

SUTHERLAND SHIRE ORCHID SOCIETY

**Awarded Natives of the Early Years**

Recently when good friend Dennis Wood loaned me his copy of 'The Australian Orchid Council Awards Register: 1964 - 1986 ---Nos. 1 to 600' to research an article that I was writing on Dendrobium Speciosum 'National White' I took the opportunity to scan the record for other native orchids that received awards in the early years. I was greatly surprised to discover that of the first 600 awards only 18 were awarded to native orchids.

While the small number of native species and hybrids to receive award recognition may have been a surprise so too was the relatively large variety of species and hybrids across a number of genera

- 4 Sarcochilus species
- 1 Sarcochilus hybrid
- 5 Dendrobium species
- 7 Dendrobium hybrids
- 1 terrestrial species



There was also a large variety of growers achieving these awards. Most growers only appear once or twice on the list with J. Smith being the exception with 3 awards.

Just what this all means I'm not sure. Perhaps in these relatively early years of interest in native orchids there were few specialist native growers. Maybe early attempts at hybridising were struggling in their attempts to to develop quality breeding lines. Possibly growers were not encouraged to put natives up for award consideration. It is also possible that the 18 awards that were given compares very favourably with the level of recognition granted to other genera - I didn't have the inclination to count all of the other awards!

Regardless of these possible justifications it is surely the case that orchid species and hybrids being grown in their country of origin where a greater availability of genetic material, large areas of suitable environment and a healthy interest in all things native exist there should have been greater recognition of our native orchids. 18 awards out of 600 represents a mere 3 out of every 100 awards granted or 3 awards every 2 years over the first 12 years of AOC awards - I rest my case!

Summary Of AOC Awards to Native Orchids 1964 -1986

Award No.	Plant	Owner	Award	Year
159	Den. Bardo Rose 'Berowra'	R. Kerr	HCC	1975
231	Sarco. falcatus 'Miriam Ann'	A. J. Merriman	HCC	1977
296	Den. Bardo Rose 'Teresa'	C. Brandon	HCC	1979
297	Den. speciosum 'National White'	C. Brandon	HCC	1979
298	Den. kingianum 'Bungan Castle'	E. Webeck	AM	1979
299	Sarco. hartmannii 'Kerri'	J. Williams	AM	1979
330	Den. Ku-Ring-Gai 'Ann Brown'	W. Brown	HCC	1980
339	Caladenia catenata 'Gigantea'	J. Smith	HCC	1980
371	Den. striolatum 'Lesley'	I. Brewster	HCC	1981
382	Den bigibbum var. superbum 'Blue Horizon'	J.Mackinney	AD	1982
388	Den. Rachelle Simpson 'Qlander'	S. Hayden	HCC	1982

392	Den. Hilda Poxon 'The Lodge'	Mr & Mrs R. Rankine	HCC	1982
425	Sarco. Fitzhart 'Wollumbin'	B. Simpson	HCC	1982
454	Den. falcorostrum 'Anembo'	E. Gogerly	AM	1983
473	Den. Bardo Rose 'Bronilyn'	J. Smith	HCC	1983
492	Den. Hilda Poxon 'Gold Star'	J. Smith	AD	1984
496	Sarco. hartmannii 'Sylvanvale'	K. Wilson	HCC	1984
527	Sarco. hartmannii 'George'	G. Colthup	AM	1985

20 or more years later some of these plants are still seen as winners on show benches or appear as parents in nursery catalogues - they have been good enough to stand the test of time.. but what became of the others?

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