

The New Zealand
Internet
Orchid Review

Issue 7

13 March 2009



A Coelogyne species on Mount Kinabalu, Borneo

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Publication Details and Charges

The *New Zealand Internet Orchid Review* is published on a quarterly basis, with publication in March, June, September and December.

The email subscription rate is **zero**. We would like to eventually publish a printed version (which would attract a charge), but there would need to be sufficient demand to make it practical. To date that demand has not been sufficient for us to follow it up.

Deadlines for copy

All written copy for articles must be emailed to the Editors no later than one week before publication date. A reminder will be emailed to all regular contributors two weeks before each deadline. Society notices and classified advertising must be emailed to the Editors no later than one week before publication date. If you are running late, please email the editors (ncmiller@orcon.net.nz) to advise them. We expect the next issue to go out on Friday 12 June 2009.

A reminder notice will go to all subscribers and Society contacts shortly before each publication deadline.

Advertising

If you are interested in advertising in this publication, please email the editors for an information sheet. Our advertising rates are extremely reasonable, being set at \$10 for a page, part pages on a pro-rata basis. Graphics and photos incur no extra charge, provided that you supply them.

Classified advertisements, Society notices

These are published free of charge, maximum of 30 words for a classified ad please.

Letters

Feel free to write letters to the editor. As long as they are not anonymous, obscene, time-wasting or libellous we will publish them!

Question and answer section

If you have any questions relating to any aspect of the growing of orchids or companion plants, we will solicit replies from our panel of experts. Any responses received will be emailed to the questioner, and the question and answers will be published in the next issue. This way you can receive a prompt response to your question but other readers can subsequently benefit as well.

Spread the word

If you have any friends who grow orchids or 'companion plants', let them know of this publication. All they have to do to subscribe is to send an email. If they haven't joined the computer age and/or would be interested in subscribing to a print version, ask them to contact the editors by mail or telephone or else send an email on their behalf. So far only a handful of requests for a printed version have been received.

Please write for us

All submissions are welcome – long or short. If you're not too fluent with the written word, we are happy to edit your copy. Without writers there will be no magazine. We prefer to receive copy in MS Word (but NOT saved in the new .docx file format), and prefer not to receive Acrobat files. Please don't send jpeg photos of text unless there is no alternative (as in the case of old typescript etc) as this is time-consuming to convert to digital format. We prefer to receive photos as jpeg files.

That address again

ncmiller@orcon.net.nz

Please note: If you change your email address and you don't advise us, you won't receive your magazine! Typically, every time we send out an issue, 8 to 12 bounce due to invalid email addresses.

Editorial

After a slow start, an editorial appeal for more copy resulted in a good inflow of articles for this issue. We appreciate the response. We are pleased to see a good proportion of articles relating to the practical aspects of growing orchids.

It is also good to see several articles from across "The Ditch". At least 11% of our readership are Australian so it is good to see writings coming from them. Now since about 30% of the articles in this issue are from Australians this means that hmmm..... COME ON KIWIS – you can do better than that!

This month's cover

Coelogyne are popular with a number of growers, as they have attractive flowers and often tolerate cool temperatures. The cover photograph is of a *Coelogyne* photographed *in situ* on Mount Kinabalu, Borneo. A tentative identification suggests it has an affinity with *Coelogyne exaltata* but identification from a photograph alone is always uncertain. This species was growing at approximately 2000 metres elevation. The large leaves surrounding the flowers probably belong to hoyas and *Aeschynanthus*. Photograph by Nick Miller

Corrections

G'day Nick. After having a look through Vol. 6 of your internet magazine, I thought I should send you this link! I don't dispute that the picture of Mr. David Lee Senior's plant is MAGNIFICENT, but it isn't a *Dendrobium* Mousmee! These 'L. Bradford' plants, have been sold by the Manly Orchid Society, now for a number of years, and I believed, all along they were *D. farmeri x thysriflorum*. This was confirmed, when I sent pictures to Orchidee's Vacherot & Lecoufle, who are the people who were originally responsible for the registration of *Den. Mousmee*!

Please understand, I do not at all want to discredit Mr. Lee, for a really beautifully grown plant, BUT, let's get the name right!

I will send some more links shortly.

Cheers Robert Bisetto

<http://www.orchidsonline.com.au/node/5165>

Here's the complete story on Mousmee!

<http://www.orchidsonline.com.au/node/2727>

Picture of *D. farmeri x thysriflorum* from France!

<http://www.orchidsonline.com.au/node/5166>

Mousmee 'L. Bradford'????

<http://www.orchidsonline.com.au/node/5167>

Another latouria Dendrobium

Shirley Sidnam (shirleysidnam@xtra.co.nz)

It was interesting to read the article, from Ron Maunder, on the PNG latouria-type Dendrobiums. I have a *Dendrobium* Aussie Chip x Gerald McGraith, which I bought almost 10 years ago. It is now in flower for the second year. The colours are green with brown spots, the lip darker green with deep stripes. It has a pleasant scent and is long lasting. I feel that it is rather unusual.



Dendrobium Aussie Chip x Gerald McGraith (Grower, photo, Shirley Sidnam)



It grows hanging up high, like most of my orchids, so they get good light and air movement. The shade house roof is clear corrugated plastic and shade cloth. The plants are fertilised about every 7-10 days, less during winter and drenching with clean water in between. I use rain water.

Since the name Gerald McGraith (well known in NZ) has featured in this issue and the last, readers may like to see this photograph of Gerald McCraith's 100th birthday on 23rd Feb. He is the Patron of Maribyrnong Orchid Society and we provided a birthday cake at our first meeting in February. His daughter Lois Dixon-Ward is assisting him cut the cake. (Photo, text courtesy Frances Wilde).

Tough!

Glenn Poffley (gpoffley@clear.net.nz)

Orchids are very **hardy** - I have PROOF.

One of my more disastrous acquisitions was a flask about 18 months ago, which succumbed to a combination of ignorance, bad culture, over/under watering, winter and possibly a few other factors.

The remaining few were dutifully handed over to the Neo-natal Intensive Care & Keep Emergency Dept. (NICKED) under the supervision of my wife where they were coddled in a fish tank. Here under strictly controlled conditions, a spray bottle with a magic formula of hormone rich Dyna-gro KLN to promote root growth and a carefully adhered-to watering regime they were thankfully now out of my control and responsibility.

Women, I suppose do have the advantage of a natural gift for looking after babies. Well I can't say they actually leapt off the slabs they were mounted on (except later) and grew like crazy, in fact various materials were experimented with to see which they preferred. At one stage one was on scoria, another on ponga and the last (or so I thought) on cork. My wife in that usual devious womanly manner had secreted a 4th much larger specimen away from my inquisitive eyes and prying fingers as a 'surprise'.

We recently went through a windy spell and as it was getting warmer it was about this time I decided more fresh air was required in the area where these miniature plants were kept. So I opened the ranch sliders very W I D E.

It must have been a relatively small gust to dislodge one of those microscopic seedlings and it just disappeared! I usually have a lot of trouble with tools and other gear disappearing, only to be found later carefully hidden away in the garage or somewhere down in the garden looking a little worse for rust, but this was a first.

I had to break the bad news when the head sister arrived home prompting a careful



search with us both crawling around on hands and knees looking under the couch, shelves and various other nooks and crannies. But all to no avail. It looked like I would chalk up another loss. The unit cost of each of those cursed seedlings was now skyrocketing. It was about 2 – 3 weeks later when my wife was doing something on the floor, I'm not sure whether it was a missing needle, dropped stitch or what

but suddenly there was a whoop of joy.

Yes, against all odds the MIA seedling was found alive and well (although a little squashed) rooted into the doormat in front of the ranch slider! It had survived feet, no water, no KLN, in fact it was even looking OK.

It is still alive and well and now tied down to the final resting place (do I dare use that phrase) on a lump of pumice.

PS. At the time of writing it has been transferred to a lump of driftwood and is still reluctant to grow. Maybe I should suggest it goes back on the doormat.

Tough 2

Nick Miller (ncmiller@orcon.net.nz)



Earina mucronata growing on the Jacksons Bay wharf
(Photo N Miller)

Yes, orchids are tough. A few years ago we were visiting the southern part of the South Island and paid a visit to Jacksons Bay, on the West Coast about half an hour's drive south of Haast. There is a wharf there (*photo to left*), used mainly by commercial fishing boats. The wharf is sheltered from the worst of the south-westerlies but any hint of north in the prevailing westerly winds and the swells in the southern Tasman Sea must really drive in there, accompanied by much wind and salt spray (it was a fine calm day when we visited). The wharf is mostly built of heavy timber, and there are a few hardy weeds growing on or between these timbers. Among them is what I first took to be a grass. Closer inspection revealed it to be an epiphytic orchid, *Earina mucronata*, one of our native species. Although

sun- and wind-blasted, it appeared quite healthy, if stunted! A second orchid species *Earina autumnalis*, was growing nearby on the same wharf (see photo on next page), with a colony of several plants close together. The photo shows one plant, in close up. Both were exposed to full sun, salt spray, fierce winds, winter cold and summer heat, plus passing pedestrians. Tough – definitely!



Earina autumnalis growing on the Jackson's Bay wharf, one of several plants. Photo N. Miller



Earina autumnalis growing on a tree fern trunk in the Editors' garden.

The species just mentioned, *Earina autumnalis*, is in flower at this time of year, so keep an eye out for it if you are in the bush. It has a sweet vanilla perfume, and, although small, is very attractive, with pure white flowers. Both of these *Earina* species may be established on suitable trees and form an attractive addition to the garden (see photo below left). We have them on a Magnolia tree and on tree fern (*Dicksonia squarrosa*) trunks, as is the case with the plant shown to left. Don't collect them from scenic reserves though!

Our other major epiphytic species, *Winika (Dendrobium) cunninghamii*, although not apparently present on the wharf, was quite common in the nearby bush, so these epiphytes are widely distributed throughout New Zealand.

Some quick tips

Plant Labelling

D Williams (dwilliams@retailfirst.com.au)
Brisbane Australia

I find it very frustrating when buying plants and find that I can not read hand-written faded labels, particularly those written in pencil. These labels have often been pulled out of their pots by numerous prospective buyers, and the writing is then rubbed off, or the natural oils in our skins fades them. I find this to be the case more so with plants sold at shows, but I also find some nursery labels to be just as bad with dirt on them, even if they are a printed label. I have made it a habit to only pick up labels by the top end or by the sides. My own labelling is done using a Brother label maker, using the plastic labels. Although they discolour with the light, I find they stick very well to the labels, and are of course waterproof. After verifying a newly purchased plants name via the Kew website, I then print my label and put it into my pot.

Orchid Database

D Williams (dwilliams@retailfirst.com.au)
Brisbane Australia

I recently purchased an orchid database program, which I have found to be excellent. The program allows you to upload an image of each of your plants, you can input all the data relevant to each plant, species or hybrid, parentage, watering regime etc. The program runs on Windows and I think its also available for Mac. If anyone is interested in the database, it can be seen at www.orchidsonline.com.au and is located in the buy/sell or swap section. You don't need to be a logged in member to browse the site.

Paddling pool or Sand pit

Ron Maunder (paradiseorchids@paradise.net.nz)



From Payless Plastics or similar shop. Ideal potting container. Two plastic scallop shaped shells about a metre across and 30cm deep. One shell covers the other to keep cats out. Use double thickness or two singles. \$50 normally but sometimes on special at \$30 dollars a pair. Buy one for \$25 at present but watch for price drops!

Fertilisers

Jim Buchanan (buch1@netspace.net.au), Geelong, Australia

After watering, I find fertilising the most difficult aspect of orchid growing. When to fertilise? What fertiliser to use? How much fertiliser to use? All these questions regularly enter the thoughts of orchid growers. I can give advice on some of these questions, but some answers can only come with experience. No two growers I know use the same fertilising procedures. In time you will find out gradually what works for you. Remember that most orchids do not like a lot of fertiliser, and it is very easy to over-fertilise, especially with the water-soluble products. I favour the advice to fertilise weakly, weekly, and I usually mix half the recommended amount on the packaging. Don't forget the makers are trying to sell fertiliser.

This article I have compiled will help you to figure out which fertiliser is best for you, and what happens when there is a deficiency of one of the critical nutrients necessary for plant growth. The following table shows the percentages of Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P), Potassium (K), in various well known soluble fertilisers available in Australia. These three elements are known as the macronutrients, and are the elements which plants need the most. For New Zealand growers, where these products are not available, substitute the products you use and read the analysis on the packaging.

	N	P	K
Aquasol	23	4.4	18
Campbells Blue	30	4.4	8.3
Campbells Yellow	11.8	13.2	16.6
Miracle Grow	15	13.1	12.4
Phostrogen	14	4.4	22.5
Thrive All-Purpose	27	5.5	9
Thrive Indoor	19.3	6.3	19.2
Thrive Fruit & Flower	15	4	26
Yates Orchid Food	21.5	8.3	13
Cultisol	13	27	27
Dynamic Lifter	3	2.4	1.5
HSO 8	8	5	25
HSO 10	10.2	6	25.6
HSO 22	22.2	8	12.4

HSO is a Queensland company called Horticultural Solutions who specifically formulate the HSO fertilisers for orchids. The products are available direct from Horticultural Solutions, 86 Duncan Road, Capalaba, Queensland.

The general rule of thumb is to use a fertiliser higher in Nitrogen during the active growing months, say from October to January, and to use one higher in P and K during the other months, when the plants are preparing to flower. Some people don't believe in fertilising in the coldest winter months, I would agree with this, as the plants are not in active growth, and it seems wasteful.

The secondary elements are of lesser importance, but should be present. These are Calcium (Ca), and Magnesium (Mg). If you use a product where no calcium is in the mix, it should be added by the use of Dolomite, or another suitable calcium.

Thirdly, important trace elements should be present in micro amounts. They are Iron(Fe), Sulphur (S), Manganese (Mn), Boron (B), Molybdenum (Mo), Zinc (Zn), and Copper (Cu).

Check the analysis on the packaging of any fertiliser you are looking to buying, and make sure the above elements are present. Please note that the above information applies to soluble inorganic fertilisers. Many growers also use sheep, horse, cow and chicken manure, liquid seaweed, worm juice and fish emulsion occasionally, these are organic fertilisers which supply many other elements beneficial to your plants.

The following information gives you an idea of the function of the various nutrients mentioned above, and how to identify a deficiency.

Nitrogen (N)

Nitrogen (N) is most important to plant growth. Plants convert nitrogen to make proteins essential to new cell growth. Nitrogen is mainly responsible for leaf and stem growth as well as overall size and vigour. Deficiency symptoms: Pale plants, smaller growth. Rapid yellowing of lower leaves progressing up the plant. Solution: Use any chemical or organic fertiliser containing N until the deficiency is corrected.

Phosphorus (P)

Phosphorus (P) is necessary for photosynthesis. Furthermore, it works as a catalyst for transferring energy within the plant. Phosphorus will help build strong roots and is essential for flower and seed production. Deficiency symptoms: Slow or stunted growth. The lower leaves will turn yellow and die. Solution: Add chemical or organic fertiliser containing phosphorus. Already affected leaves will not show recovery, but the new leaves appearing will be normal.

Potassium (K)

Potassium (K) activates the manufacture and movement of sugars and starches, as well as growth by cell division. Potassium increases chlorophyll in foliage and helps regulate stomata openings so plants make better use of light and air. Potassium encourages stronger root growth, water uptake and triggers enzymes that fight disease. Deficiency symptoms: Affected plants are usually tallest and appear to be most vigorous. Necrotic spots form on lower leaves. The leaves appear pale or yellow.

Solution: Add chemical or organic fertiliser containing K.

Calcium (Ca)

Calcium (Ca) is fundamental to cell manufacture and growth. Some growers use dolomite lime, which contains calcium and magnesium, to keep the potting mix sweet. Calcium moves slowly within the plant and tends to concentrate in roots and older growth. Deficiency symptoms: A lack of calcium results in the potting mix becoming too acid. This leads to Mg or Fe deficiency or very slow stunted growth. Solution: Sprinkle some dolomite on top of the potting mix and the deficiency condition will improve. Using dolomite is the safest option, because when pH neutral is reached in the potting mix, the dolomite remains inactive until the pH starts to turn acid again.

Sulphur (S)

Sulphur (S) is a component of plant proteins and plays a role in root growth and chlorophyll supply. Deficiency symptoms: Plants suffering from S deficiencies exhibit yellowing of new

growth. Solution: Mix one tablespoon of Epsom salts per 5 litres of water until condition improves.

Magnesium (Mg)

Magnesium (Mg) is found as a central atom in the chlorophyll molecule and is essential to the absorption of light energy. Magnesium aids in the utilisation of nutrients, neutralises acids and toxic compounds produced by the plant. Deficiency symptoms: Lower leaves turn yellow and in the end may even turn white while veins remain dark green. Solution: Do a foliar application of liquid fertiliser containing Mg and/or apply dolomite to the top of the mix.

Iron (Fe)

Iron (Fe) is a key catalyst in chlorophyll production and is used in photosynthesis. Deficiency symptoms: Leaves turn pale and veins remain dark green. PH imbalances make iron insoluble. Solution: Foliar feed with chemical fertiliser containing Fe or rusty water.

Manganese (Mn)

Manganese (Mn) works with plant enzymes to reduce nitrates before producing proteins. Deficiency symptoms: Necrotic and yellow spots form on top leaves. Solution: Foliar feed with any chemical fertiliser containing Manganese.

Boron (B)

Boron (B) is necessary for cells to divide as well as for protein formation. It also plays an active role in pollination and seed production. Deficiency symptoms: New growths turn grey, look burned and can die. Solutions: Use a teaspoon of Boric acid per 5 litres of water.

Molybdenum (Mo)

Molybdenum (Mo) helps form proteins and aids the plant's ability to fix nitrogen from the air. Deficiency symptoms: Middle of the leaves turn yellow. Solution: Foliar feed with chemical fertiliser containing Mo.

Zinc (Zn)

Zinc (Zn) is a catalyst and must be present in minute amounts for plant growth. Deficiency symptoms: tips of the leaves and between the veins turn white. Solution: Burying galvanised nails in the mix can treat Zn deficiency. Chemical fertiliser containing Zn can also be used.

Over fertilisation

Over fertilisation causes leaf tips to appear yellow or burnt. To correct this problem, pots must be thoroughly flushed with water.

Acknowledgements to Luis Bartolo for the information on nutrient deficiencies Maximum Yield 2006.

From a new grower

Christine Bull" (christine.bull@xtra.co.nz)

Greetings from Foxton Beach, Manawatu.

I am having a 'go' at growing orchids due to one Eileen Gardiner from Te Puke giving me a plant or two....she is a neighbour of mine and this is how I got started! I bought three cymbidiums from a grower up north and I placed them here and there but for some reason all but one 'passed on' . I thought: "Oh well, obviously one has to be a brain specialist to grow orchids. I am only a postie so what do I know, and what do I do with the remaining plant...." And that was when I met a lady waiting by her letter box and we somehow got on the subject of plants then on to orchids. GREAT! I had someone who I could dump my cymbidium onto! Which I did BUT she wanted me to

see her collection and it was in September / October when all was in flower! Not fair because when I entered what was once a chook shed I was not prepared for the beauty or fragrance which hit me as soon as I stepped through the door. They were amazing and so healthy. They were mainly dendrobiums, sarco's, slippers, masdevallias, *Odontoglossums picta* and *pulchellum* and cymbidiums. It was and still is a joint effort, with her husband Pat feeding them when required. Eileen insisted I take some dendrobiums and have a go! Which I did, so out came the hammer and nails and I converted the wood shed into a cool area (very cool area actually), so I have converted it many times until it is now against my north facing wall on my house.

This all started 5 years ago and since then my collection has grown somewhat! I still have a long way to go as far as what I think is strong healthy growth like Pat and Eileen's orchids, but they have been really great in encouraging me. I cannot go past a second hand bookshop without ducking in and seeing if there is a book or two on orchids. I want to focus on achieving good healthy root growth on all my plants and I have managed to walk in and out of two orchid shows without buying any plants! I want to get things right first.

Anyway, I don't seem to have much joy on the masdevallias; they look healthy enough but have no flowers and I would really like the *Dendrobium thyrsiflorum* to flower this year. It flowered in '07 in mid December....was that normal? But not last year, however I did split the plant in '08. I have a problem with the watering and have rotted the roots on quite a few plants but they seem to want to hang in there and send up new shoots. I think I might be pushing it with the stanhopeas because it does get down to 2 degrees C at about 5 o'clock in the morning, but who knows - I have read that some other enthusiasts have grown them outdoors hanging from beneath trees..... Actually I can't wait until the flowering season because it is then that I find out whether I am getting closer to the preferred growing conditions of orchids. It is a lot of fun, isn't it – well, for me anyway...my dog sighs when I just pop in and have a look at the plants - he realises that he has a long wait before his walk.

Hoya online magazine

If you are interested in Hoyas, be sure to take a look at www.stemmajournal.com. This is the website for **Stemma**, a quarterly internet Journal dealing with Hoyas and their close relatives *Dischidia*. Easily downloaded as Acrobat files (just like the NZIOR), for no charge. Somewhat technical, but very interesting and well illustrated, with photographs and paintings of many mind-boggling hoyas. At present 9 issues are available. Volume 1 #4 is devoted to Hoya propagation and is also a very useful guide to propagation and propagation media generally. Volume 2 #2 is a fascinating travel issue devoted to collecting hoyas in various parts of Southeast Asia. The website also contains a number of useful links. *Ed.*

Odontoglossum harryanum Rchb. f. 1886

Franz Zumbuhl (franzanda@xtra.co.nz)

This beautiful orchid was introduced to cultivation in England after being found in Colombia. The area where it was discovered was soon cleaned out of this rather rare species. *O. harryanum* was then lost until the mid 1900s.



Odontoglossum harryanum (Photo F. Zumbuhl)

Here we have a plant originating from damp cloud forests at 1800-2300m altitude, really tailor-made for cool glasshouse growing in NZ. It has a manageable size for even limited bench space. The furrowed, one-leafed pseudobulbs, 9x3cm, are flanked by four bulb leaves. From the innermost of these the approximately 40cm sub-erect inflorescence appears, bearing about 8 flowers. Petals and sepals, undulated at edges, are chestnut brown with yellow tips in my plant. The petals are pointing forward, giving the impression of a not quite open flower. The lip, 5cm long and 3cm broad, is white spotted and striped bright red/purple. Below the column one finds yellow tentacles, lamellae or whatever you want to call those knobby things. One look at this gem and you ask yourself: "Why bother with hybrids? This is beautiful as it is!"



Odontoglossum wyattianum (Photo F. Zumbuhl)

PS. A very closely related species was discovered and described in 1928 by a Mr. Wilson: *Odontoglossum wyattianum*. A Rev. Paul Wyatt of Bedford got a plant from a friend in Peru. Because *O. harryanum* was lost,

there was no way to compare the two species, until it was re-discovered in 1973. Fowlie and Garay then sorted out the differences between the two rare species. The most distinguishing factors are the more open bloom, and evenly, solid coloured sepals and petals in *O. wyattianum*.

It amazes me, that two species of the same genus developing hundreds of miles apart can look so similar. *Odontoglossum harryanum* flowers in April for me, *O. wyattianum* ALWAYS second week in February.

The Genus *Phragmipedium*

The late Walter Syder, Kaiapoi

*This typescript, written by the late Walter Syder, whom many older orchidists will remember (we used to send him plants) was presumably intended for publication in an orchid society newsletter or perhaps the original NZ Orchid Review. It was forwarded to us as digital photographs by Brian and Alison Syder, who believe it was prepared in the 1970s (before NZ converted to metric measurements). For the technically inclined, we have printed out the photos of the text, scanned the printout, passed it through OCR software and edited it in MS Word, with some minor editing of the text. We thought readers would be interested to read how *Phragmipediums* were being grown 30 years ago. Eds.*

I am getting on in years and do not go far from home, but get lots of pleasure growing my orchids. George Fuller, Frank Askin and Allan Beck are just three North Islanders you may know who have seen my collection.

I used to grow Cymbids but used to burn about 100 gall of Diesel a week to keep them warm, so farewell Cymbids. Still interested in Species *Cattleyas* - just flowered *C. O'brieniana alba*, and still have most of my collection of Paphs.

The genus *Phragmipedium* is not seen in many collections and they are getting very rare. Most of them grow in the grass on the Pampas or plains of South America. Most of this country will not stand cultivation. If you plough in the grass instead of making a compost it just dries up and blows away. The grass is not palatable to cattle so the answer is to drop napalm etc and burn it off and then aerial top dress with fertiliser and good grass seed and then turn the cattle in. Poor orchids - what the fire did not kill the cattle trample to death, so soon there will be none, but food is food and you can't eat orchids.

I grow my Phrags in 6" squat pots. Put four saw cuts up the side of each pot and use Allan Beck's mixture to which I add about a quarter of bigger bark - about ½" mesh size. I grow them in with Paphs in a double-glazed house 15 X 15 ft with 2" slats an inch apart on the roof. This gives good shade and also keeps hail damage clear as well as footballs etc., as I live next to a Rugby Park.

Paphs are gross feeders and I feed about fortnightly with any pot plant fertiliser - using Alaska at present. About ½ strength recommended for house plants, I like to warm my water to 90°F or so and dip each plant. By doing this I find which plants are not draining and promptly repot them. About three days after using fertiliser I dip

again in water to wash out unused fertiliser. Between fertiliser they just get a spray over with the hose. After Christmas I will use Aquasol or similar. Plants like a change of diet just like humans. I stop feeding about April.

I think I was getting better results using coarse Dicksonia and live Sphagnum but so much of the country is now National Park that it is difficult to get the good stuff so I have changed to bark.

Most of the plants I have listed I have bloomed but cannot be certain some are true to label and I will not dispose of a named plant until I have bloomed it and checked it with text books. Some of these plants flower all open together - others flower continuously – one flower fading and a new one taking its place. One that comes to mind is *P. Besseae* from Peru. This has been out for over a year, only two spikes and it is a real gem. Flower shaped like a Dutch sabot and a mixture of colours in the mauve range. The listing is:

Boisserianum. Peru, successive flowering, green

Caricinum from Equador tall green flowers with red border on petals

Caudatum var. Stumphle, petals two feet long and up to five blooms on a spike, mostly green.

Klotzcheanum, miniature plants about 10” high and reputed to have white blooms striped in red with yellow petals.

One of my last imports and growing well, *Lindleyanum*, a big plant when well grown - spike about five feet high. Flowers mainly green, about three inches across and now reputed to be extinct.

Roetzlii. Similar in growth to *Longifolium* but flowers – mauve - are larger. Successive flowers.

Longifolium. I have three varieties of this. The miniature var. *Humboltii* is the most frequent and is mainly green with a red edge on the petals. Var. *Roetzlii* is a big plant but the flowers are very like the miniature. My last imports included var. *Dominica* (FCC/AOS) which is supposed to be a bright red-purple on spikes 4 ft high.

Sargentiana is another multi-flowered import from Brazil and is a big one – spikes 4 ft high, yellow-brown petals pink at tips.

Schlimii var. *gigas* is a pale pink flower, quite big and successive blooming.

Wallisii was listed as a variety of *Caudatum* but is now listed as a distinct species.

Long Petals and a creamy colour - one of the best.

I have imported two plants of *Pearcei* but lost them both. Must be a small plant as you get small single growth \$150 a growth. If any member has a spare piece of *Pearcei* I will swap for it.

I have a couple of spare plants of *Paphiopedilum Elliotianum* - was supposed to be *Rothschildianum* but I've flowered them and there is a distinct difference.

I have three hybrids: x *Grande*, x *Sedenii* and x *Krazerianumo*. I will have divisions to exchange. I am not interested in selling plants.

Some Gems of the Dendrobium World

Ewen Perrott (perrtuita@xtra.co.nz)

Papua-New Guinea is the home of a huge range of orchids, notably Dendrobiums, usually growing from sea-level and up to 3,000 metres in the mountain ranges.



D. cuthbertsonii (Photo Ewen Perrott)

In those high altitudes are found some of the gems of the Orchid world, including *D. cuthbertsonii*, a real miniature with surprisingly large 1.5-2 cm flowers, which can last on a plant for up to 9 months. The accompanying photo shows one of the many colour forms, which cover a huge range: red, purple, yellow, shades of pink, bicolour "red-yellow", bicolour "purple-white", white, in fact every colour except blue and green. These compact little plants are not choosy with their

growing medium - punga slabs, in moss in baskets or in pots of bark-pumice.



D. dichaeoides (Photo E. Perrott)

Another gem is *D. petiolatum*, usually found at a lower altitude, very small and compact, often carrying dense clusters of mauve to purple miniature flowers in early winter. It seems to prefer moss in a basket (with me anyway).

The next photo shows *D. dichaeoides* (syn. *D. sectii*). This charming little plant never hesitates to put on its annual display, again in autumn-early winter, with flowers lasting 3-4 months. It is quite happy in moss

in a basket. All the above three species being evergreen don't require a decided rest in the winter months, a slight slackening only in the watering being all that is needed.

From Eastern PNG comes another very small Orchid, *D. cruttwellii*, discovered by Cannon Norman Cruttwell, hence the name. It carries its drooping stems of about 5-10 creamy spotted flowers, not as long-lasting as the above, but it lasts reasonably well.

Another slightly different one, *D. roseipes*, has slender cane-like pseudo-bulbs, usually deciduous before blooming, often throughout the year. Flower-clusters are usually pink-white. It grows at lower altitude.



D. uniflora (Photo E. Perrott)

The last photo is of a South-east Asian *Dendrobium*, *D. uniflora*. This orchid got in to this article because of its utter charm and long-lasting qualities, and its 20-30mm flowers white-yellow, usually closely spaced up the stems (canes), that last a good four months.

D. uniflora needs a dry winter.

All the PNG dendrobiums are a delight to cultivate, always bearing in mind their watering needs at the correct time of a

year, e.g., if evergreen, slightly less in winter; if deciduous, withhold more in winter months. Good Growing.

Writing Orchid Names

Mike Leaity (Leaitym@xtra.co.nz)

Writing orchid names in full may be confusing for the novice grower, but the following hints should be of help.

The Genus is written in *italics*, and all *species* are written in *italics*; i.e. *Dendrobium speciosum*.

The registered Name is not in italics, so with *Cymbidium* Del's Delight only *Cymbidium* is in italics.

The varietal name is also not in italics but usually written inside speech marks: i.e. *Cymbidium* Del's Delight 'Lionel'.

When labelling crossings of plants which have not been registered all the parents in the cross need to be on the label. This will enable the plant to be checked in Wildcatt or Sanders lists at any time to see if it has been registered by another owner or breeder.

With a species to species cross your label should look like this:

B. digbyana x *C. harrisoniana*.

With a *species* - Hybrid cross your label should look like this:

Phalaenopsis venosa x Tungku Afzan

The Crossings of Unregistered Plants can be even more confusing.

When *Phal* Elinor Shaffer is crossed with the progeny of the following cross:

Phal Barbara Kirch x Dolores,

your label shows this as:

Phal Elinor Shaffer x (Barbara Kirch x Dolores)

A Wildcatt check shows that (Barbara Kirch x Dolores) is registered as Brave Venture;

and *Phal* Elinor Shaffer x Brave Venture is registered as *Phal* Venturesome Lady.

The plant label now needs to be updated.

If you are unsure ask at your local society, they are there to help.

Deflasking your Paphs

Selwyn Hatrick (selwyn_h@slingshot.co.nz)

For our hobby to continue to flourish, we now need to change the way we acquire new hybrid plants, particularly of new breeding lines. We no longer have any professional source of supply, so it is necessary for some of us to source new plants from overseas. The most practical method of doing this is by the importation of flasks. For those of you who haven't deflasked orchids, the hardest part is deciding to do it!! You won't want to keep all the plants, so you can recoup expenses by selling some when they are large enough. So, what are you waiting for?

Deflasking is simple. There are some variations in technique that I will attempt to describe.

The Process

Firstly, you need to get the plants from the flask. This is easy when the flask has a wide mouth. Simply invert it and shake, gently at first but with increasing vigour until the agar breaks its attraction with the inside base of the container. With continuing shaking and coaxing you can extract the plants from the flask all interconnected by the root ball. If the flask has a narrow mouth, you need to break it. Be careful, because glass shards can be sharper than a scalpel. It is best to roll the flask in several layers of newspaper. Hold the flask (through the newspaper) by the mouth, and start hitting the base, gently at first. Increase the force of each blow gradually until it breaks. Carefully unwrap the paper. Beware of sharp shards, which you need to remove carefully, preferably with forceps. I like to do this in bright sunlight so that I can see and remove every trace of glass. I don't want to risk injury at a later date.

Now you are ready to pot your seedlings. You need a pot just large enough to accommodate them. Half fill the pot with bark of a slightly coarser grade than you usually use for paphiopedilums. I then top up to within about 3cm of the rim with "normal" fine grade bark. At this point, you have some choices.

Some growers advocate putting the intact root ball of plants, together with agar, directly into a pot. Bark is sprinkled and shaken between the plants to cover the agar and roots. Over the weeks and months the agar degrades and shrinks. Bark will need to be topped up and carefully shaken and prodded into the voids.

Another method involves putting the intact root ball of plants into the pot after using the garden hose to wash out the agar. You can apply a lot of water pressure to the base of the root ball without damaging the leaves. When in the pot, fine bark is shaken and prodded around and amongst the roots.



Deflasked the previous day (Photo S. Hatrick)

The method that works best for me is as follows. After washing the agar out of the root ball, I carefully separate each plant. I grade the plants into three categories by size. The larger plants (they have the larger and longer roots) are placed around the circumference of the pot, with the roots pointing in towards the centre. The

mid-sized plants are then placed in the pot (as evenly as is practical) through the remainder of the space. The smaller plants are then “poked” into which ever spaces are available. I then scatter fine bark (not too much at a time) over the plants and carefully shake and prod to get it to sink amongst the roots. I may repeat this two or three more times until I am satisfied that I have the correct distribution and coverage. Although this technique is rather more laborious the first two methods described, it works best for me.

Now, a very important point. Write a label very clearly (and correctly!), and insert it into the pot before you embark on the next flask.

I have had problems of mould infecting and killing plants when I have tried planting complete with agar. Yet, this technique is favoured by some well recognised growers (e.g., Harold Koopowitz). Planting the intact root ball with agar removed has worked better, but I have found some reluctance of the plants to grow new roots. There is nothing like disturbing roots to induce new root growth, I find. When using this technique, I have managed to flower some plants ex-flask in as little as 18 months.

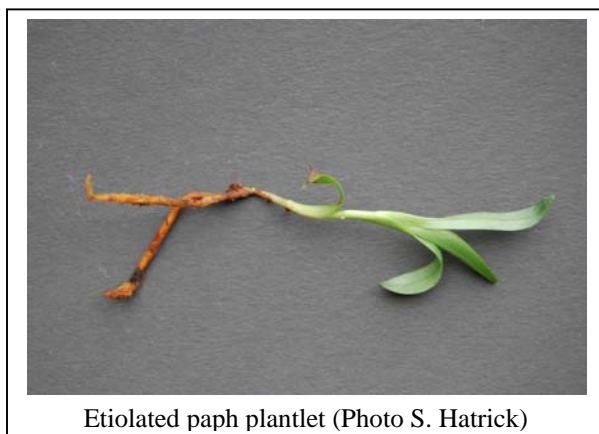
Having deflasked and planted out is not the end of the story. Thoroughly water the plants and place in a well shaded location away from draughts. The plants need care, as they have been snatched from an environment of constant 100 per cent humidity to the fluctuating climate of your greenhouse. The roots are in a “foreign” medium (bark), and they are not yet working properly. When the water has dried off the leaves you can take some additional measures. Koopowitz recommends inverting a tumbler over the pots to retain humidity. Condensation is removed each morning. Another technique that I have used is cutting the top third off a 1.25 litre clear polycarbonate fizzy drink bottle. This is placed it over the newly deflasked and potted plants. The lid is left off so that there is some air circulation allowed, while a high level of humidity is maintained. This also prevents the build up of condensation, which, in turn, can lead to disease risk. Watering is carried out as required (when the top grains of bark have dried). The “cover” is left off again until the beads of water have dried off the leaves.

If you have only one or two pots of new plants to manage, the above technique is well worth the small amount of extra effort involved. At the time of writing this article (early Spring) I have over 20 deflasked pots, and expecting more. The only thing I am doing differently is that I haven't covered them. Instead I am watering them more frequently and fertilizing normally. The down side of this is the bark nearer to the base of the pot will become substantially over watered. Consequently I will need to repot earlier, probably in March. By this time, there should be substantial root development and leaf growth.

The above techniques will serve you well when deflasking most other genera. Probably the most important consideration would be the grade of bark used. Also, because the roots of the new plants in the community pots are located no more than about 2cm from the surface, frequent watering is required to prevent them from drying.

Choosing Flasks

It is important to select flasks where the plantlets are growing vigorously. Plants that have "stalled" can be very difficult to establish and get growing again. One clue to watch for is judging how "dry" the agar is. Usually when you tilt the flask a little you can see evidence of a bit of fluid movement within the agar. If the agar appears to be very stiff without any signs of fluid, be a little wary.



Some agar mixes are made up with too much nitrogen content, with the intention of accelerating growth within the flask. The danger is that the plantlets become etiolated. Inspect the flask carefully. I have deflasked a number of plants that have been etiolated, and they have all grown for me, but it takes longer to gain good growth. It is advisable to remove the lower leaves and plant so

the bark surrounds the main crown of leaves further up. This way the new roots will grow into the bark instead of developing in mid air. These roots will become blind and die.

There you have it! Deflasking is easy. It is best done in the spring, but any time will suffice. If you are concerned about costs, get a small joint venture of friends to "club in."

So, get off your butts and DO IT!!!!!!!!!!!!

Orchid Leaf Tip Die Back.

Albert Blumhardt (ablumhardt@igrin.co.nz)

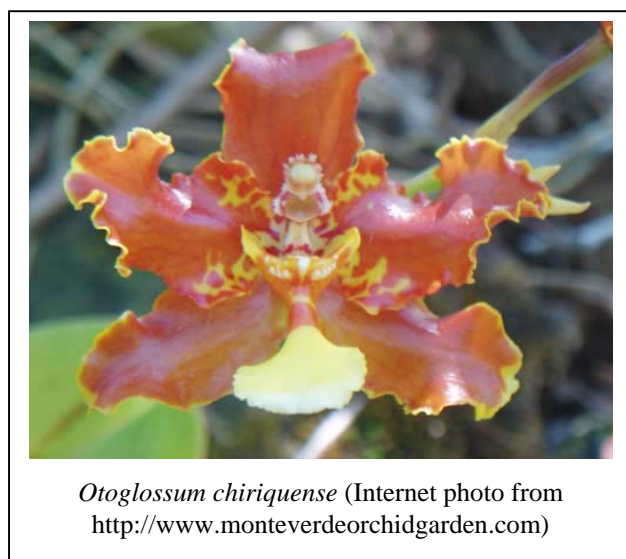
This is a phenomenon which we are told is mostly caused by the plant roots becoming too dry at some time during their normally active growth cycle which allows the leaf

cells farthest from the water supply to collapse and ultimately die. Since there is no water at the root tip it will also retract or reduce its growth rate and if water is not restored, pretty soon the whole plant will be affected.

The thin often plicate leaves of some species of orchid such as *Pleione*, *Lycaste*, *Anguloa*, *Zygopetalum* and their like, often begin to develop unsightly browning of the tips at a time when it is thought they should be growing happily. This is a problem I have noted in a number of collections including my own. Alterations to the type of growing medium, or the rate and amount of watering given, does not eliminate the problem. I was both surprised and pleased this year when two hybrid *Pleione* plants of different species origin completed their growth with no browning. – So what was different? This result may of course be only a ‘one off’ occurrence with no real explanation, and still I can’t help wondering.

Having given some thought to the possible cause and having just read an article in ‘The Orchid Digest’ (a really worthwhile American magazine) showing pictures of *Pleione maculata* with one photo of that species growing naturally in Bhutan on the surface of a rock along what looked to me like a weathered fissure in the rock surface, from studying that photo several ideas occurred to me at the same time. The first was that the likely reason for this particular spot being suitable to grow this particular orchid had everything to do with that crack in the otherwise smooth rock surface into which the plant seemed to have established, and no doubt would happily have plunged its roots deeply, thereby maintaining a good supply of water during the drier times. This species is of course found in other situations and in other habitats but the one shown in that photograph struck me as fairly unique and therefore special as an example of a choice of place to grow.

All this brings me back to a rant I gave at a meeting recently on the subject of our perceptions as orchid growers of what combination of materials might be suitable for our plants to grow in. As all experienced orchid growers know, the ideas people have of what would be an ideal is as varied as their fingerprints. The only ideal I know of, is that in which an orchid chooses naturally to grow. Orchids grow, where orchids grow!!



It is likely that the more tricky things to grow are often only difficult to us because we haven’t properly assessed their needs, from being either unsure of the factors involved or, for some reason we are unable to do so. A case in point was made by the very knowledgeable Rudolf Jenny in an article on *Otoglossum chiriquense*, in the American Orchid Society magazine ‘Orchids’, October 2008 where he tells how he had made numerous unsuccessful attempts to grow this beautiful species but not until he had visited a habitat at

some altitude on Cerro Jefe in Panama did he realise that the plant grew terrestrially

and directly with its roots in the cold wet ground creeping for several yards among low shrubs with no protection from the sun. (Day temperature 20° to 22° C night 10° C) He returned home to Bern, in Switzerland after that visit with a 1.2 meter long piece of that species which he planted horizontally on a long piece of bark. The plaque with orchid attached was then inserted into a normal orchid substrate with added loam. This was then kept in a cold house close to the roof for maximum light. After three years the original plant with its original five pseudobulbs had made ten new leads and was flowering twice a year. (It must be a sight to behold in flower!)

To get back to my previous story of the *Pleione* growing on the rock, it struck me when looking at that picture, that there was an orchid that liked its roots in cool, always moist conditions to grow well. This led me to a thought, which might have a bearing on why my two plants were leaf tip burn free. Firstly, they are not in as deep pots as usual and their pots have almost flat bottoms but a good number of drainage holes. Secondly, they are sitting on a flat concrete floor with a shallow drainage angle but are amongst some potted *Streptocarpus*. Potting mix from the streps has leached onto the floor slightly and serves to keep the pot bases moist almost all the time. No doubt this arrangement would also help keep the roots cool as well. Naturally it is not being suggested that you place your *Pleiones* among a load of stropy streps but no doubt you will find something to adapt to your own needs in the above.

The possibilities of this variation in the culture of this couple of plants will of course need lots more examination and testing but you never know, it may lead to a better understanding of the conditions needed by some plants.

Albert Blumhardt, Whangarei.

Name changes

Jim and Rae James (jamesj-r@ihug.co.nz)

The multitude of taxonomic shifts since the advent of DNA technology have sent many orchid growers over the edge.

So what do we do about it? Most do nothing, do not learn the new names and do not change their labels. I have not changed mine and use the excuse that I am waiting for things to settle down. A paper delivered to the 19th World Orchid conference suggests that more recent DNA work point to yet further changes in the cattleya alliance. Apart from anything else it is greatly complicating the Sanders Hybrid list which has served us so well over the years.

The purpose of language is to communicate. If I talk about my Gsl how many other orchidists would know it was a *Sophrolaeliocattleya* which is now called a *Guarisophleya*. If I called it an Slc I would be understood.

And what do we do about show schedules? This question was recently put to the Orchid List Digest. There were several replies some of which were:-

RF Orchids said there would probably be no changes for the cattleya alliance in the Miami International Orchid Show schedule particularly as they thought more changes might be coming.

The Mid America Orchid Congress has issued a schedule which apparently has no nomenclature changes in it.

K. Barrett. We probably won't change our schedule either except for Guarianthe and Rhyncholaelia in case any exhibitor has changed the tag.

Apart from making Taxonomy an unlawful profession I can't see any answer to these ongoing problems.

Deflasking Odontoglossum Seedlings

By the late Jane Frear

[Some older orchid growers may remember Jane Frear, who was a stalwart member of the North Shore Orchid Society -- indeed a foundation member. She had been an ardent grower of cymbidiums until a bout of ill health compelled her to give up orchids for a time. Later, with health partially restored, and having been advised to "grow small types, and above all nothing heavy", she became an enthusiastic and passionate grower of Odontoglossums.

In November 1994, Philip Altmann of Warrnambool Orchids, Australia, was guest speaker at a meeting of the New Zealand Orchid Society. He brought many flasks of odont seedlings Jane wrote this article in the February 1995 issue of North Shore's monthly magazine Insigne, hence the references to "hot weather".

I think the article is worth reprinting for a wider audience. There is no reason why her method cannot be applied to some other types of orchid seedlings. In particular, I have recently used, with considerable success, her "second recipe" for newly deflasked paph seedlings. – C Hubbert, editor of Insigne (chubbert@jacksonrussell.co.nz).]

Quite a few of our members will have bought flasks from Philip Altmann when he came over last year [November 1994], and here is how a friend and I dealt with some 15 of them, successfully. I say successfully, because going into hot weather abruptly as we did is the worst time to deflask the cool ones like odonts.

All materials mentioned here were pre-sterilised, dust removed, and moistened. In use were 5" pots and low square or oblong polystyrene boxes.

First, each container was half filled with polystyrene chunks. Second, on that was spread No. 3 bark treated as above, to fill each pot to two-thirds. Third, the cleanest and greenest sphagnum moss was laid thinly across the mix and up the sides of the pots. Fourth, the Odonts, shaken clear of agar (but not washed) were placed roots to centre and tops lying over the sides of the pots, the roots having been shortened back to 2½" which is enough to 'anchor' them. Fifth, very gently, a mix of No. 3 bark plus a little fine pumice and perlite was placed in the centre of the pots to hold the roots down while the tops were one at a time being eased upright and mix being spooned in

between them and the pot rim, to end up with the bases of the plants being almost level with the tops of the pots.

The 5" pots held 8 plants each, and the polystyrene boxes were just right for 16 plants.

Mist spray recipes

Having got your plants to this stage it is urgent that they grow 'true' roots quickly, and these two recipes will encourage that, although I prefer the corn syrup recipe myself.

First recipe:

2 teaspoons corn syrup;
1 tablet vitamin B1, crushed and strained;
3½ to 4 litres of cold boiled water.

Spray your newly potted plants without delay and each day for one week, always misting the plants but not wetting the already damp mix they are growing in. Start up a cool slow fan to circulate the air. After one week you may continue to spray daily, but thin the recipe with a further 1 litre of water and do not stop the fan at any time as the combinations of (a) shallow planting, (b) special food, and (c) being gently moved constantly by the fan forces them into 'true' root growth, and within 2 weeks a pull on a leaf to test them will show resistance and presence of new roots. At around 3 weeks will be time enough to use plain water. Drench through the pots but not on the plants if possible.

At the commencement of the fourth week, the recipe can be further thinned with water, and a pinch of, say, Phostrogen as well as Captan can be added to finely spray the plants, but I use plain water to drench the growing media and avoid getting water on the plants.

If there is no 'white' appearance on the top of the growing media, then you are growing correctly and keeping a restraint on amount of feed given - this being a chief fault even with adult plants.

Try not to 'pot on' any Odont seedlings until they have made a first bulb and a new side growth is just visible, but still hold to the shallow mix principle with plenty of polystyrene and not too wide a pot. (And don't, like me, put these wonderfully well-grown seedlings out among the adult plants just in time to be decimated by two of the worst frosts ever seen in the district!)

Second recipe:

2 level teaspoons white sugar;
½ level teaspoon vegemite;
3½ to 4 litres cold boiled water.

Apply as a fine mist as under the first recipe, and following all the same rules.

In both cases, I would advise a pinch of Captan in each recipe that is made up, so the plants have some help against wilt, but if everything right throughout the process is thoroughly clean and the fan keeps going there should not be this problem even in the hot weather danger mentioned earlier.

There are other ways to deflask, some quite radical and yet successful in the right hands, but I have found the ways outlined above as the safest to use.

[reprinted from *Insigne*, February 1995]

Orchid Growing by the Moon

Jim Brydie, forwarded by Robert Bisetto (rbisetto@optusnet.com.au)

The Editors confess to being somewhat sceptical but we are happy to include this piece – we're sure it will stimulate some discussion! An explanatory note from Robert appears at the end.

I had a visit from a very good grower a few weeks back, and over a cup of coffee he asked me if I knew anything about growing orchids in accordance with the concepts of gardening by the phases of the moon. I admitted that I knew nothing of it. He then told me how he had adopted these principles, particularly in terms of timing his repotting, deflasking, seed sowing etc. He said he was very pleased with the results and was totally convinced. I resolved to read more on the subject and it appears that there is indeed some science behind it.

The following articles are written regarding gardening in general rather than orchids specifically but they give you an introduction to the principles and I offer them to you for consideration. If you decide to give it a try, you will need to buy yourself a moon gardening calendar. I believe they can be purchased for about \$15 to \$20 from several internet sites and perhaps also at some of those alternative lifestyle shops.

As one internet article said: "Pliny the Elder did it, and so did Benjamin Franklin and your great grandma as well! They all planted gardens by the phases of the Moon, using a method practiced in rural communities for over two thousand years. It was so well established in the first century AD that it became part of the "natural history" that Pliny wrote about in his series of the same name. A method proven successful over that length of time deserves more than a label of folklore. It warrants a trial in our gardens too."

Planting by the Moon – an article by Marion Owen,

What if I told you that mowing your lawn on certain days would mean you could mow less often?

Before you roll your eyes, think about it. The moon influences more than the ocean tides. Just ask any bartender, clergyman or nurse. In fact, my friend Amy braces herself before going to work. Amy works at the hospital and when the moon is full, those nights in the emergency room are, as she calls it, "memorable."

Many scientists insist that the myth that a full moon affects the behaviour of humans, animals and plants is a bunch of baloney. But police, bartenders and folks like Amy will tell you otherwise.

Before I go further, let me tease you with a possibility: What if mowing your lawn during certain phases of the moon retarded growth which meant you didn't have to mow as often? Keep reading. I bet you won't be shaking your head much longer! According to a National Geographic news article more gardeners today are turning to the moon for sage advice on the best time to plant, prune, weed, and harvest. The practice, known as moon or lunar gardening, centres on the moon's gravitational effect on the flow of moisture in soil and plants.

Gardening by the moon is as old as time. Long before man (and women!) ever had a watch on his wrist or a calendar on the refrigerator, everything was governed by the phases of the moon.

Moon gardening has been passed down through many generations. "There are firm believers in moon gardening today who will not plant anything unless a favourable moon sign is indicated," says Ed Hume, one of the Pacific Northwest's favourite garden gurus and proponent of the moon's influences on gardening. Hume publishes an annual Garden Almanac which gives month by month moon sign gardening calendar.

The moon controls ocean tides, influences the groundwater tables beneath our feet and the movement of fluids in plants. Even continental land masses are said to rise 2 to 3 feet in elevation with the passage of the moon. Understanding the effects, and timing your gardening chores accordingly, is the basis of moon gardening.

For example, the best time to turn over garden soil is during the last quarter of the moon (decreasing moon phase) because that's when the water table has dropped to its lowest point. This means there is less moisture in the soil. Taking your back into consideration, it is easier to turn soil over when there is less moisture in it!

How to garden by moon phases

The moon moves through a complete cycle every 29 days. For moon gardening purposes, this cycle is divided into four quarters or phases. The term phase refers to the moon's apparent shape as viewed from earth during the month. To plant by the moon phases you will need an almanac or calendar, such as Ed Hume's Planting Guide, that lists the exact time and date of the moon phases.



The lunar month starts with the new moon, also called "the dark of the moon". From the new moon to the first quarter and from the first quarter to the full moon, the moon appears to grow from nothing to a crescent and then to a full circle at mid-month. These are the increasing or waxing phases.

1. Increasing Light -- New moon to full moon

Examples of garden chores to do by the light of the moon: (NOTE: These are general guidelines. I highly recommend referring to Ed Hume's Planting Guide for specific planting tasks): *(JB's editorial note : the guide referred to is for the northern hemisphere. You need to find an Australian almanac or moon calendar, designed for our seasons and for the Australian East Coast timetable)*

Repot and groom houseplants

Sow seeds of plants that grow above ground (for helpful tips on starting your own seeds, click [here](#).)

Fertilize

Graft fruit trees

Plant evergreen and deciduous trees

The decreasing or waning phases are when the moon "shrinks" from the full moon down to the new moon (darkness). As the moon wanes during the 3rd and 4th quarters, this is a good time to prune plants, as the water table is diminishing and so less sap will flow out of the cut ends. The plants are said to orient themselves toward

their roots, making this a favourable time for planting, transplanting and harvesting root crops in general. The 4th quarter is the most dormant period and is good for chores like weeding.

2. Decreasing Light -- Full moon to dark of the moon

Examples of garden chores to do by the dark of the moon:

(NOTE: These are general guidelines. I highly recommend referring to Ed Hume's Planting Guide for specific planting tasks).

Plant bulbs

Plant crops that grow below the ground, such as potatoes, carrots

Cultivate weeds

Plant biennials and perennials because they need strong roots

Eliminate slugs

Prune shrubs

How is sowing, transplanting and harvesting linked to phases of the moon? One theory is that during the light (waxing) of the Moon, sap is thought to flow more strongly, filling plants with vitality and energy, favoring the planting and harvesting of crops that mature above ground. What the moon gardening movement currently lacks is a body of modern scientific work that validates its benefits...

Science or baloney?

John Teasdale, director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Systems Laboratory in Beltsville, Maryland, said he is not aware of any research on the lunar influences on agriculture, though he said an experiment could be established.

"We know that the moon influences some natural phenomena such as tides," he said.

"I would guess that a simple hypothesis would be that lunar cycles could influence meteorological cycles which in turn could influence crops."

RJ Harris, the head gardener at a private estate near Cornwall, England conducts his own experiments. Each year he cultivates a selection of crops in opposition to the best practices of moon-gardening methods. Crops planted according to the lunar cycle fare much better, he said.

"I've got a large area in potatoes. We've got some planted at the right time of the moon and some crops at the wrong time of the moon. The difference is so obvious and there for everybody to see," he said.

Now it's your turn. Test the validity of gardening by the moon in your own garden.

Plant some crops by the correct moon sign and others by the wrong moon sign.

Experiment with above ground and below ground crops. Try mowing different parts of your lawn according to the moon phases!

JB: Does Lunar Planting Really Work? Here are a few more interesting quotes gleaned from the internet

"The gravitation of the passing moon pulls the nearest body of water a little away from the solid mass of earth beneath it, and at the same time pulls the earth a little away from the water on the farthest side. In this manner the moon sets up two tidal bulges on opposite sides of the earth." (Louise Riotte) These same forces affect the water content of the soil, creating more moisture in the soil at the time of the new and full moon. This increased moisture encourages the seeds to sprout and grow.

Dr. Frank Brown of Northwestern University performed research over a ten-year period of time, keeping meticulous records of his results. He found that plants absorbed more water at the time of the full moon. He conducted his experiments in a

laboratory without direct contact from the moon, yet he found that they were still influenced by it.

In a work titled 'the Moon and Growth of Plants, by Kolisko, we find the following: "A curious fact about the Moon is that, despite its low reflectance, from its sunlit side it reflects infra-red light that is several times more intense than the rays it reflects in the visible light range"

John Jeavons, author of How to grow more vegetables... "adds the **influence of the increasing or decreasing moonlight** on the growth of plants. When the moon is in it's waxing phases the increasing amount of moonlight stimulates leaf growth", and "as the moonlight decreases the above ground leaf growth slows down. The root is stimulated again."

G'day Nick,

In the attachments, and the emails below, I have sent you a copy of an article written by Jim Brydie, after an interesting conversation we had. I asked Jim, if he does his planting by the moon, and his face screwed up, thinking where is this fellow coming from!!!!

I explained to him, that I do all my repotting, dividing and deflasking using a Moon Chart, and below is the resultant article, which Jim has given me permission to use for my own society's bulletin, etc, and so I have passed it on to you!

I explain the basic theory;

When the moon is waxing.....this is the period that affects, the above ground part of the plant.

When the moon is waning.....this affects primarily the roots/tubers.

Every 2.25 days, the moon passes through a different 'star' sign, ie Aries, Taurus, etc. The MOST fertile periods are the 'star' signs, that belong to the element of Water, ie Cancer, Scorpio and Pisces.

This is when plants should be repotted, divided and deflasked.

The MOST infertile periods are the 'star' signs, that belong to the element of Fire, ie Aries, Leo, Sagittarius.

This is when pest and fungi controls work best! and is also a good time to prepare mediums, pots, etc, for when the fertile periods return.

When I have mentioned this to some collectors and/or nursery owners, some have literally laughed in my face, and some say they can only repot etc, when the time is available. I believe, this is basically, a lack of good planning, and a lack of foresight, reason being, that once you know the periods of the moon, a little bit of planning, can help coordinate any nursery work and plan your time better.

How many times, have you heard a grower, mentioning, how they broke up one of their favorite specimens, only to have all the divisions die on them.....I can almost guarantee, that when these plants were broken up, it was the moon going through a fire sign!

Cheers Robert Bisetto

Society Notices

(As we have been getting more notices for overseas events, we now have a NZ and an International section.)

NZ

The Bay of Plenty Orchid Society autumn show will be changed from the dates as stated in the OCNZ year book to avoid Easter.

The show will be held in The Te Puke Memorial Hall

On Friday 3rd April 2009, 10.30 to 5.00 and Saturday 4th April 2009, 10.30 to 4.00.

This year the show will be run per courtesy of the local Lions Club as a fund raiser and should be better than ever.

The Orchid Council of NZ has a web site that lists all the shows around the country. The URL is:

http://www.orchidcouncil.co.nz/show_dates.html

Here are the 2009 show dates for the **Hawkes Bay Orchid Society**

Winter Show to be held in the Clive Hall at Clive on Saturday 18th July 2009

Spring Show to be held at the Taradale Town Hall on 19th & 20th September 2009

Sarcophilus Show to be held in the Taradale Rotary Lounge, Taradale Town Hall on 7th November 2009

Manawatu Orchid Society Autumn Show, Senior Citizens Hall, Bowen Street, Feilding. Saturday April 4th 9am - 4pm. Free Entry, Raffles, Plant Sales.

Orchid Council of NZ AGM & National Judging Seminar

June 14th - 16th, Community Leisure Centre,
569 Fergusson Street, Palmerston North

Waitakere Orchid Club Spring Show, 21-23 August 2009

Friday (21st) 1-4pm, Sat & Sun: 9am-4pm

Kelston Community Centre, cnr. Awaroa and Gt. North Road

Entry: \$5 per person, seniors \$3, children under 12 free if accompanied by an adult. Each entry goes into a draw to win \$250 worth of orchids.

New Zealand Clivia Club

21 March: Auckland Horticultural Centre, 990 Gt North Rd, Western Springs (Opps Motions Rd to Zoo) An open day promoting all the Gardening Clubs in Auckland with lots of displays and demonstrations including plant sales. The New Zealand Clivia Club will be there so call in and see us.

27/29 March: Auckland Botanical Gardens at Hill Rd, Manurewa, are having a 3 day 'Manukau Garden Festival' On the Sunday there is a Gardeners Market with heaps of events. **The New Zealand Clivia Club** will be there promoting Clivia and hope to see you.

New Zealand Clivia Club Meeting

Wednesday 29th April 7.00pm – Discussion and slide show, plants for sale. Venue is the AHC Building, Great South Road, Western Springs.

International

The Australian Orchid Council Conference 2009 website is now up and running at <http://www.mosorchid.org>.

18th Australian Orchid Council Conference & Show Werribee Sept 8th - 13th 2009

The organising committee are in the last stages of putting together the programs for the conference being held at Werribee in Sept 2009. A programme is shown on the next page.

The discounted early bird registrations started in September 08 and runs through until 31st March 09, when the full registration price starts and runs through until 31st July 09.

The vendors who are attending are as follows:

David Keanelly Orchids,
Western Orchid Laboratory,
Royale Orchids,
Dendi Orchids,
Australian Orchid Nursery,
Orchids on Newbold,
Orchid Species Plus,
Easy Orchids,
Magic Meadow Orchids,
Dark Star Orchids,
Woolf Orchid Culture,
Mt Beenak Orchids,
Nicky's Slippers,
Warrnambool Orchid Nursery,
Sims Orchids,
Castle Creek Orchids,
Cedarvale Orchids,
Orchidaceous Books.

18th Australian Orchid Council Conference & Show 2009 Proposed Lecture Timetable

Thursday 10th Sept 2009

9am	George Hatfield	The Cymbidium Industry in the USA
10am	Clive Hayman & Rita Cusack	The Phragmipedium Story
11am	Graham McKay	The Phalaenopsis Revolution - New varieties & culture

12noon Lunch

1pm	Kevin Hipkins	Specimen orchids - growing & showing
2pm	Clive Halls	Masdevallias for the New Millenium
3pm	Gary Backhouse	Bush Gems - The Native Terrestrial Orchids of Victoria

Friday 11th Sept 2009

9am	Neville Roper	The proliferation of Sarcochilus Hybrids in Australia
10am	George Hatfield	Cymbidiums. Past, present & future
11am	Wayne Turville	Breeding trends with Australian Dendrobium Orchids

12noon Lunch

1pm	Dennis Diehm	Modern mid and mini Cattleya in culture
2pm	Gary Yong Gee	Oncidium and it's relatives
3pm	Grant Garrett	Why the Champions received the accolades they did

close

for more information write to
Secretary
ef.wilde@bigpond.com

or 15 William Road,
Little River 3211 Vic Aust.

Register now for the 14th SAOC conference and show in Durban (South Africa)

The 14th SAOC show and conference will be held in Durban from 24-27 September 2009. Registration will be R1200 per person, but there are early-bird packages from R750, which will include the show, all lectures and lunches, and the opening function and gala banquet. Better value for money you will not find! For those registering early there is a payment plan. Details from Hennie Steyn orchidshow2009@gmail.com or 083 228 2413. Confirmed overseas speakers include Pepe Portillo, Francisco Miranda, Olaf Gruss, James

and Lauris Rose, Frank Smith and Claude Hamilton. Confirmed overseas vendors include Francisco Miranda, Ecuagenera, In-Charm Orchid Lab, Sunset Valley Orchids, Water Orchids and more. Of course, all our favourite local speakers and vendors will also be there!

2009 Show dates for the **Port Macquarie Orchid & Bromeliad Soc. Inc.** as well as the **ANOS** Speciosum Spectacular to be held at the home of Ted & Win Walmsley at Kempsey:

P.M.O.&B. Soc. Mothers Day Extravaganza - Panthers Club, Port Macquarie- 8th, 9th & 10th May, 2009

P.M.O.&B. Soc. Winter Show - featuring Aust.Natives and Exotic Species - Panthers Club, Port Macquarie – 29th & 30th August, 2009

ANOS Speciosum Spectacular- Australia's foremost show of hundreds of Dendrobium speciosums as well as Australian Native Hybrids- Kempsey- 4th to 7th September, 2009 (see above for venue).

P.M.O.&B.Soc. 'Orchids By The Sea'- Panthers Club-2nd, 3rd, 4th October, 2009.

Port Macquarie & Kempsey are both part of the Mid-North Coast of New South Wales and are about a 4 to 5 hour road trip from Sydney. Both are serviced by Qantas and Virgin airlines

Eric Nethery, Show Chairman,

Port Macquarie Orchid & Bromeliad Soc. Inc

14 Wiruna Rd.,

Port Macquarie, NSW,2444, Australia

can666@optusnet.com.au.

Classified advertisements

I would like to acquire *Cypripedium japonicum* and wonder if any of your readers could help in this regard. I am happy to pay for a plant.

Agnes Betschart (abetsch@waikato.ac.nz)

I am looking to buy *Lycaste* plants either species or hybrids but with the emphasis on species. However, would particularly like a plant of *L. Betty Sparrow* which was a favourite of mine before we moved house 10 yrs or so ago.

Margot Kay Please contact me on mkay@paradise.net.nz
or ph 09 4182590

Wanted to buy.

Calanthe :any Variety

Spathoglottis: any variety

Mike Leaity (Leaitym@xtra.co.nz)

Final stock clearance of USA made Dynagro fertiliser as advertised in AOS monthly magazine. This is a liquid fertiliser and mix ratio is one Quarter of a teaspoon to 4 litres of water to give a CF reading of approx. 4. Available in 11oz, 22oz and 1 quart bottles. Also 2 only 1 gal (US) Bottles of Hi N Pro 10 5 5 (no longer made).

Please contact G. Poffley, email gpoffley@clear.net.nz for available products and prices.

North Shore Orchid Society

The Society meets on the LAST Sunday of each month in the Milford Senior Citizens Hall 141A Kitchener Road, Milford (behind New World, adjacent to Milford Shopping Centre carpark) at 12.30 pm We would love to see you at our meetings which are relaxed and informative. Any queries regarding meetings to Rodney Draper at draperfam@xtra.co.nz

Bay of Plenty Orchid Society

Bay Of Plenty Orchid Society meets at 1.30pm on the second Sunday of each month (excepting January), at the Lodge Hall, 18 Oxford Street, Te Puke.

contacts: Wilma Fitzgibbons 07 5422243

email: tony.wilma@xtra.co.nz

Trevor Signal 07 3228233

email: signalp@nettel.net.nz

Orchid Society secretaries – if you would like a permanent notice of when and where your society holds its meetings, we can publish one (as above) for no charge in each issue.

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Or our web site : www.petersglensshadehouses.com

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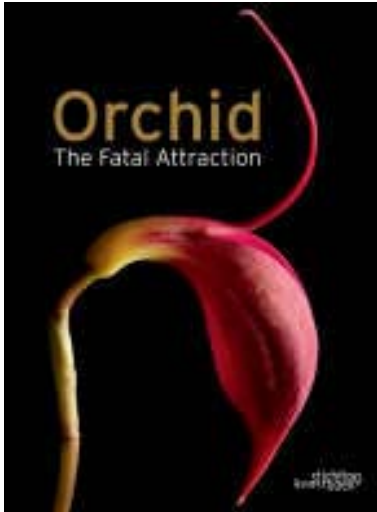
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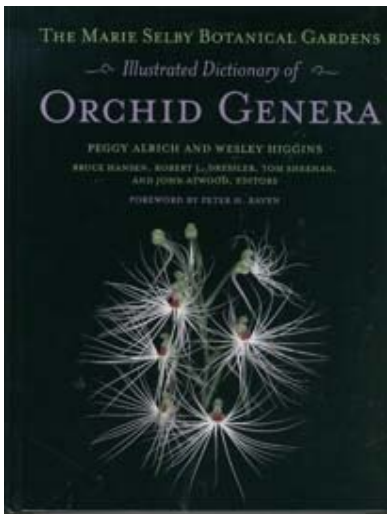


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