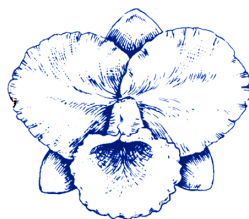


THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ORCHID BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL 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 of Collins St. & Shaftesbury St. South Perth, Friday 24th February 2012, commencing at 8:00 pm

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**THIS MONTH'S MEETING ITEM:
AGM, WINE & CHEESE NIGHT**

MARCH MEETING DATES:

Judging Panel 8.00 pm Monday 5th
OSWA Committee 7.30 pm Friday 2nd
General Meeting 8.00 pm Friday 23rd

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Birthdays February 6th – Maxine Perry **7th** - Jim Baylis **11th** – Nancie Jones & Len Munnings **20th** – Lois McFarlane **25th** – Betty Rensen

March 8th – Margaret Jess & Dot deGruchy **9th** – Bob Jones **11th** – Merrilyn Brechin **14th** – Maree McDonald **19th** – Jack Rensen & John Walton **24th** – Raye McIntosh **25th** – Lorna Dodd **26th** – Kaye Baylis & Peggy Stacy **27th** – Mick May **31st** – Kon Doornbusch

Best wishes to anyone else celebrating Birthdays or Anniverseries. To any member on the sick list, may you soon be well.

New Members: Jeanette Houldsworth, Ian & Chris Paton, Ryan Craig

Welcome to the Society, we hope you enjoy a long & happy membership.

The **OSWA Bulletin** (and other information) is now available at www.orchidsocietywa.net.au

General News

- **Home Open:** At the residence of Malcolm & Ann Davis – 4 Ryans Court, Redcliffe, on Sunday 18th March from **11:30 am**. There will be a sausage sizzle, please BYO drinks and chairs. Also please bring either a salad or sweet to share. There will be a cover charge of \$5.00pp, proceeds go to OSWA. There will be a raffle.
- **Membership Fees:** Membership fees for 2012 are now due. These can be paid in person at a meeting or you can send a cheque payable to the Orchid Society of WA, to I. Duncan, 5 Salen Ct., Ardross, 6153. A single membership is \$21.00, a double membership is \$26.00.
- **A big Thank You:** to Kaye & Jim for hosting a very enjoyable social evening & BBQ at their residence in place of the January General Meeting. I am sure that everyone who attended appreciated the trouble they had gone to in order to make it a comfortable evening.
- **The Opportunity (sales) Table:** If you want to make space in your shade house, you don't need to wait for an auction to sell your excess plants. Consider bringing in plants to a meeting to sell on the Opportunity Table, especially if they are in flower. We have quite a few new members at the moment who may be looking for new plants to expand their collections. Plants will be sold on commission (10% to OSWA).

The President and Committee, along with the general membership, extend our deepest sympathy to Merril Brechin and Dana Mitchell on the recent passing of Don Brechin - Merril's Husband and Dana's Grandfather.

CYMBIDIUM CULTURE NOTES (FEBRUARY/MARCH 2012) by Roy Brown

These are very hot months with the temperatures in the high 30's, so regular use of the sprinklers, are an absolute must. Create as much humidity as possible, keeping the pots and the areas around your plants as damp as possible.

In my opinion, the next month or two are the most important for the successful flowering of Cymbidiums.

THE NEW GROWTHS MUST BE KEPT GROWING, SO THEY WILL BULB UP IN TIME TO PRODUCE THEIR FLOWER SPIKES.

To do this they will need as much light as they can take without actual burning of the leaves, plenty of fertilizer and water.

For those who grow their plants under 50% Saron Shade Cloth, you will find the leaves have become a yellowy green colour, this being mainly because of the bright light we experience here in WA with the skies being almost cloudless during the summer months. Provided the bulbs are nice and plump, and the plants are healthy, this yellowing is a good sign that the plant should flower this season. A plant grown under too heavy shade conditions will have dark green, lush foliage and will not produce as many spikes of flowers as one that has been grown under bright sunlight.

If you find your plants are troubled with Red Spider, Thrips, Scale etc., then give them a spraying of an insecticide. It's during the next couple of months that the flower spikes are produced and it's a good idea to have the plants free from all insect pests well in advance, so no harm will come to the young flower spikes when they show up.

CATTLEYA CULTURE NOTES (FEBRUARY/MARCH 2012) by Henry Eaton

The weather, has as expected been hot, excessively so at times and is likely to be the same in this period. As such, the aims of culture are to keep your plants well hydrated and as cool as possible. This means regular watering without getting the mix soggy. A little drying out between waterings is acceptable and will be appreciated by the mature plants. Do not allow seedlings to dry out completely as this may set them back. Avoid any potting at this time.

Continue your fertilizing programme, but try to do it on any day forecast to be cooler than 30-35C if possible. If the days are very hot, especially if in the high 30's or 40's, give consideration to watering your plants in the late afternoon or evening to cool everything down. This will also increase the humidity. Increase the shading if necessary. Sometimes, removing the shade cloth on the shadiest side of the growing area or raising the lower border off the ground, helps in letting in more air and cooling the place down.

Keep a lookout for flowering sheaths and flower buds breaking through so that they can be separated from those areas which are being watered the most. This helps to stop water collecting in an open flower sheath, leading to rotting off of the buds.

NB. As John Walton has withdrawn from supplying Cattleya Culture Notes due to ill health, with members indulgence I will be reprinting some of the late Henry Eaton's notes until a replacement writer can be found.

Editor.

19th AOC Conference #7

Early bird registration lapsed on 31st January but you can still register by going online at

<http://www.waorchids.iinet.net.au/Registration.pdf>

If you are unable to download the registration form, please contact the Secretary or email to

aocconference@dodo.com.au with your postal details. We now have credit facilities for your ease of payment.

Advantages of registration are.... Entry to ALL Conference Lectures

Preference in all the Conference Tours

The opportunity to mingle with world class orchid identities

The prospect of adding new and exotic orchids to your collection

We are proud to announce that the 19th AOC Conference Lecture Programme is now complete with a confirmed Speaker List of 24 world class orchid specialists, (16 of whom are from overseas) and will present 31 lectures over 3 days.

The latest inclusion in our quite remarkable line-up is Jason Fischer of Orchids Limited of Minnasota, USA. Jason has agreed to give two talks and will bring orchid flasks for sale, as will many of our top flight lecturers, an opportunity that rarely presents itself in Australia.

Perhaps your Society or individual members would also be interested in sponsoring individual classes or a major prize in the Australian Orchid Council Orchid Show? Any sponsorship large or small would be appreciated and would also be acknowledged in the Show Schedule and the Registrants handbook. Perhaps too, you may know of a business that would be interested in sponsoring a major prize or individual classes. The Conference Committee would be pleased to hear from them.

We anticipate good public attendance and with radio, television and newspaper publicity, this would be a golden opportunity for any sponsor to have fantastic exposure with little outlay. In theory it will be another 18 years before an AOC Conference returns to Perth, as it is held triennially and on a rotation basis, so as you can see it will be a longtime before the opportunity arises again.

The 19th AOC Conference Tours are now finalised and can be seen on the web site.

http://www.waorchids.iinet.net.au/Conference_Tours.pdf

The one day Orchid tour will cost \$70 including a packed lunch and be led by a noted expert on Western Australia's unique orchids, and visit various orchid areas around Perth and the surrounding hills. Seats are going fast so be quick.

The Post conference Five Day Orchid tour of the south west of Western Australia from the 17th to 21st September, will cost \$880, including twin share accommodation, all meals, a seat on the bus and the experience of Andrew Brown and his team. As hotel rooms are scarce in the south west, anyone wanting a room of their own will be required to pay double.

Swan Valley tours, both full day and half day, are planned, plus our Home visit & Nursery Tour. Conference Registrants will be given first preference on all tours.

Further information regarding all our latest happenings can be accessed on the 19th AOC Conference web site at...

[http://waorchids.iinet.net.au/19th AOC_Conference.htm](http://waorchids.iinet.net.au/19th_AOC_Conference.htm)

Tony Watkinson

Where did You Get That From? By Murray Baker

We see interesting things in other people's orchid areas that we would find handy. More often than not, it seems these handy things were acquired "from some place in Bentley" that went out of business years ago, or were passed down like family heirlooms from one grower to the next so many times that the source is long forgotten. Here is a list of some interesting and useful things and where they can be obtained from. ***The list of suppliers is not exhaustive, nor is it an endorsement of any particular product or supplier.*** It is just a list of stuff accumulated over the years that might be useful or give ideas to other growers.

Orchid pots, including squat pots; orchid potting mix; fertilisers; plant tags; plant hangers; orchids: OSWA Opportunity Table. The prices at OSWA are generally below standard retail prices, and every purchase made at the Opportunity Table helps support OSWA.

Maximum-minimum thermometers and humidity gauges: \$15 - \$200 (depending on the bells and whistles that come with it), from Bunnings, Dick Smith Electronics, Australian Geographic Store.

Shadecloth or solarweave covers made to measure; Jaylon (Malaga). Solarweave is a translucent plastic that is useful for making waterproof covers for hothouses or waterproof covers for shadehouses for winter.

*Galvanised pipes; galvanized mesh, pipe fittings etc .*for DIY shadehouse projects; for new materials, Midalia Steel (branches all over Perth); for used materials, salvage yards.

Fans & evaporative coolers: misting fans are available all over the place from Bunnings to Homeart. Pedestal fans can be as cheap as \$10 from Mitre 10. Evaporative coolers are available from places like K Mart, Big W, Cash converters. (these items can often be collected off the verge during suburban junk collections, but this can be risky because of their history and current safety condition are not known. Probably safer to buy new ones, but if you do pick some up off a verge, get them checked out by a qualified electrician before you use them).

Shadehouses and shelving (if you are not a DIY kind of person); Chris Wardley (Kalamunda) ph. 9291 7131.

Misters: Inexpensive (\$20 - \$30) pre-fabricated kits suitable for fixing to a pergola and running from a tap are available from reticulation and hardware stores. More sophisticated components, such as Netafim misters (which can be used with black PVC pipe and tap water) make a nice mist but are harder to find....only available at some reticulation places.

Temperature controllers (things that can turn off or turn on a heater or fan or sprinkler when the temperature rises or falls to a particular value)...<http://aussieponics.com> (look for "Grow Lush Thermal Controller" under "Accessories"; prices vary from \$62 - \$90 for no apparent reason). In one of the glasshouses at EziGro Orchids there are similar devices in use to control fans, and they are branded "Growth Technology", so perhaps Growth Technology (O'Connor) sells them too. Cheaper versions that require a licenced electrician to set up can be obtained from places like RS Components.

Heat pads (small, electrically heated pads for keeping trays of seedlings a little bit warm); Hydroponic stores (several in various parts of Perth)

pH meters and standard pH solutions, electrical conductivity meters, etc. (to test water for pH and salt content): Hydroponic stores, maybe pool shops, and <http://aussieponics.com> Alternatively, a number of OSWA members have these meters and can do water testing for you – just ask around.

Float valves: small float valves are useful for fitting to evaporative air conditioners when these are to be incorporated into automatic humidification/cooling systems attached directly to a tap. These float valves are hard to find!!! Metal ones can sometimes be obtained from plumbing suppliers. Plastic ones designed to fit into pet water bowls, but easily adapted to other uses, can be obtained from the hardware store on Thomas Road (go south on Kwinana Freeway, turn left at the Thomas Road exit, and the hardware store is on the right side of Thomas Road when you are headed east. Sorry, can't remember the name of the store!)

Galvanised wire clips and clipping tool: Great for fixing shadecloth or Solarweave to galvanised mesh, or fixing bits of small gauge mesh together. If you have seen a shadehouse built out of galvanised mesh, that shadehouse is probably held together by these sorts of wire clips. Bunnings sells small clips and a small clipping tool (red handle). Hardware stores tending towards more agricultural users, sell larger clips and a larger clipping tool (green handle). There is one such hardware store in the Spearwood area (sorry, can't remember the name of this store either)

General recycled stuff: Freecycle Perth (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/freecycleperth/>). Freecycle is designed to encourage people to pass their "still good but no longer needed" things on to others rather than send them to landfill. Members can post messages to ask for specific items, or to offer unwanted items to be given away. It is all free – no for sale stuff here. This site has everything, from pavers and concrete slabs to fans, evaporative coolers, plants (but I've never seen any orchids advertised), TVs, computer gear, books, furniture, old Hills hoists (great source of galvanised pipe and wire)... You need to register for a Yahoo account first (which is also free).

If you have any favourite gadgets that you find really useful for orchid growing, please let us know!

A Strange Way to Kill Slaters by Murray Baker

The January 2012 issue of *Orchids* magazine (available in the OSWA library) has an interesting article about growing orchids in a terrarium (a glorified fish tank) by Daniel L Geiger, a marine invertebrate systematist working at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. This is the second such article – Geiger published an article on the same topic back in 2008 – and in this latest article he talks about many improvements on his original system. He has been quite successful and the article includes many pictures of orchids from many genera that he has managed to grow in the terrarium in his home.

On one occasion he noticed slaters had gotten into the terrarium. Apparently he doesn't mind some bugs in his terrarium (he studies invertebrates for a living, after all), but the slaters were eating his orchids, so he had to deal with them, but he didn't want to use toxic chemicals, since the terrarium was in his home.

His solution was to stick a container full of dry ice (solid carbon dioxide) in the terrarium and close the lid. As the dry ice sublimed (evaporated) the atmosphere in the terrarium was filled with carbon dioxide, which suffocated the slaters. The treatment had to be repeated some time later to kill newly hatched individuals (the treatment did not kill eggs). Also, he had to take care to keep the dry ice away from his plants, to avoid freezer burn. He suggests that dry ice can be obtained for about \$2/kg from beverage and party supply places, and 1kg would be sufficient for treating a 400 litre terrarium.

Dry ice needs to be treated with caution, since it can cause suffocation of humans just like it can cause suffocation of slaters.