre on the 5th. October to the 12th. October.

It is pleasing to see that a composite committee made up of 4 members from the Orchid club of S.A. and 2 members from each affiliated Society had its first meeting, maybe in future years a better system of organising show dates will be available, plus better liaison between clubs, could mean an exchange of ideas that I am sure we will all benefit from.

Members are asked to bear with us in regards to the bulletin until a Bulletin sub-committee can be organised. Until one has to get out a bulletin we do not appreciate the amount of work and time that our former Editor put into the project, which has always been a credit to her conscientious effort in bringing the bulletin out on time each month, which I am sure we were all truly grateful.

If any body is interested, the Australian Cymbidium Co. in N.S.W. is evidently selling off a large range of Mcbeans Orchid Mericlones at very reasonable prices.

#### CULTURAL NOTES

Well it looks like a bumper flowering season, everybody who owns flowering size Cyms. are jumping for joy at all the spikes showing. Our President Les Poole is amazed at the effort his Cyms. are putting forth with multiple spikes showing on leading growths. This is an example of what happens when you get away from the "Big Smoke" and into the fresh country air and the fragrance of septic tanks. Even us city dwellers are revelling in spiking plants.

So all I can say is watch for slugs and snails and "Delete". Early spikes should now be long enough to start training to stakes. Kalangs - Earlyana's - Lustrous Betty - Henry Davis and seedlings with these as parents should be starting to flower. Water only when plants feel dry.

#### To Grow a Cattleya Cold - by Bernie Hansen

There are a lot of Catts. that will grow Cold but firstly before you buy Catts. it pays to check up on the parentage. Most Catts that do not have any Sphoronites in their make up will do.

#### Growing condition.

If you grow your Catts in a shadehouse with a little extra shade than Cyms. need from about November through to April or when the cooler weather sets in and then place them in a Cold glasshouse, sunroom or glass covered shelter for the winter months and a certain amount of success can be had.

The plants can be watered and fed the same as your Cyms. through the warm weather, letting them grow a little dryer through the cool months, by this I mean that on a good warm winters day they can be thoroughly watered but then let them dry out before the next watering.

#### Compost

As these plants will want to grow reasonably dry in the winter a coarse mix is necessary, I would suggest  $\frac{3}{4}$  grade fir bark 3 parts to one part Isolite, this is not the only mix but one I feel that will tolerate a multitude of mistakes that we all make.

#### Types

Any crossing that has C.Claesiana - C.Intermedia - C.Vietchii - L.anceps - L.gouldeana - L.superbiens will grow quite well cold. Other types should be selected that flower through the warmer months.

HARD CANE DENDROBIUMS

By Mr. M.R. Chenoweth.

Probably as a result of having, during judging and paint commentaries, on numerous occasions, made remarks that they are easy to grow and flower very readily and costantly, I have been given the job of writing this article on my method of growing Hard Cane Dendrobiums.

Provided a grower is able to supply the correct conditions, I firmly believe this genus to be extremely easy to care for and in the 8 years I have been growing them, have never known a reasonable sized plant to miss flowering regularly in season.

I commenced with a small plant of Den. biggibum phalaenopsis, commonly known as the Cooktown Orchid which, as most members will know, is the National Flower of Queensland. This was grown for the first two years in an unheated sun-room and although it grew satisfactorily, dropped its buds just before the flowers were due to open. In 1967 I built a small glass house approx. 11' x 15' with a high pitched roof. One end of the house I heated with Pyrotanax heating cable, wherupon my "cookie" flowered, and has, like its now numerous relatives, flowered without fail every year since.

Plants are grown on a wire mesh frame which hangs from high in the house down to bench top level. Plants are hung from this frame by attaching a single wire hook to the plastic pots in which they grow. My house is constructed so that a full length of the house faces north, and the dendrobiums grow on the sunny side of the frame and act as a sun screen to provide shade on the southern side for paphiopedilums and other shade loving species. The house is heated in Winter with the thermostat set so that the heater cuts in when the temperature at bench level drops below 60 degrees F. The air high in the house is probably 5 or 6 degrees higher than at bench level. Humidity in the house is maintained at a reasonable level by keeping the bench tops and floor damp, particularly from October until April.

My plants are growing in a variety of mixes and I must confess it is difficult to judge which is best. My favourite brew consists of 3 parts American Fir (which is treated first by soaking in lime water and then a weak fertilizer solution) and 1 part Isolite with a large handful of fine gravel to each gallon of mix. Sometimes I add, or substitute, varying quantities of scoria, charcoal and small cubes of treefern fibre. You will notice all of these ingredients are very course and free draining which appears to be most important. with hard caned dendrobiums it is also desirable to keep plants slightly underpotted, a 4" pot being quite suitable for large adult plants, although they are inclined to become top heavy, particularly when in flower.

As the potting medium is very open frequent watering in the warmer weather is necessary, however watering should be reduced in the Autumn when the canes are fully developed and should be kept to a minimum while the plants are in bloom as this appears to give them improved keeping qualities.

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Fertilizing should be frequent and regular from the time the new forward growths begin to send down their own roots in Sept.- Oct. each year after flowering is finished, and maintained until approximately March when canes should be almost fully developed.

The Genus Dendrobium is the second largest in the family of orchids and is divided into a number of sub-sections. Several of these sections are being crossed by hybridists, particularly in Queensland and many new and interesting hybrids are being developed. With inter-sectional crossings and by using cool growers with warm, a wider variety of colours and plants with more adaptability to different climatic conditions are being created. To illustrate this point members will probably recall the magnificent display of plants with white and pinky-mauve bicolor flowers exhibited by Mr. Kevin McFarlane from Queensland at the 3rd. Orchid Conference Show last year. These were plants of Den. Impact. Impact is the result of crossing Den. New Guinea ( Den. macrophyllum x Den. atrovioleaceum) and Den. phalaenopsis schroderianum "Bicolor" and again back crossing onto Den. phalaenopsis schroderianum. This crossing has the very desirable distinction of flowering over most months of the year and each plant remaining in bloom for several weeks at a time.

Seedlings to flower within 12 months are available from Nurseries in Queensland at reasonable prices and come in a wide variety of shapes and colours. Antelope, semi-antelope New Guinea type dendrobiums come in a wide variety of colours including yellow, brown, chartreuse with chocolate purple stripes, blue, violet, red, bronze, white, purple and apricot whilst the round filled in phalaenopsis types are available in mauves to deep red purples, pure whites and whites with flares of pink or mauve.

If you can provide heat in winter, take my advice and "give them a try". I am sure you will not regret it.

This months Selection

Due to my up bringing I do not know any smutty ditties but the following titbit may tickle your fancy.

A priest was standing looking at his new car that had just been rammed by a Methodist Minister's vehicle.

The Minister on alighting from his vehicle promptly said. "I can see you're a man of the Cloth the way you are controlling yourself". To this the Priest replied, "Controlling myself, if it wasn't Good Friday I would \* ! eat you".

Stop Press

With Streaking the current rage, perhaps we will have a 'Nude' Flash at the next meeting.

P.S. ALL streakers to report to the Vice President for vetting.

CULTIVATING ORCHIDS IN LIVING HUMUS by Merv. Dunn, Valley Orchids Pty. Ltd.

The question most frequently asked by visitors to our Orchid farms is "What do you feed them on? Meaning, usually "What chemicals do you give them?"

I think it is the greatest tragedy of this century that so many people have either forgotten or never learnt the laws of Nature pertaining to living things.

That so many people have been misled into believing that chemicals are plant food.

That so many people are aware of the dangers to themselves of tonics, drugs and poisons yet so few realise the dire consequences of applying chemicals to other living things.

That from this blatant transgression of Natural laws our children's inheritance will be chaos instead of order in living things.

Our answer to the question "On what do you feed them?", is always the same - - - - - WATER!

Our Orchids are sprayed only with water - no chemicals, no fertilizers, no insecticides or fungicides, no tonics, drugs or poisons - only water.

Why?

Because we look upon our orchids as living things and we look upon the countless millions of unseen life in the humus in which our orchids grow, as living things.

We think also of the humus itself as a living thing, for it is still organic matter.

It is not dead in the sense of having returned to the inorganic state. It has not been burnt, nor drowned, nor suffocated, nor poisoned with chemicals.

Nor has it been petrified or calcified, or turned to coal, oil or gas.

It is still organic matter merely in a transition stage between one form of life and another.

By living organisms, it has been converted from plant tissue and animal wastes to humus.

By living organisms, it will again be converted from humus to plant food which, in turn will be converted, this time by living plants, to plant tissue. It will sustain once again the life factor in living things - our Orchids.

We treat all of them, the plants, the micro-organisms and the humus, with the respect that should be accorded living things.

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The most important ingredient of any living thing is not the few chemicals or the water of which it is composed, but the factor of life itself - the life factor - which permeates each individual cell of the countless millions that go to make up the plant or animal body.

The life factor gives purpose to, it directs and it controls the actions of living things.

Creation of the life factor, its behaviour and its ultimate life span are the sole prerogatives of Nature.

Understanding the complex chemical actions how plants convert radiant energy to tissue and how animals convert this tissue back to energy and to other tissue, without understanding the life factor itself is, to me, of no gain.

As no man understands the life factor, it suffices me to believe what the great philosopher, Aristotle, put so well, when he said, "If there is a better way than another, it is the way of Nature".

Accordingly, it is the ways of Nature that guide and influence all our Orchid growing activities.

Everything that lives, be it plant or animal, to sustain its life factor, needs a continuous and adequate supply of these items; Air, the sun's radiation for both light and heat - which because they are inseparable, I shall refer to simply as "light", water and food - Air, light, water, food.

Myself, our Orchids and the myriad unseen life in the humus, all need these things.

Indeed, so does the humus itself lest it should die - petrify and return to the inorganic state.

I am mobile so I can go and get my share of each.

Our Orchids are stuck where we put them so we must see to it that the things they need are provided them and, if we want the best from them, we must see that they have the optimum levels of supply of each of these items, at all times.

Taking each of these factors, in turn, as we apply them to our Orchids.

Fresh air is always available. We never close the walls of the planthouse, even during the flowering season.

An adequate supply of air to the roots of the plants is made available by the movement of the earthworms throughout the humus. They literally "boil" the humus each night.

Light is admitted to the planthouse at a calculated intensity, automatically and without manipulation, on each day of the year.

The planthouse is built to take advantage of the sun's changing path in the heavens throughout the year, the variation in the intensity of solar radiation that reaches ground level between the Summer and Winter Solstices and, the light transmission co-efficient - that is, the "reflective characteristics"- of glass.

Water is applied as often as necessary to maintain the moisture content of the humus at a level suitable to both the living organisms of the humus and the plants.

An abundance of Natural and complete plant food for any level of supply of the other factors of air, light and water is always available.

THE PLANT FOOD IS PROVIDED BY THE WASTE PRODUCTS OF THE LIFE PROCESSES AND THE RESIDUES, OF THE COUNTLESS MILLIONS OF LIVING ORGANISMS THAT LIVE IN AND EXIST OF THE HUMUS.

These are our soil chemists - they are the supreme soil chemists.

The humus is not gobbled by the plants as oats are gobbled by horses.

The humus is food for the living flora and fauna of the soil, mostly funguses and bacteria but, including the earthworms: their wastes are the plant's food. If it were not so, we would be wallowing in it up to our armpits.

Humus undergoes many changes as it is processed by many varied forms of living organisms. Each process leaves the humus in a more suitable form for the next variety of living organism.

The plants simply take their food requirements from each processing of the humus.

Of course chemicals, also, will process the humus, or even raw organic matter, but they will not leave it in a form suitable for further life. They will kill it and return it to the inorganic state. The practice is improvident.

The rate of life processes of living organisms is governed by, the supply of, again, the same factors which affect any living thing - air, light, water, food - so that when these factors are in good supply, the metabolism of the micro-organisms is speeded up and they supply, at a faster rate, food for the plants.

It is a way of Nature well displayed in a tropical rain forest where, because of the high levels of supply of each of the air, light, water and food, factors, growth - death - decay - humus - on again to new growth, are very rapid indeed, when compared to the desert, where perhaps only one factor - water - is missing or in short supply.

This then illustrates the case of the "limiting factor" in a plant's performance.