



Sutherland Shire Orchid Society

Upcoming Events:

SSOS March Meeting 12th Mar

Collectors Plant Fair 7-8th

April

SSOS April Meeting 9th April

SSOS April Meeting 14th May

Articles This Month:

You Grew It
In My Greenhouse

Orchid Ailments -- The
Biggest Cause



President: Frank Daniel

Vice President: George Birss

Editor: Richard Dimon

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SUTHERLAND SHIRE ORCHID SOCIETY MARCH 2018



**Feb 2018
Plant of
the Night**

*Dendrochilum
latifolium var.
macranthum*
– Grown by
John Costa





SSOS GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

12 FEBRUARY 2018

Frank Daniel extended a welcome to our members and guest, Steve Falconi.

He asked for a member to motion that the January minutes which were printed in the Bulletin and distributed either by mail or email were accurate. Gary Hodder motioned they were correct. Carried.

Correspondence received

- Newsletters from OSNSW, Batemans Bay, Eastern Suburbs, Blue Mountains & Penrith Districts and North Shore Orchid Societies
- Thea Shaughnessy with October 2017 Minutes from AOC AGM and AOC Board of Management
- Chris Dalrymple and Helen Mason with updates on the AOC Conference
- Tony Watkinson re the 24th World Orchid Conference 2023 in Perth
- Flyer from Eurobodalla OS re their March workshop
- AOC Conference & Show with price list and order instructions from AWZ Orchids from Brazil for delivery; and Scientific Program's speakers provisional timetable
- Woolf Orchid Culture with their latest catalogue

No new members were accepted this month.

Tonight Steve Falconi from Eco Organic Garden spoke about his range of organic garden products and the benefits they bring for the environment and our orchids. Some members took advantage of the

opportunity of buying his products after hearing how they can be used.

The judging of growing competition was also conducted. Michael Dimo's plant was judged the best in Open with Richard Dimon's judged as second. In Novice/Intermediate Herbert Chen's plant was rated first and Frank Daniel's second. The next judging will occur at the May meeting.

MARCH: AGM & Seedling Competition judging

APRIL: Jim Brydie and Trevor Onsloe will talk on Oncidiums

MAY: Auction & judging of growing competition

JUNE: Gary Hart will talk on Bulbophylums

ITEMS OF INTEREST

The Society has received a number of information sheets relating to the AOC Conference, such as the details of each of the Speakers; the provisional Speakers program, and the AWZ Orchids catalogue from Brazil for distribution at Orchids in the Foothills. If you would like a copy of these documents, would you contact Rhonda who will forward them to you.

The St. Ives Orchid Show and Fair will be held this year, despite rumours to the contrary. The show and fair will be on at the usual venue at St Ives Showground on the 17th- 19th August 2018 inclusive.



The next growers group get together will be held in March. Once the date has been confirmed, we'll let you know.

Jan reminded members that the closing date for entries for exhibiting at the Sydney Royal Easter Show was 28 February 2018. The first orchid session commences 27 March and the second orchid session commences on 2 April. For more information go to the RAS website at www.rasnsw.nsw.au.

Frank reminded members of the AGM at the March meeting. He asked members to nominate for positions on the committee, especially Secretary. We are looking for people to fill general committee member positions as well. Please give serious consideration to nominating to fill these positions.

The winner of the subscription to the Orchids Australia magazine was Chris Bannell.

NAME BADGE DRAW: John Ng

LUCKY PLANTS: Wal Chapman, Jan Robinson and Peter Ng

PRESIDENT'S AWARD: John Costa for Dockrillia tweetie

RAFFLE: Florence Andrews (2), Robert Cawley, Judith Leong, Lee Buivids and Elsie Burriss (2).

Next meeting: 12 March 2018

VALE KEVIN HIPKINS

It's with great sadness to announce that Kevin Hipkins passed away on Sunday March 3rd. Kevin was the owner of Royale Orchids and made many appearances selling plants at our local southern orchid spectacular. Many renowned Cymbidium hybrids were the result of his breeding, dedication, and overall love for orchids. May he rest in peace.

A service to celebrate the life of Kevin Hipkins will be held at 12:30pm on Monday 12th March at Palmdale Hillside Chapel.

YOU GREW IT



Dendrochilum latifolium var. macranthum
– Exhibited by John Costa

“PLANT OF THE NIGHT”



A wonderful Species found only in the Philippines on the island of Luzon. Growing on trees, as an epiphyte, in humid forests, at around 300 to 2200 metres. The plant has smooth, pale green pseudopulbs with a single large leaf. The variety 'macranthum' has larger leaves and inflorescence than other Latifolium.

Flowering from the new growth each year, the peduncle curves from the base of the leaf and can reach 50cm. The graceful inflorescence that can measure between 15 and 30cm has two ranks of dense fragrant flowers. The flowers have greenish yellow sepals and petals and an orange yellow labellum.

An easy to grow orchid that goes well in a green house, regular watering and fertilising, good light and air. Has few pest problems other than mealy bug and gives a great display when in flower.



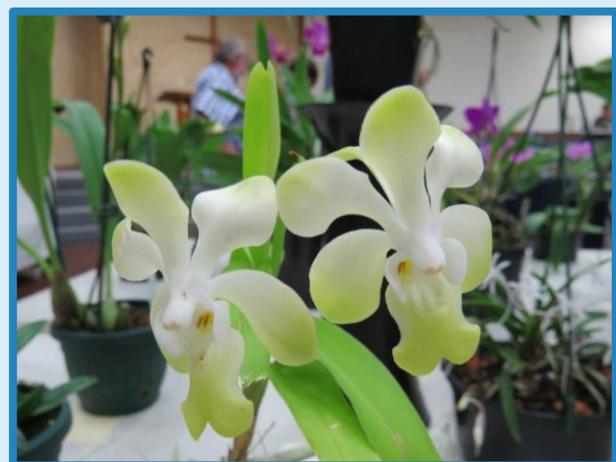
Trichoglottis atropurpurea – grown by W & J Chapman

Another outstanding species from the Philippines that is found growing at sea level to 300m making it an orchid that will require heat.

An upright growing monopodial (growing each year from a single point) epiphyte, has bright green leaves that can be 8cm long by 4cm wide and will produce fleshy white aerial roots along the plant.

Growing these plants require a basket type pot with large chunky bark or medium. They can be left to hang but will require some sort of support or attach to a mount or secure the mount in the pot for support. You will find that the plant will have few if any roots in the medium. They require bright light, plenty of water and fertiliser, humidity and good air movement.

When in flower this is one of the most stunning and vibrant orchids. A single flower opposite the leaf will be very dark reddish purple, almost black. The labellum is bright pink and hairy with a golden yellow throat. Even with heat it is very hard to get a high flower count in Sydney. If you see this plant in hot, humid countries with 50 + flowers it is jaw dropping gorgeous.



Vanda denisoniana – grown by Michael Dimon



Originating from Yunnan China, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam this beautiful species grows at altitudes of 450 to 1200 metres making it a warm to intermediate grower.

As with most Vanda orchids, grow in a slotted basket with an open fast draining mix. Plants need only enough medium such as large bark, wine corks or chunky charcoal to anchor the plant until it attaches to the container. The roots will hang well down past the bottom of the pot and should NOT be trimmed. Trimming of roots will set the plant back 2 -3 years. The main requirement of a basket is to be able to attach a hanger to suspend the plant. In Asian countries they are grown tied to a stake or piece of wire.

The flowers of this orchid are a beautiful soft lemon yellow that fades to a white centre. The flowers are waxy with a vanilla scent.



Dendrobium secundum – grown by P.Ng

Commonly called the 'toothbrush orchid' as the flowers appear on only one side of the stem much like the bristles on a tooth brush.

Found growing in lowland forests at sea level to 700 metres from Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Borneo, Java, Sumatra, New Guinea and the Philippines this orchid will require some heat to grow successfully in Sydney.

The epiphytic pseudobulbs can grow up to 80cm in length and are usually tapered at both ends. The flowers appear on the leafless canes that were last year's mature pseudobulbs.

The inflorescence will carry about 50 waxy, glossy, fragrant flowers that are semi open (don't open fully) and are all pointed in the one direction. The flowers range from a pale pink to rich pinks and towards purple. They have an orange labellum. There is an alba form which is white with a golden labellum.

This orchid does well mounted to accommodate for the pendulous growth of the longish canes. If potted use the smallest pot to accommodate the plants root ball.

If you can supply heat for this plant it is worth chasing. It doesn't get a large flush of flowers but the few bunches you get on a plant is spectacular. Not easy to come by as most growers hang on to their plants and grow in to specimen plants. Sometimes you can find small divisions and if you are prepared to grow for a few years will be rewarding.



Phalaenopsis pulchra – grown by George Birss

This is now subgenus “Polychilos pulchra” since 1982.

One of the small species Phalaenopsis type orchids, it comes from the mountain slopes of the Philippines at elevations of between 100 and 650 metres, making it an orchid that will require heat to grow in Sydney.

This orchid prefers a small basket with open mix. Once established it can be grown by hanging the basket by two wires allowing the plant to hang sideways and allowing the flower spike to hang down. It likes humid conditions and good air movement, to be kept moist but not wet and will tolerate a darker area than most plants in the hot house, so can be hung under a bench.

The plant has broad flat glossy green leaves. The star shaped flowers open along the short inflorescence and can number 5 to 6 and are a waxy, vivid magenta to purple in colour.

This type of Phalaenopsis is compact small and has the most striking small flowers, about 3 to 6 cm across and although they need heat can be grown inside with other phallies.

IN MY GREEN HOUSE



I usually like to write this article when it's raining as that's because I'm stuck inside and not in the orchid house, but time ran out and I'm inside, bummer. Oh well at least we have had some rain, 20mm a week ago and last weekend I had another 45mm of good steady rain, yippee my water tanks are again full. Something to be aware of, if you have water tanks and they empty out, then re fill, remember to run some water through your tap before putting through your watering / sprinkler system. You will find that your water tubes may have the sludge that is in the bottom of your tanks in them and the new water will mix that sludge with the new water. It needs time to settle.

With this cooler weather you can get back to the re potting that wasn't completed prior to the summer heat. There is still plenty of new growth to come.

Talking about new growth, my cymbidiums, yes I still have quite a few, are throwing up new growths, I believe some growers actually have spikes on their plants. My Lycastes have a big flush of new leaves for this year's flowering, all I have to



do is watch they don't get sunburnt if we get a sudden flash of heat and to watch out for nibbling critters to chew holes in the new leaves.

Last spring, I spent some time re potting my *Sarcochilus* and it looks like it has paid off with the majority enjoying the new mix and care displaying strong healthy new growths.

A trip to my hot house at present is nice but also nasty. The nice part is the display from *Bulbophyllum frostii*, a small little plant and flower with maroon slipper like flowers. Also in flower with much bigger flowers are *Bulbophyllum Wilber Chang* with 8 to 10 cm big bright yellow flowers with a maroon to black labellum or lip that wobbles and *Bulbophyllum echinolabium* which has a flower that is about 15cm in length and with striking red and silvery flowers. The last two give a great display and are very showy, but also the last two give the hot house the "nasty" influence in that the smell is that of rotting meat. Nice flowers but ones my wife doesn't want me to display in the house.

Back in the green house and I have a *Coelia macrostachya* with a flower spike about 40cm high covered in pretty pink and white flowers. Not often seen on show benches, this orchid comes from Central America and there are only 5 species in this genus of *Coelia*. It has bulbs about the size of a big onion and requires plenty of water and light and takes up little space. Another orchid hanging nearby on a tree fern slab is *Sigmatostalix radicans*, big name for a plant with small flowers, maybe 5mm to 10mm. It comes from Central America and grows at around 400m, which would make this a hot to warm grower but I have mine in the shade house under shade cloth and it grows

fine for me. At present it is a mass of tiny buds maybe 400 in number so should look great when open. The flowers resemble little birds and are yellow and white with a brown lebellum that sticks up like the head of a bird.

I recently re potted my *Encyclia polybon*, a small creeper with small brown and white flowers. It was in an oval dish about 3cm deep by 15cm wide and 30cm long. I have re potted it into a 30cm dish and with all the growths that were hanging over the sides it is now a full dish again. This time I slightly mounded the medium in the centre to make a hill and it looks great this way.

I was growing my *Masdevallias* and *Pleurothallis* reasonably well. The Massies had great growth but not such a great flowering. The Pleuros seemed to be doing fine, although they suffered quite a bit over summer, with the heat. So I moved some to a different area. Well things looked up so now I have moved most of these to the new area and am very happy with things so far. The Massies still get the cooler air and more moisture, I have most double potted and or in trays that hold a little water but they get more filtered light and the flower spikes give the impression if done the right thing. The Pleuros now get a moister environment, less direct light but still ample light and probable better air movement and so far lots of new growth and healthier plants, hopefully the flowers will come.

I have a number of *Laelias* and most of the mature plants are in spike some up around the 60cm height. I have a few that I purchased as seedling about 3 years ago and placed them in small water well pots and a couple of them are in spike. One is a 'bicolour' which should give a two tone light and darker pink on the petals and sepals and the other



is 'Santa Barbara Sunset' which I believe is an orange, something to look forward to.

Walking around I found something that I hadn't noticed in bud, hidden behind other plants, is Cattleya Chocolate Drop crossed with Cattleya Interglossa. A cluster of five open flowers and five buds. The flowers are a silvery grey colour with magenta spots and a reasonably big magenta lip, veeery nice.

In by house I have some companion plants, nepenthes, broms and ferns. One of the ones I bought back from Queensland is a 'Tassle Fern'. I have it growing in my greenhouse amongst my ceologyne and in about twelve months has doubled in size. A fine spiky leaved plant that has one growth growing straight up and another hanging down, too bad we no longer have a foliage category in the Society anymore.

Now is a good time to sprinkle some pelletised fertiliser on your Stanhopea, again I still have no spikes, but great new leaves and plenty of them. At recent other Society meetings I have attended Stanhopea orchids are numerous on show benches, maybe this year is again going to be a late flowering period.

MONTHLY JUDGING RESULTS -

FEBRUARY 2018

PLANT OF NIGHT

Ddc. latifolium var

Winner macranthum J. Costa

OPEN CLASS HYBRID

Blc. Hawaiian Passion

Winner 'Kermie' P. Ng

OPEN CLASS SPECIES

Ddc. latifolium var

Winner macranthum J. Costa

INTERMEDIATE JUDGES CHOICE

Winner Onc. 'unknown' H. Chen

NOVICE & JUNIOR JUDGES CHOICE

Epi. Raspberry Valley

Winner 'Cupid' M. Spring

PRESIDENT'S CHOICE

Winner Doc. Tweetie J. Costa

CLASS # 1 AUSTRALIAN NATIVES

- | | | |
|------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| | | S.Crosby/T.Cost |
| 1st | Plectorrhiza brevilabris | a |
| 2nd | Sarco. ceciliae | G. Birss |

CLASS # 3 LAELIINAE OVER 110MM (CLASSICAL SHAPE)

- | | | |
|------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1st | Blc. Mount Isa 'Jean' | W. McEvoy |
|------------|-----------------------|-----------|

CLASS # 4 NOVELTY PAPHIOPEDILUMS

- | | | |
|------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| | | S.Crosby/T.Cost |
| 1st | Paph.Carolyn Butcher | a |
| | | S.Crosby/T.Cost |
| 2nd | Paph. Magic Lantern 'A' | a |

CLASS # 5 LAELIINAE OVER 80MM UP TO & INCLUDING 110MM (CLASSICAL SHAPE)

- | | | |
|------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| | | S.Crosby/T.Cost |
| 1st | Bc. Dal's Cherry | a |
| 2nd | Lc. Mini Purple 'Vanessa' | L. Buivids |

CLASS # 7 LAELIINAE (NON CLASSICAL SHAPE)

- | | | |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| 1st | Epi. Green Hornet | J. Costa |
| | C.Caudebec 'Carmela' x | |
| 2nd | Bc. Waianae Leopard | W. McEvoy |
| | C. Mark Jones 'Lance' x | |
| 3rd | Slc. Kathryn Clarkson | P. Sanaphay |
| | C.Penny Kuroda 'Spots' x | |
| 4th | C. Orchidom Leopard | V. Petrovski |



CLASS # 8 LAELIINAE UP TO & INCLUDING 80MM

(CLASSICAL SHAPE)

Blc. Hawaiian Passion

- | | | |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1st | 'Kermie' | P. Ng |
| 2nd | C. Topaz Raspberry 'Lea' | J. Robinson
S.Crosby/T.Cost |
| 3rd | Rly. Swan's Shy | a
S.Crosby/T.Cost |
| 4th | Ctns. Capri 'Lea' | a |
| 5th | Blc. Ollies' Foley | W. McEvoy |

CLASS # 9 AUSTRALIAN NATIVE HYBRIDS

- | | | |
|------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1st | Den.Goose Bumps 'Nev" | C. Brandon
Den. Hilda Poxon x Den. |
| | | S.Crosby/T.Cost |
| 2nd | Pinterry | a |

CLASS # 9A DENDROBIUM SPECIES EXOTIC

- | | | |
|------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| 1st | Den. macrophyllum | V. Petrovski |
| 2nd | Den. secundum 'Dark ' | P. Ng |
| 3rd | Den. henryi | G. Birss |

CLASS # 10 SPECIES ASIAN (Elsewhere not Included)

- | | | |
|------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1st | Bulb. tingabarinum | G. Birss
S.Crosby/T.Cost |
| 2nd | V. falcata | a |
| 3rd | V. falcata | J. Robinson |
| 4th | V. tricolour | M. Luk |

CLASS # 10B ONCIDINAE SPECIES

- | | | |
|------------|-----------------------|----------|
| 1st | Ornithophora radicans | J. Costa |
|------------|-----------------------|----------|

CLASS # 11A COELGYNINAE SPECIES

Ddc. latifolium var.

- | | | |
|------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1st | macranthum | J. Costa |
| | Ddc. uncatum var. | |
| 2nd | longispicatum | P. Davies |
| 3rd | Ddc. uncatum | R. Dimon
W. & J. |
| 4th | Ddc. uncatum ? | Chapman |

CLASS # 14 PHALAENOPSIS

- | | | |
|------------|-----------------|--------|
| 1st | Phal. 'unknown' | M. Luk |
|------------|-----------------|--------|

CLASS # 15 ONCIDIUM HYBRIDS OVER 60mm

- | | | |
|------------|------------------------|----------|
| 1st | Odtna. Mayfair 'Robin' | J. Costa |
| 2nd | Onc. Kamano Jem | M. Luk |

CLASS # 16 MISCELLANEOUS HYBRIDS

- | | | |
|------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1st | Prom. Michael Wilson | J. Robinson
Abranthes Grandelena |
| 2nd | 'Hihimanu' ??? | M. Luk
Prom. Dinah Albright x |
| 3rd | rollinsonii | a |
| 4th | "Unknown" | M. Luk |

CLASS # 17 DENDROBIUM HYBRIDS

- | | | |
|------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| | Den. Hsinying | S.Crosby/T.Cost |
| 1st | Chrysopense 'Zoe' | a |
| 2nd | Den. Frosty Dawn 'Pearl' | P. Ng |
| 3rd | Doc. Tweetie | J. Costa
Den. mulhianum x |
| | | S.Crosby/T.Cost |
| 4th | sulawesiense ??? | a |

CLASS # 18 VANDACEOUS

- | | | |
|------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1st | V. Blue Fairy x V. falcata | G. Birss |
| 2nd | V. Bangyikhan 'Blue' | P. Ng
Aerides Korat Koki x |
| 3rd | odorata | P. Sanaphay |

CLASS # 21B LAELIINAE SPECIES

- | | | |
|------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1st | E. alata | W. McEvoy
C. bicolor var |
| 2nd | minasseriassensis ??? | W. McEvoy |
| 3rd | C. forbesii | ??? |
| | | W. & J. |
| 4th | C. amethystoglossa | Chapman |

CLASS # 23 SPECIES OTHER (NOT ELSEWHERE INCLUDED)

- | | | |
|------------|-----------------|-------------|
| 1st | Max. cucullata | J. Robinson |
| 2nd | Gongora galeata | G. Birss |
| 3rd | Anguloa eburnea | L. Buivids |

CLASS # 23A OTHER PLEUROTHALLIDINAE SPECIES

- | | | |
|------------|--------------------|----------|
| 1st | Rstp. trichoglossa | G. Birss |
|------------|--------------------|----------|



2nd Rstp. wagneri S.Crosby/T.Cost
a

3rd Rstp. cymbula S.Crosby/T.Cost
a

CLASS # 28 NOVICE - LAELIINAE

Epi. Raspberry Valley

1st 'Cupid' M. Spring

CLASS # 29 NOVICE - MISCELLANEOUS

Mtssa. Estrelita 'Sweet

1st Senorita' M. Spring

Mtssa. Sadie Loo x

2nd Mtdm. Christmas Eve J. Riley

3rd Phal. 'unknown' F. Andrews

CLASS # 34 INTERMEDIATE - LAELIINAE

1st Rhy. Swan's Shy C. Matheson

CLASS # 35 INTERMEDIATE - MISCELLANEOUS

1st Onc. 'unknown' H.Chen

2nd Zns. Cynosure 'Blue Birds' C. Matheson

Mtssa. Estrelita 'Sweet

3rd Senorita' H. Chen

4th Odcdm. Wildcat 'Bobcat' C. Matheson

the actions of That Woman. What have we done to deserve this? Some of us come from the tropical jungles of the Americas, or the cool rainforests of Asia, or, at the very least, the prime conditions of commercial orchid nurseries. To our horror, we have been plucked out of these wonderful environments and somehow ended up here with That Woman, fearing for our survival on a daily basis. Here are some examples of the numerous maladies that we have had to endure due to the irrational, illogical, insensitive and uninformed actions of That Woman.

MALNUTRITION. Initially when That Woman first became interested in orchids, she had no clue about feeding us. Water and the odd bit of foliar feed once in awhile was all we got. Please note that when there are hardly any new growths on your orchids, or the new growths are smaller than the old growths, then your orchids are starving and you need to do something about it!! Luckily That Woman attended a New Grower's class and learned about the benefits of fertilisers---but then the pendulum swung to the other extreme!

OBESITY. For awhile, That Woman fed us with a hand sprayer, one of those pump up ones. She had heard the phrase "weekly weakly" in the New Grower's class and tried to follow that rule with her hand sprayer. We were much happier, much less hungry, and our growth habits were much improved. But then That Woman's hubby rigged up a bulk spraying system, one where she could mix up 100 liters of fertiliser at a time and totally saturate us, which she did with great enthusiasm and appalling

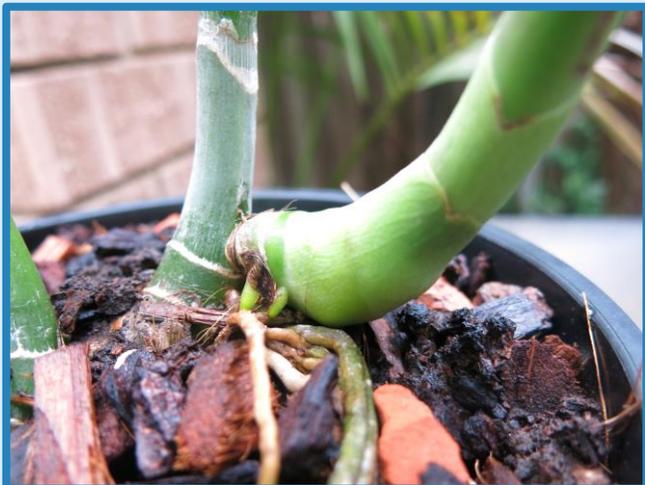
Below is the winning article of the 2017 AOF Essay competition, awarded to our very own SSOS member Jan Robinson. The topic for 2017 was "Orchid Ailments and their management". Congrats Jan!

ORCHID AILMENTS -- THE BIGGEST CAUSE

The majority of the health problems we have are caused by one thing and one thing only--That Woman. "We" are a small collection of orchids doing our best to survive in a suburb of Sydney, but we are constantly under threat by



regularity. No thought was given to the fact that we are a varied collection of orchids, ranging from large specimen-size plants to tiny seedlings just out of flask, or that we have different feeding requirements. Nor was there any consideration given to the impact of complete "saturation" of our potting media with fertilisers versus the previous light spraying technique. It was only when symptoms of obesity such as horribly swollen pseudobulbs, new leaves not unfurling properly because they were too fat, and mutated labellums began to appear that That Woman realised we had a problem with excessive food intake. Please don't overfeed your orchids!! In the wild, we rely on slowly decaying organic matter for our nutrition--don't try to supersize us with commercial products. Forget about trying to "hurry us along" to flowering size by feeding us too often. Think carefully about your fertilising regime and the possible consequences of what you are doing, particularly before making any major changes. Trust me, it takes a long time to recover from the effects of obesity.



DEHYDRATION. Lack of water at our location is caused by one thing -- That Woman being too lazy or "busy" to turn the watering system on frequently enough when it hasn't rained for awhile. If your orchids have a good root system and the "drought" doesn't last too long, they will usually spring back to life after a few good drinks.

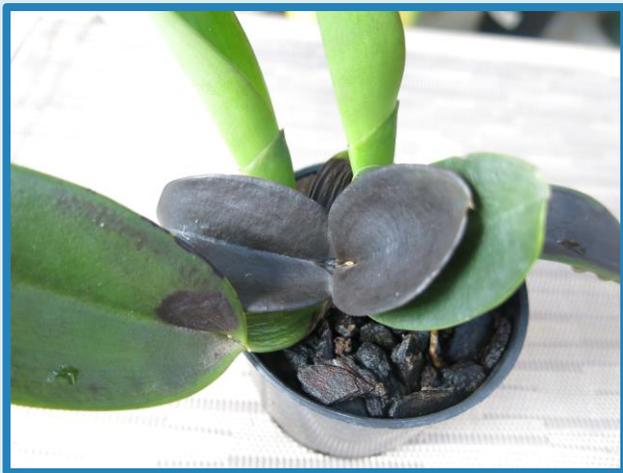


However, if your orchids are totally dehydrated because they have no roots and cannot absorb any water or nutrition, then you have a real problem. Shriveled pseudobulbs can be a symptom of root ailments. There is only one way to tell for sure--take your orchid out of the pot and have a look at its root system. If there are only old dried up roots and no new healthy ones, then some first aid is required! That Woman is having some success with sphagnum moss as a remedy for this, especially for genera such as oncidiums, coelogynes, lycastes and anguloas. Cut off all the old dead roots and firmly pack the shriveled pseudobulb and any live roots with sphag in a pot barely big enough to hold the bulb. Be patient, it takes time to recuperate from severe dehydration, sometimes



years! When you see the pseudobulbs start to fatten up and a new growth develops, you have succeeded in treating your plant for dehydration.

ROOT ROT. The other extreme from being dehydrated is getting so much water that the potting mix stays too wet and the roots of your orchids rot. Root rot is bad news and the mortality rate is very high for plants that succumb to this ailment. That Woman is an expert at causing root rot, especially in her glass house. When her columnar oscillating fan stopped working, she foolishly replaced it with just a small fan that only blew air in one



direction. Without considering the effect that this change of air flow might have on us, That Woman also decided not to repot any of her paphs that live in the glass house that same spring and left us all in a mix of over 50% cocochip. How stupid was that?!! If the amount of your air flow changes for any reason, think about the impact on your orchids and make adjustments accordingly. Don't wait until your plants start to die to make a change. Treatment for root rot includes repotting your plant in fresh mix after cutting off all the rotted roots, giving it

a good dose of Seasol or Auxinone, reducing watering for several weeks, and crossing your fingers that your plant pulls through this crisis. Repot your orchids on a regular basis, don't wait until your potting mix has broken down to a gluggy mess and rotted all the roots of your plants to take some action. Yes, it is a big job to repot your entire collection every few years. Yes, it may cost you a few dollars to buy new potting mix. Yes, it is a pain to wash and sterilise your old pots before reusing them by soaking them in bleach. But we're worth all the work and expense and we will reward you with fantastic flowers if you treat us right.

CROWN ROT. Not only has That Woman been known to rot our feet, she has also rotted some of our heads! Crown rot happens when water stands too long in the top of your orchid before evaporating or being absorbed. If this happens during the summer, the water may heat up and literally cook the top of your plant. If it happens during the winter, your plants won't be happy, either. At least this orchid ailment is a bit easier to spot than root rot, as you don't have to take the plant out of its pot to see what the problem is. Brown soggy leaves around the top of your plant are symptomatic of crown rot. If you're lucky, your plant will recover and put out a new growth. More than likely, though, your plant is a dead duck. Crown rot, or "damping off," is also deadly for developing buds. If water stands in the sheaf of your paphs where the buds are forming, they will go black and not mature--and you will have to wait another whole year for the chance of getting a flower. Some growers apparently use hydrogen peroxide to treat crown rot. Don't tell That Woman, we don't want to



have all our heads drenched in that mixture!! Check your orchids a few hours after watering them. If water is standing in the top of a plant, drain it by tilting the plant on its side until the water runs off. Or soak up the water by dabbing it with a piece of paper towel. Sometimes That Woman puts a few stones between a pot and the tray it is standing in so that the pot sits at an angle and water can drain naturally out of the top of the plant. Sometimes you have to think outside the square to solve an orchid problem.

SUN BURN. Now this is a good one! What person in their right mind decides to move several trays of cattleya seedlings from their usual spot of nicely filtered light into an area of much brighter sunlight ---the day before temperatures are tipped to reach the high 40's? THAT WOMAN, of course! For once, the weather forecast was right and for the three days that temperatures hovered around 47.5 degrees, That Woman sat in front of a fan inside the house drinking cold drinks without even a thought about her poor cattleya seedlings. Didn't she get a severe shock when she saw those seedlings, hardly recognizable and covered in third degree burns! Their lovely fat green leaves had turned pitch black. Several days later, the black leaves fell off the plants, revealing burned black pseudobulbs as well. What is the treatment for sun burn? Move your plant into a shadier spot, give it a big drink, and hope for the best. But beware, leaves with sunburn spots can become susceptible to fungal infections and other nasty ailments. So if the leaves of your burned plant don't actually fall off, try cutting off the damaged bit (with sterilised secateurs of course). And next time, pay attention to the

weather forecast and move your plants **out** of the sun on hot days, not **in** to the sun! Wet the floor under your benches and move plants that normally hang up high in your bush house to down lower. Even orchids that are used to growing in the direct sun (Dendrobium fimbriatum and some cymbidiums here at our place) can get sunburned in days of extreme heat. It only takes a few minutes to move your plants into a temporary shadier spot---it may take years for them to recover if you don't, if they recover at all.

HYPOTHERMIA. This is another orchid ailment that is directly attributable to That Woman. We get hypothermia when we are simultaneously too cold and too wet. This is easily preventable by (1) providing us with cover (maybe even a bit of heat) during the winter, and (2) being careful how you water us during cold periods. Only water on a sunny day; water before midday so our leaves have time to dry off before the sun goes down; and don't water us too frequently. Make sure there is good air circulation around us to dry off our foliage after watering. Remember, many of us require dry winters to initiate flower spikes in the Spring. Most of us orchids have a much better chance of surviving in winter if we are cold and dry rather than cold and wet. Symptoms of mild hypothermia include leaf spotting and plant rot. Mild hypothermia may cause your orchids to be susceptible to fungal attacks. Severe hypothermia causes death. Spray with a fungicide if you must, but it's much better to just keep us dry during cold periods.



ALCOHOLISM AND BUG

INFESTATIONS. That Woman hates insects. One of her favourite evening activities is to creep around the bush houses with a torch, hoping to find some unsuspecting grasshopper or slug to squish with great gusto. She does not like to spray with insecticides as a preventative method, she waits until she sees actual damage before taking any action. Somewhere That Woman read that metholated spirits is a good remedy for all types of scale on orchids, especially since its use is non carcinogenic to the grower, and it supposedly kills scale on contact. In typical unthinking style, That Woman got an old toothbrush, dipped it in some straight metho, and launched into a vigorous scale eradication program. The mature cattleyas didn't mind too much, as removal of all the old bracts around the pseudobulbs with the toothbrush revealed quite a few hidden nasties that were sucking the life out of the plants. When no more scale was visible, That Woman then gave the cattleyas a thorough rinse with clean water. After waiting all of 24 hours and seeing no ill effects on these few trial plants, That Woman then proceeded to give the metho treatment to any and all of the rest of us that had even one spot of scale. In her tooth brushing enthusiasm, That Woman slackened off with the rinsing procedure after applying the straight metho--and guess what happened? Yes, she burned the soft leaves of young cymbidiums, oncidiums and lycastes. They literally turned brown in a few hours after receiving the metho treatment. The treatment was worse than the original ailment!! Please think about the possible impact of any new procedures/chemicals/insecticides before

adopting them for your entire collection, and wait at least several weeks if not several months to see what the effect has been before deciding to apply it to all your orchids.

INFECTIONS. That Woman is a master at encouraging infections, especially fungal ones. The worst example of fungal contamination happened last summer when That Woman overwatered all her sarcochilus collection during a bout of hot, humid days. She did not realise she had a problem until leaves started falling off her sarcs by the handfuls. That Woman found out later she had caused a catastrophic case of the dreaded fusarium fungus! This horrible malady invades our roots first, causing severe rot before destroying stems, leaves, and everything else in its path. CPR is immediately required if your plants become infected with the fusarium fungus: **C**arefully take the plant out of its potting medium ("carefully" because you don't want to damage what few roots there may be left); **P**runed the rotted roots, leaving only the healthy ones; and **R**inse all the old potting mix off your plant. Then soak it in a bit of anti-fungal solution such as Mancozeb before repotting in fresh mix. Give your plant a drink of Seasol or Auxinone to stimulate new root growth, and once again hope for the best. There are many other varieties of fungal infections besides fusarium that are detrimental to your orchid collection. Glomerella is a common one that creates horrible brown and black lesions on orchid leaves. Botrytis is another one, it attacks the actual flowers of your plants. Once again, this is a case of an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Don't overwater your orchids, especially when the natural humidity is already



high. Proper air movement is critical to keeping fungal infections at bay. If something is preventing good ventilation, like the neighbour's new garage blocking off one side of your bush house, invest in a cheap fan or two. Never be tempted to buy plants that do not look healthy, no matter how cheap their price may be! Bringing new fungal-infected orchids into your collection is a recipe for disaster. Keep dead leaves and pseudobulbs trimmed off your orchids, they are great places for fungal diseases to incubate.

The 'V' word. The 'V' word throws That Woman into an absolute panic attack. She has no quarantine area and believes in immediate euthanasia of any orchid that shows even the slightest sign of unusual ring spotting on the leaves. Goodness knows how many perfectly good orchids That Woman has sealed in a plastic bag and dumped unceremoniously into the rubbish bin, fearing they were infected with a virus. (She would never put a sus plant into the green waste bin, in case the bin contents get mulched and distributed and thereby transmitting the virus to other plants and gardens.) She has never sent a leaf to a lab for a proper scientific diagnosis. "If in doubt, throw it out" is her motto. That Woman is a stickler for soaking her secateurs in bleach after every use, and she never ever reuses any potting mix. One reason she hates insects in her collection so much is because they have been known to transmit viruses. Over-the-top behaviour? Perhaps. But at least we haven't been wiped out by any virus like so many other orchid collections over the years.

That Woman, what a menace. Luckily she is going on holidays soon so we can have some well-deserved respite. We hope you never make any of these same mistakes with your own orchids. If you do, at least don't publicly admit it--to do so can be very embarrassing.

ORCHID HOUSE FOR SALE!!!

6' X 10' clear glazing, only 2 years old and almost like brand new. \$600 o.n.o. Shade cloth and benching included. Would require dismantling on site. Instruction booklet available. Some orchids also for sale. Ring Josephine on 0409 151 990 for further details.





SUTHERLAND SHIRE ORCHID SOCIETY INC.

NOMINATION FORM FOR COMMITTEE

Members at the March Annual General Meeting will elect the Society’s President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Committee. If you wish to nominate for a position, please fill in the form below, and return to The Secretary, Sutherland Shire Orchid Society, 5 Tiber Place, Heathcote. 2233 or thejackson4@bigpond.com

I,.....(insert full name) wish to nominate for the position of:

(Please tick in circle)

- President Vice-President Secretary Treasurer Committee

Signed:.....

Seconded By:.....

TO NOMINATE, YOU MUST BE A FINANCIAL MEMBER OF THE SUTHERLAND SHIRE ORCHID SOCIETY INC.

ARTICLES FOR THE BULLETIN

If you are interested in providing articles for our monthly bulletin or any feedback on articles that you would like to see in the bulletin, please email Richard Dimon at dimon.richard@gmail.com

The articles can be on anything you like related to orchids. Pictures to go with articles are also encouraged.

Disclaimer: The growing guides are provided only as a starting basis to cultivation. Local conditions in your area may require modification to these suggestions. SSOS will not be responsible for the results of your cultivation practices. The opinions expressed in these articles are those of the author and not those of SSOS, SSOS in no way endorses or supports any claims or opinions of said authors. Pictures provided by Pamela Davies, Jan Robinson, and Richard Dimon and may not be used without the expressed permission of the photographer.