

# THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ORCHID BULLETIN

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NOVEMBER 2020

The next meeting of the Orchid Society of Western Australia (Inc.) will be held at the Manning Senior Citizens Activity Centre, Manning, on Friday 27 November, commencing at 7:30 pm.

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## THIS MONTH'S MEETING

TARA PEETERS

GROWING SARCOCHILUS ORCHIDS

## DECEMBER MEETING DATES

OSWA Committee: 7:30 pm Friday 4th

General Meeting: 7:30 pm Friday 11th  
(NOTE: SECOND FRIDAY)

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## Notice about General Meetings

Please keep in mind the following special arrangements that we have implemented in order to keep our members safe.

- (1) **Please do not attend if you are unwell**, or have had respiratory symptoms (including coughing, sneezing, or fever) in the 2 weeks prior to the meeting.
- (2) **Please observe physical distancing restrictions.** The centre has space to have 70 people attend the meeting, so we should be able to accommodate everyone! Seating will be arranged to comply with physical distancing restrictions.
- (3) **Suppers will be returning, so donations of snacks will be most welcome!**
- (4) There will be no sales table, but orders for bark, pots etc. can be made using the order form that will be available at general meetings. See details later in the bulletin.
- (5) **Hand sanitizer will available at the entry** — please use it before entering the meeting.
- (6) You do not need to physically sign the attendance register but **please ensure you have your attendance recorded on entry.**
- (7) **Please bring exact change** for the \$1 entry (yes, we are still required to collect it for the venue's insurance purposes) and also bring exact change if you would like to buy raffle tickets. We will not be handling cash to provide change.

We would still love members to bring their plants to display for the monthly plant competition, but please do not crowd around tables.

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### Birthdays

November: 2nd, Aishya Ghose, 13th, Rosalie McCallum, 18th Trevor Burnett

December: 6th Val Seaman, 23rd Cheryl Compagnone, 27th Maxine Godbeer

Best wishes to anyone else celebrating Birthdays or Anniversaries. To any member on the sick list we wish you a speedy recovery & may you soon be well.

### New Members

Welcome to Dahlia Beitmanas (Ardross), Katia Stefanova (Subiaco), and Don and Lorraine Phillips (Kardinya). We hope you have many rewarding years ahead with our Society.

New members are eligible to receive three free orchids. If you are a new member, you should receive a letter about how to receive your free orchids. If you have not received your letter, contact Courtney at a meeting or on 0407 049 717.

### OSWA Christmas Party — at the December General Meeting, Friday 11 December.

Strangely, the preferred restaurants for our Christmas Dinner are unavailable this year. Some jokers obviously had nothing to do during lockdown — all Christmas dinner dates for this year were booked out back in April. Fear not, we will still be having a Christmas gig this year, but of the DIY kind. Our Christmas Party will be held as part of our December General Meeting, which will be on the **second** Friday in December. Please bring a plate to share, and BYO drinks. Please also bring a plant or wrapped present (less than \$10) so that we can have a "Secret Santa".

**Neutrog: New procedure for future bulk orders.**

One of the many benefits of membership of OSWA is access to Neutrog products at excellent prices. Until now, OSWA (usually Kirsty) has collated orders and payments on behalf of Neutrog. The process of ordering has now moved to an online platform called 'Shopify'. This change should ensure a smoother transaction between the OSWA and Neutrog. Also, it will give you more control over your order and take away the need for order forms and money collection. The receiving of payments and collating of orders will now done by Neutrog.

The delivery/collection process will remain the same. You will receive a receipt from Neutrog and you simply bring this receipt to the collection point on the specified date to collect your order. There will be up to four delivery dates per year (actual dates to be arranged), compared to just two currently.

For you to participate, Neutrog needs to know your email address. **If you wish to participate, please let Murray know (murray.baker@iinet.net.au) and he will pass on your details to Neutrog.** Once you are set up in their system, Neutrog will send you a unique activation code that will take you to the member section on their online store. You will then enter a password. This will be your own password, which will allow you to access the store at any time. You can then scroll through all the Neutrog products and make your purchase. The store is always open, so you can order whenever you like. You simply select the drop off point and date, and then collect as normal. As an incentive to join the new system, Neutrog are offering a one off \$20 discount on your first order provided it is over \$40.

If you don't have an email address, you won't be left out, but you will need to 'buddy-up' with someone who does have an email address. OSWA will not be collating orders or collecting payments under the new system.

Neutrog will provide instructions about the new process via email. You will be stepped through the process online, but there is a freecall number 1800 656 644 should you need any help, or you can contact Murray and he will pass on your concerns to Neutrog.

***TL:DR summary: if you wish to continue purchasing Neutrog products at the special prices available to OSWA members, let Murray know and he will send your contact details to Neutrog.***

**Orchiata Bark Bulk Order**

OSWA has arranged a bulk purchase of orchiata bark, to make it available to members at significantly less than the usual retail price. Some of the bark has been delivered, so if you have made an order and paid for it, you need to go to the shed to collect it. Collection time to be announced at the general meeting.

If you have not placed an order but would like to, place your order with Kirsty now, \$23 per bag. Stock is limited and already there are no bags of large grade bark left, so be quick to avoid disappointment. So that all members can benefit from this bulk purchase, there is a limit of 3 bags per membership. Payment in advance, by direct deposit if possible. Check with Kirsty before making any payment to ensure that what you want is still available. \

The supplier is experiencing delays in shipping, so if you place an order now, your bark might not arrive until January. Contact Kirsty for further info.

**Pots, Labels, Potting Bark, Charcoal, Perlite, Sphagnum Moss...**

Occasionally OSWA makes bulk purchases of orchid-related products, to provide them to OSWA members at special prices. We have squat pots, clear pots, green pots with saucers, cym pots, water well pots, terracotta pots, clips, labels, club badges and club spoons. Order forms with current prices will be available at general meetings. To place an order, check with Kirsty to make sure the items you want are still in stock, place an order and make your payment (cheque or direct deposit into OSWA's account), then collect your items at the next general meeting.

**CATTLEYA CULTURAL NOTES (NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020) - based on notes from Henry Eaton.**

Although this year has again seen a mild spring and cooler temperatures well into November, the heat finally arrived this week and the weather is now warmer a little more consistently. It is now getting too late to do much more dividing of your Cattleyas, but you may still pot some on if they are badly in need of it. They will not be too traumatised provided that the roots are not disturbed too much.

As the weather heats up further, you should assess the degree of shade needed to keep your plants protected. The best indication for this is the colour of the leaves. If the leaves are deep green, then it indicates that they are too shaded, whilst reddening of the leaves means that too much light is hitting the plants. The ideal is to have a greenish yellow leaf colour.

At this time of the year liquid fertilising can be carried out once a week, or every fortnight, with a high nitrogen product. Strike Back for Orchids is a suitable fertiliser. Strike Back pellets can be sprinkled over the potting medium as a slow-release fertiliser. If you prefer liquid fertiliser, Strike Back for Orchids liquid is suitable. Fertilising is best done the day after the plants have been given a thorough watering to flush out the salts in the mix. Because of the warmth, be on the lookout for caterpillars, scale and mealy bugs that multiply very quickly in these conditions. Treat them as soon as they are identified as this will prevent them causing a big problem.

**PAPHIOPEDILUM CULTURAL NOTES (NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020) by Trevor Burnett**

The Paphiopedilum growing season will now be fully in progress. The plants should be producing new roots that will support the new growths which should be developing strongly.

As the sun power is increasing towards summer it is time to consider whether you need to increase the shading required to stop any burning. Generally with our hot conditions, plants may appreciate a little additional shading. Passing your hand over the plants on a bright and sunny day can indicate the amount of shading required. The shadow cast should only be faint.

The plants should not be excessively dark green, as this indicates a lack of sufficient light. Bright light produces the best flowering but if too bright, burning will occur and plants will suffer a setback which will be reflected in the flowering results later in the year. It is also very important to keep up good air movement.

As the plants will be growing strongly now, a weekly application of fertiliser at one quarter to one half strength with a high nitrogen base, will promote good development of the new growths. A specialist orchid fertiliser such as Strike Back for Orchids (liquid or pellets) can be used as per the label. With the warmer days, I increase my watering to twice a week. Do not crowd your plants in the growing area as plenty of fresh air movement is essential for the good health of your plants.

Once again, with the warmer weather, check your plants and the surrounding area for mealy bugs, ants and other bugs that may decide to move into the cooler conditions of a shade or glass house where greater moisture content is available. It is much easier to get rid of the pest when there are only a few and not let them multiply, which makes the task harder.

**CYMBIDIUM CULTURAL NOTES (NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020) - based on notes from Roy Brown**

Most of the dividing and repotting of our Cymbidiums should be completed by now because as we reach the end of November, the weather pattern will have changed from warm Spring days to hot, dry days with easterly winds. These conditions, of course, are not suited to dividing and repotting our plants. Any pots that were not attended to will be better left until next Autumn.

From November on, with the increase in temperatures, we must increase the watering too. Provided the pots have good drainage, the plants will appreciate having the surrounding area nice and damp all through the summer period.

This is the start of the summer culture, and this means added fertilizing: once a week or fortnightly as you prefer, with a product such as Strike Back for Orchids. If you are not too certain as to how much fertilizer you should apply, then always err on the lighter side. It's far better to give the plants two applications of half strength fertilizer than one dose that is too strong. Always remember to give the pots a good watering before you apply the fertilizer, then another good, heavy watering several days later. In the meantime of course, if you have fine misting overhead, then use this to keep the plants' leaves, benches and surrounding areas nice and damp.

During November and December, the sun's rays are increasing and shining more directly overhead each day, and if it should shine through a break in the shade cloth the plants beneath will suffer with badly sunburnt leaves. This will affect the efficiency of the plant in producing the necessary plant sugars. Once plant leaves are burnt, they do not repair themselves and the scar will stay there until the leaf eventually dies.

**The Orchid Society of WA (Inc.) - Minutes of the General Meeting held in the Manning Senior  
Citizens Activity Centre, Manning, on Friday 23 October 2020**

**Welcome: 7:37 pm**

**Minutes:** Moved, M Brechin seconded V Gray that the Minutes of the Sept 2020 meeting be accepted. Carried.

**Business arising:**

- We owe some raffle prizes from last month! For Enid Chelva, Natalia Kulchytska, Valerie Cooper, Richard Gordon (x2 prizes), Howard Tan. (No raffle plants again this month!)

Moved Lynn Brooks, seconded Ray Taylor that the business arising has been dealt with. Carried.

**New Members:** Alan Rowe, Sheelagh Harman, Priscilla Cappello.

**Correspondence:**

- emailed Charly asking if he is happy to present on greenhouse automation- agreed, likely for early next year
- received email from Andrew asking to identify an orchid, Murray kindly responded
- emailed Manning Activity centre re: wifi details
- received correspondence from K Bayliss re: club plant suggestion, enthusiastic approval from committee
- emailed T Burnett advising of OSWA's approval for the MoU regarding the use of the OWA ABN
- received flask list from H Stretch- please circulate at meeting
- received email from Kirsty/Neutrog regarding new ordering system- this requires Neutrog to have your email address. See general business for further information.
- membership approval letters sent to new members
- sent email advising of Neutrog order arrival + Potting workshop info
- received OWA reports/statements, financial reports, notice of OWA AGM
- received GCA readings
- received AOC documents from T Burnett
- received email from Warren Moore advertising "A Complete Guide to Native Orchids of Australia- Third Edition". Moved Lynn Brooks, seconded Ray Taylor that the correspondence be accepted. Carried.

**Reports:**

- Potting workshop. Successful event, many members of the public brought plants for repotting, some very large. Busy with repotting all day, inside was a bit quieter. Business might have been down due to clash with Northern Orchid Fair, so we need to work on scheduling next year.
- Neutrog orders. A big thank you to Rosemary for accommodating the delivery, and thank you members for being so prompt in collecting orders.

**Financial report:**

- Financial report delivered by Kirsty Bayliss. Accounts will likely be in the black at the end of our financial year. Moved Kirsty Bayliss, seconded Alan Rowe that the financial report be accepted. Carried.

**General Business:**

- **Christmas function** — unable to book Bentley Pines. Exploring Itsara but they have been slow to reply.
- **Please return trophies!**
- **New Neutrog ordering process** — Sign up sheet circulated.
- **Orchiata bark delivery is delayed.** Thank you to all who have put in Orchiata order. About half the pallet has been sold already. Unfortunately the shipment has arrived in Melbourne but cannot be shipped further at this time due to COVID.
- **Late Flowering Orchid Display and Workshop.** Arrangements discussed. Roster circulated, including sales table, entrance/raffle, kitchen and donations of food. About 10 OSWA people expected at setup on Friday night.
- **Ray Taylor's home visit is on November 15,** 10am start at 2118 Great Northern Highway 6084 (Google "Taylor's Alpacas" for directions.)
- **AOF AGM with Gary Yong Gee presenting on Australian epiphytic orchids**
- **Orchidup** Open Weekend is this weekend.
- **Club Plants** (Kirsty) - Laelia purpurata (an American line, from Barrita Orchids, semi-alba; flowers should be white with purple-pink throat. \$5 per plant, one per membership. Also some other plants for raffles: Cattleya warneri alba X Laelia alarorii.

**Presentation:** Ray Taylor on repotting orchids.

**Raffle:** Lynn Brooks, Jack Przytula, Derek Smith, Val Seaman

**Open popular vote:** Courtney Rogasch, Sarcophilus hartmannii. (Courtney to receive plant next month)

**Novice popular vote:** Nataliya Kulchytska, Phalaenopsis unknown. (Nataliya to receive plant next month)

**Door Prize:** Keng Leow (to collect orchid prize next month)

*No raffle plants again this month: Keng, Natalia, Courtney are owed plants next meeting.*

**Plant descriptions**

**REMINDER: please help pack up the tables and put chairs away neatly**

**Meeting closed at: 9:30 pm**

## Orchids in "Our Gardens" Magazine

"Our Gardens" is the magazine produced by the The Garden Clubs of Australia, an organisation that represents about 720 affiliated clubs, including OSWA. Currently Jacqui and Eric Bateman are the GCA's membership secretary and webmaster respectively. So, OSWA members will occasionally see a copy or two of "Our Gardens" floating around OSWA meetings. Those fortunate enough to have seen the Spring 2020 issue may have noticed the excellent article about Western Australian terrestrial orchids, written by Jeanette (Jenny) McLean. Jenny is a member of both OSWA and ANOSWA and is very knowledgeable about native terrestrials. The article is beautifully-written and definitely worth a read. Well done Jenny!

### From the October General Meeting...

#### *Ray Taylor on repotting orchids.*

Ray presented a couple of phalaenopsis orchids that had apparently been badly damaged by application of fertilizer pellets that had high salt content. After much discussion there was a consensus that the problem was a bad batch of fertilizer. Ray noted that salt burn is characterised by dry black or brown patches around the edge of the leaves. Routinely he flushes his plants with lots of water a couple of times a week to wash away salts. Ray demonstrated the use of a Bluelab Truncheon to measure salt content in solutions. He planned applications of Rhizotonic, an algae-based growth stimulant for plant roots, to try to salvage the phallies. Next, Ray demonstrated repotting a healthier phallie that was growing in sphagnum moss. Sphagnum moss should be replaced every year because it hangs onto salts that can lead to problems for orchids. Ray gently teased the sphagnum away from the roots. Using sterilized secateurs, he cut off dead roots and the old flower spike then potted the orchid back into a mix of equal parts of bark, polystyrene, coir, charcoal and perlite, pushing the mix into pot firmly but not too hard, to avoid damaging roots. Ray noted that using straight bark is risky. Fresh bark does not hold much water, but as it ages it breaks down and compacts and holds too much water. Polystyrene helps to keep mix open. Coir holds moisture. Perlite absorbs water quickly but dries quickly, which can be helpful for orchids such as Tolumnias that do not like to be wet for too long. Growers need to adjust their potting mix to suit the growing area and conditions. Areas with strong air movement will tend to dry out fast and need a mix that will retain moisture.

Ray showed off two very impressive zygos, both of which were Zga. Nusa Dua 'Green Peace' x Zga Freestyle Meadows 'Jester' (photos below). One had bright green sepals and petals with a purple and white labellum, while the other had much darker, predominantly brown sepals and petals with a large purple labellum. These plants demonstrated the variability that can arise from a crossing. Some of the leaves of the zygos had brown dry edges due to salt damage. One such leaf is visible in the photo of the darker flower below. Salt damage can be distinguished from fungal damage by dryness; fungal damage tends to be brown and mushy.



Ray's two siblings from the crossing of Zga. Nusa Dua 'Green Peace' x Zga Freestyle Meadows 'Jester'

## Popular Vote Winners

**Open:** *Sarcochilus hartmannii*, grown by Courtney Rogasch.

Courtney grows this orchid in an area where it receives morning sun through aluminet shade cloth and then bright shade in the afternoon. It receives a spoonful each of Strike Back for Orchids pellets and Seamungus pellets every 4 months. Courtney waters all over the pot to ensure the water washes over the pellets. The plant was a healthy specimen size plant with many racemes, in a 20 cm pot.

*Sarcochilus hartmannii* is native to south east Queensland and north east New South Wales, where it usually grows as a lithophyte (on rocks and cliffs). Rarely it grows as an epiphyte. It is named after Carl Heinrich Hartmann, who collected the first specimen, near Toowoomba, in the 1870s.



**Novice:** *Phalaenopsis* unknown, grown by Nataliya Kulchytska.

Nataliya grows this orchid in a mix of bark and perlite, with slow release fertilizer. The plant is a few years old and has substantial aerial roots, characteristic of mature *Phalaenopsis* orchids. It gets watered once a week, and sits on a window sill out of direct sunlight. The plant is potted in a clear pot sitting in a water-well pot. Water sits in the water-well to create humidity.

There are about 70 species of *Phalaenopsis* orchids, native to the region from India, eastward through southern China and South East Asia as far as Malaysia and New Guinea, and north to Taiwan and the Philippines. One species is native to Queensland. The greatest variety of *Phalaenopsis* species come from Indonesia and the Philippines. The species have been used to breed thousands of hybrids. *Phalaenopsis* hybrids typically have long lasting flowers (up to several months) and in Perth are best grown indoors.

### Plant descriptions

Ray Taylor presented *Phaius* Lady Ramona Harris "Looking at you" (photo at right). Usually grown sitting in a saucer of water, phaius orchids can grow very large. They like a humid atmosphere and grow best low, just off the ground, where it is cool and moist, but not on the ground where slugs and other pests will get them.



Howard Tan presented *Paphiopedilum* Booth St Jewel, the multifloral paph that won Open popular vote last month with two of its three flowers open, had all three flowers open this month.

Courtney Rogasch presented *Cymbidium ensifolium*. This Chinese terrestrial has small flowers that have a beautiful perfume in sunlight. Courtney recently divided a large *Cymbidium ensifolium* and lost three out of the divisions because they were potted directly into pure Orchiatia bark and the bark dried out. Courtney recommends members put something in with the Orchiatia bark to help keep it moist. Courtney plans to stop using straight Orchiatia bark and start using mixes of 6 parts pinebark (mix of Orchiatia and Ausgro), 1 part perlite, and 1 part charcoal. Courtney cannot use any form of coir (coconut) because it hangs onto too much salt, causing problems. Orchiatia bark is great because it does not break down fast, but it has to be watered more frequently or it dries out. With some species orchids you need to be more mindful of what happens in nature...

Ray Taylor also showed two maudiae-type paphs (paphs characterised by dark burgundy colours). One of these was *Paphiopedilum* Yi-Ying Morning Sun (pictured below left). Two years ago these paphs flowered in May, but this year they are flowering in October. They were grown in glasshouse when they were seedlings just out of the flask but as mature plants they are now growing in a shadehouse under 70% shade cloth (under a solarweave cover to protect from rain in winter).

Finally, Ray presented *Phragmipedium* Don Wimber 4N (pictured below right). In their natural habitat phrags receive water daily. In Perth, many growers keep Phrags in a shallow tray of water.

