

THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ORCHID BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE ORCHID SOCIETY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA
A MEMBER OF THE AUSTRALIAN ORCHID COUNCIL. FOUNDED 1946.

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NEXT MEETING of the Orchid Society of Western Australia (Inc.) will be held in the Collins St. Hall, cnr Collins St & Shaftesbury St. South Perth, Friday 22nd May 2009 commencing at **8.00p.m.**

Orchid Society of Western Australia
Patron Mr K.C. Rex

THIS MONTH'S MEETING ITEM:

BUILDING A HOME FOR ORCHIDS -

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JUNE MEETING DATES

Judging Panel 7.30 pm Monday 1st

OSWA Committee 7.30 pm Friday 5th

General Meeting 8.00 pm Friday 26th

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**Deadline for Bulletin Items — 9 pm
Sat. 13 days prior to OSWA GM.**

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BIRTHDAYS: May– 7th - Dorothy Walton, 9th - Ellen Dixon, 31st - Jean Herbert

We wish everyone a very Happy Birthday and also anyone celebrating an Anniversary, our best wishes to you. To anyone on the sick list, we wish you a speedy recovery.

OSWA Website: The new website is now online at <http://www.orchidsocietywa.net.au/>

Coming Events:

- **Home Open:** The sausage sizzle at the home of John & Dorothy Walton, will be held **Sunday 26th July** Cost will be \$5 pp, all proceeds to OSWA.
- **OSWA Winter Show:** 18th & 19th July. Set up 8 am, Saturday 18th July, South Perth Scout & Guide Hall
- **Inter-Society Challenge:** 1st-2nd August 2009, at Eaton Hall, Pratt Rd, Eaton. Roy Brown has kindly volunteered to make a backdrop for OSWA's display. The theme for our display will be "Orchids in the outback"
- **Spring Show:** 2nd-5th September. Set up 6 pm, Tuesday 1st September, Kardinya Park Shopping Centre.
- **Perth Royal Show:** 26th September - 3rd October. Set up Friday 25th September
- **OSWA Potting Workshop:** Sunday 11th October, South Perth Scout & Guide Hall

Meeting Item: This month– Building a home for orchids - Murray Baker

Coming months - Paphiopedilums, Hydroponics, Floral art, Deflasking, Silent Auction

OSWA General Meetings: Attendance at OSWA meetings has been dropping off lately. Are you happy with meetings being held on 4th Friday of each month? Would another time be better? Would you prefer meetings at a different time, say on a Sunday? Please let your committee know what you think.

Autumn show at Stockland Riverton Shopping Centre:

Thank you to all members who entered plants, helped set up and pack up the display, offered plants for sale or helped look after the display and sales tables.

Advertising space: Advertising space is for available at reasonable rates in your Bulletin. See the Editor for details.

Ideas for General Meeting Topics - If you have any suggestions, please let a Committee Member know.

RESULTS OF PLANT COMPETITION - (MONTH - APRIL 2009)**Open:**

Class 1B (3)	1. Henry Eaton	Blc. Triumphal Coronation
	2. Jack & Betty Rensen	Bc. Languedoc 'Singapore Welcome'
	3. Henry Eaton	Blc. Bryce Canyon 'Splendiferous'
Class 1C (2)	1. Jack & Betty Rensen	Lc. Dinara 'Blue Heaven'
	2. Henry Eaton	Slc. Dal's Buddy x <i>C. walkeriana</i>

Novice:

Class 15A (1)	1. Marilyn Brechin	<i>Enc. Radiata</i>
Class 15B(6)	1. Ross Lang	C. Mary Lynne McKenzie 'Natures Masterpiece'
	2. Marilyn Brechin	C. Unknown
	3. Ross Lang	Blc. Mary Battle 'La Tulerie'
Class 15E(1)	1. Marilyn Brechin	C. Khali Blue 'Delf Beauty'
Class 15F(1)	1. Marilyn Brechin	C. Chocolate Drop 'Kodama'
Class 20C(1)	1. Marilyn Brechin	Onc. Popcorn Pink

POPULAR VOTE: Open - Blc. Languedoc 'Singapore Welcome' - Jack & Betty Rensen

Novice - C. Khali Blue 'Delf Beauty' - Marilyn Brechin

Schokman Trophy Points: Blc. Triumphal Coronation (72 pts) - Henry Eaton

CYMBIDIUM CULTURE NOTES (MAY/JUNE) by Roy Brown.

These cooler days with the damp evenings are ideally suited for the cultivation of Cymbidiums. The night air is usually laden with moisture and you will find quite a heavy dew will settle on your plants; this will save giving them the evening watering.

Don't be misled by the change in the weather, the pots must not be allowed to dry out, particularly if you are using fertilizer. You should still give them a good watering once a day, preferably early morning.

Make full use of the current growing season. Cymbidium growths are still growing strongly, so keep up with the fertilizing programme. At this time of the year, the flower spikes are well in evidence, so an addition of a little extra Potash will help in the formation of strong, sturdy stems.

This is the month for our main crop of flower spikes to show up. The early flowering types have already produced theirs and these will lengthen considerably during the next couple of months. If you have cause to move a plant in spike, be very careful you replace it in the exact same position as before. This may not seem important now, but later on when buds show through, you may find the stem will twist and bend and so spoil the whole appearance of the plant. This is particularly the case when moving plants from the shade house to the flowering house. If you should move the plant once buds are showing through, place it so that the buds face the strongest source of light.

Don't let any slugs or other pests damage your plants at this stage; keep the area well baited with Baysol pellets.

CATTLEYA CULTURE NOTES (MAY/JUNE 2009) by Henry Eaton

Aprils weather was if anything unusual, as it was very dry with no rain and the daytime temperatures tended to be higher than normal, while the nights were cool. This has lead to some flowers coming out earlier than normal.

Writing this in early May, there does not seem to be any change in sight in the near future. This would mean watering more often than you would in colder, wetter years. Watering should be early in the day to allow plants to dry out by nightfall. Remember, should the weather change, that Cattleya roots do not like to be wet when the temperatures drop down low. Because of this, watering and fertilizing will have to be governed by the prevailing weather.

Unless something drastic is wrong with your plants cease trying to pot or repot plants now, as winter cold will be with us soon. If a plant is throwing new roots over the edge of the pot, rather than re-potting, put the entire pot and plant into a bigger size pot and re-potting can be left till Spring arrives. The new roots, by then, would be securely anchored in the larger pot. Keep water off developing flowers as they tend to succumb to Botrytis, a fungal infection, if kept damp.

Dendrobium bigibbum

I have been growing these plants for only a short time but in that time have managed some success on the show bench. Always, the first comment is "you must have a heated glasshouse". I wish!

These notes are designed for those who want to dabble with a few plants, any more and you'd better get a heated glasshouse.

I have a small collection of some 30 Phalaenopsis orchids and they grow well inside, so it got me thinking about other tropicals and with my keen interest in natives I grabbed some seedling

Den. bigibbum and *Den. lithicola*. By the time I got them it was May. Winter was closing in and the nights were cold. The plants had already matured their canes and were entering dormancy. These seedlings spent the first winter on the windowsill I full sun. I would observe the canes and only when they started shrivelling did I give them a soak in tepid water, not cold. The pots are stood in water and I let the capillary action of the water gradually wet the bark over a few hours. By the next day the canes were plump again. The books say give them no water at all but I think a little is ok. In nature there are many dews in winter, so even though it does not rain, the plants still get a bit of moisture. Even though the root tips have long since sealed, they still are very effective at getting whatever moisture they can.

By September, the plants leaves have a real purple tinge and the first signs of new growths are evident. At this time watering is increased to once every two weeks, again standing the pots in some tepid water using capillary action as I did not want any water on the new growths. On warm days the plants sit out in the shade house under 50% but are brought inside every night until minimums exceed 14C. By late October they can be safely left outside unless we get an unusually cold night or period of cold and wet weather.

Feeding commences when the new growths are about an inch high and I use Horticultural Solutions HSO 8 native formula with a little Seasol. Miracle Grow and Power Feed are two others I use. Plants are kept damp, not wet, and air movements is important. They spend their growing season under 50% green shade cloth. At this stage they are in small pots, no bigger than 65 mm and they will stay there until the pot nearly blows up. One thing I have noticed with hard canes like *Den bigibbum* is that the smaller the pot, the better they grow. My first seedling is still in a 65mm pot and has 12 canes and eight flower spikes evident.

Peak growing season is January and February, that coincides with the monsoons of our tropical north. Growth is now rapid and new roots pop out from the developing growths. The one thing I do look for is that each year I expect my canes to be larger than the previous year, a very evident sign of good culture.

The completion of growth is just as rapid. With the development of the final leaf the first signs of flower spikes emerge. Spikes will also emerge from old canes. I usually keep my plants outside until the buds are a reasonable size then move them inside. One cold night and they will drop some or all of their buds, so I don't take any chances here. Once open they brighten up my lounge for ages and even when cut they stay in good condition in the vase. It is this keeping ability that is passed on to the hot/cold hybrids, as well as the earlier flowering. Flowering starts late in April through to June.

At the completion of flowering the plant needs a rest, but my problem is that the plants are now too big for the windowsill. No problem, I just sit them as close to the window as I can. On sunny winter days, I sit them outside near the bricks of the house facing north each morning after 10 am. The bricks absorb the heat and radiate it back to the plants, so they are quite happy there until I get home from work, then it's back inside. Microclimates are wonderful things to learn. Watering is the same as last winter and so on until October when the cycle starts all over again.

Of course this is all rather labour intensive, moving plants around, inside and out every day all winter but it is worth it. Our summers are fine for growing these orchids outdoors: it's the wet and cold nights of winter that do the damage. Even if you can't give them much light over winter it does not matter, they are dormant anyway. Give them a go.Steve Howard

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The Orchid Society of WA (Inc.)

Minutes of the General Meeting held in the Collins Street Hall, South Perth,

On Friday 24th April 2009

Welcome: The President opened the meeting at 8.02 pm and welcomed the 30 members and 4 visitors present.

Apologies: Jim & Kaye Baylis, Dana Mitchell, Hector Patfield, Carl Slusarczyk, Fred & Jean Herbert.

Minutes: Moved Merrilyn Brechin, seconded Rosemary McGrath that the Minutes of the previous meeting be accepted. **Carried.**

Business arising: Stephen Chiu received his "new member" plant, kindly donated by Tom Dixon.

Correspondence Inward:

- Email to Bank West re signatories for the cheque account
- Society Newsletters and assorted junk mail

Correspondence Outward:

- Email to Bank West re signatories for cheque account
- Jim O'Hare, Judging Panel, re revised OSWA show dates.

Business Arising: Nil

Confirmation: Moved Meg Donald, seconded Ellen Dixon, that Correspondence Inward & Correspondence Outward be endorsed. **Carried.**

Financial Statement: Statement #413 was tabled.

Moved Alice Lang, seconded Henry Eaton, that the financial statement be received. **Carried.**

Reports: Nil.

General Business:

- John Walton asked members interested in receiving an exemption from water restrictions to contact him.
- Rosemary McGrath discussed arrangements for the Autumn show set-up (5th May, Stockland Riverton S.C)

Raffle: Dorothy Walton, Rosemary McGrath, Alice Lang, Anne O'Callaghan (thanks to Faye Patfield for donating extra raffle plants)

Door Prize: Jack Rensen.

Evening's Programme: Jim O'Hare gave an interesting presentation with some beautiful pictures of *Miltonia* and *Miltoniopsis* orchids, genera that we don't see often on the OSWA show benches.

Meeting closed at 9.17 pm.

Jim & Kaye's Home Visit

