



Sutherland

Shire

Orchid

Society

# October 2018 Bulletin

## Next Meeting: Oct. 8th

### September's Best

Plant of the Night and  
Judges' Choice Hybrid of the Night

*Paph. Fanaticum* grown by S. T. Ho



Judges' Choice Species of the Night

*C. loddigesii* grown by Wayne McEvoy



Judges' Choice Intermediate Winner

*Dendrobium speciosum* grown by Herbert Chen



Judges' Choice Novice Winner

*Epc. Rene Marques 'Flame Thrower'*  
grown by Jenny Sharpham



(Photos by Pam Davies.)

## SSOS CALENDAR:

### MONTHLY MEETINGS:

Oct 8: Hands-On Deflasking (or maybe “de-compotting”) Night – everyone gets at least one free plant! Crying Room topic for Novices will be fertilising lead by Vic Petrovski.

Nov 12: Guest Speaker Greg Bourke, Curator Manager, Mount Tomah Botanic Gardens, on carnivorous plants , their trapping mechanisms and how to grow them in the Sydney area; judging of growing comp plants; Crying Room discussion on pests and diseases, leader TBC.

Dec 10: Annual Xmas Party (plenty of food, a giant raffle, and presentation of the Annual Points Score awards)

# Don't forget the EVENT OF THE WEEK!!!

2018

Light refreshments available all day

**SOUTHERN ORCHID**

**SPECTACULAR**

CARINGBAH HIGH SCHOOL  
85 WILLARONG RD, CARINGBAH NSW  
(off Captain Cook Drive)

**FRI 5 OCT - SUN 7 OCT**

9AM - 4PM FRIDAY & SATURDAY  
9AM - 2PM SUNDAY

## **SSOS GENERAL MEETING MINUTES 10<sup>th</sup> September 2018.**

Jan welcomed members and guests, H&F Mattner. Apologies were received from Committee members, Ritchie, Rhonda & Gifford, also Noelene Wetherby, Josephine Mula & Jim Riley. Minutes of the August meeting were accepted as accurate as printed in the September Bulletin

**SPRING SHOW REVIEW:** Great display of plants, thank you to everyone who exhibited. 5 table top displays, most we've had for ages. A Certificate of Appreciation was given to Orchid Supplies by Mike & George for their sponsorship and doing so much repotting during the Show. The two Perpetual Trophies winners were Best Australian Native: Heath Myers and Grand Champion awarded to John Costa. The Sales Bench was very successful, lots of plants sold including NSW native orchids; sellers completed the required documentation and plants were properly tagged. The Raffle was very successful with over \$1k of tickets sold. Digital display was excellent, thanks to Richie and Gary Hodder. Financial outcome – Net profit of about \$300 – great result.

**SOUTHERN ORCHID SPECTACULAR** – Details re plant check-in, sales bench plants and the need for volunteers were reviewed.

**CORRESPONDENCE IN:** Monthly newsletters from various societies; Email from Greg Bourke, re presentation at the November meeting; Receipt from OSNSW for Affiliation fee, Agendas for AOC annual meetings in October (AGM & BOM); Flyer from Rose Society for NSW for Rose Growing workshop in 29<sup>th</sup> Sept. at Loftus Community Hall from 10am to 3pm; Email from Gabby Seddon from BeConnected Community Services; Email from Jim McMahan, Shire Farmers Market with advice on holding stall on 25<sup>th</sup> August. **Growers License from NPWS – approved 29<sup>th</sup> August!!!** Acceptance of Growers License conditions to NPWS. Email from Jane Wright Canberra Orchid Society advising Stephen Monkhouse as a possible speaker next year. Email from Veronica Clowes about us doing a show at Rockdale Plaza.

**CORRESPONDENCE OUT:** Letter and show schedule to judges at spring show; Email to NPWS following up on our application for a Growers License (6/8/18); Spring Show flyer emailed to Rose Society for NSW (Loftus Group); Email to Dan Handley advising information about his grandfather Mr Joe Taylor; Email to Jim McMahan, Shire Farmers Market thanking him for opportunity to hold community stall; Email to Jane Wright accepting her offer for Stephen Monkhouse potentially speak at one of our 2019 meetings; Emails to Veronica Clowes with entries for the Affiliated Societies Competition; Email to Rockdale Plaza thanking but declining offer.

**NEW MEMBERS:** Cathy & Rob Starrett, Graham Davies, Melissa Karayannis, Beverley Debruyn .

**TONIGHT:** Prior to meeting John Costa talked to our novices about repotting and Gary Hodder will give a presentation on Southeast Asian Dendrobiums after the supper break.

**October monthly meeting (day after the Spectacular)** will be hands-on deflasking – The Committee will buy several flasks and members can try growing a plant from a flask. Vic to talk to Novices about **fertilising/watering/misting**.

**November monthly meeting:** Very lucky to have Greg Bourke, Curator of Mount Tomah Botanic Gardens, a recognised expert on Carnivorous plants to give us an introduction to these plants, tell about their various trapping mechanisms and talk on cultivation for Sydney area. A talk to novices about pests and diseases will also take place prior to meeting – presenter TBA.

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**December** – Annual Xmas party and points score awards.

**ITEMS OF INTEREST:** The Rose Society of NSW, Loftus Branch is holding a rose growing workshop on 29<sup>th</sup> September from 10am-3pm. People wishing to attend need to register by 24<sup>th</sup> September \$30 (includes morning tea & light lunch).

Jane Wright, Pres. Canberra Orchid Society asked if SSOS was interested in presentation on Zygopetalums in either February, March, April or May 2019 by Stephen Monkhouse. Jane is trying to organise several different Societies to host Stephen to make the trip worth his while.

**May Luk** is very ill. There is a card for members to sign tonight to cheer her up.

Break for supper, after which Gary Hodder did an excellent talk and slide show about Southeast Asian dendrobiums.

**NAME BADGE DRAW:** No members present from names drawn.

**LUCKY PLANTS:** Ian & Irene Chalmers, Tony & Sandra Crosby & Mick Dimon.

**JUDGES' AND PRESIDENT'S CHOICE** certificates were distributed, followed by the raffle.

**NOVICE FREEBIE RAFFLE:** 11 Plants were distributed.

**REMINDER:** Members displaying orchids at meetings to not take yellow plant cards home as they are needed for Pam to record results.

**NEXT MEETING:** October 8<sup>th</sup> (day after the Spectacular)

(Minutes as recorded by Committee member Jan Riley in Rhonda's absence.)

## Our Editor is still MIA.....



## YOU GREW IT

### **Dendrobium tetragonum** – exhibited by George Birss



This orchid was named from the Greek *tetragonal* meaning four angles and has the common names of Spider orchid, Windmill orchid, Bowtie orchid and Rectangular – Bulbed orchid. A native to Australia, *Dendrobium tetragonum* is found growing from the Illawarra District in N.S.W. to South East Queensland.

A variety which grows on the north coast of NSW is known as *Dendrobium malaleucaphilum* in reference to its host tree, the melaleuca. It was first discovered by Allan Cunningham in 1828 and was described as “an epiphyte, hanging loosely from the stems of small trees in very dry, shady woods”.

This orchid can be found in moderate to heavy shade on host trees of Paperbark ( melaleuca), Swamp Oak (Casuarina), Scrub Myrtle, Water Gums and Hoop Pine. Growing along the coastal strip, it is usually found near water courses in heavy shade with high humidity and rarely above 400 metres.

*Dendrobium tetragonum* does not like to be disturbed and in cultivation is usually grown on slabs to display the pendulous nature of the plant as if growing on a tree. If grown in pots a very coarse mix should be used as the plant has a fine root system and likes to dry out quickly. Good air movement is essential.

The canes of this orchid are semi pendulous, they start off growing upright but as they mature and get longer they tend to hang down. The canes are four sided in shape, widest in the middle and grow in clusters. The canes will develop dark green leaves at the end of the canes where from this apex a single inflorescence emerges carrying 2 to 5 fragrant flowers. The flowers are highly fragrant and quite spidery in shape. They vary in colour from pale green or cream to yellow with vivid red markings, usually around the outer edges of the petals and sepals. The wide labellum or lip is usually white with red markings.

Quite easy to grow in green house conditions in the Shire, this orchid has few problems other than mealy bug, which can be controlled with good air circulation. The other pest that attacks this plant is *Dendrobium*

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beetle, which can be controlled by keeping the plant in a sealed green house or spraying with “Neem Oil”. When you have 15 to 30 canes all in flower it gives a great display.

### **Dendrobium tongii** – exhibited by Lee Buivids



Only recently named by Jim Cootes in 2010, this orchid is native to the Philippines and grows as an epiphyte on trunks and branches of trees. The upright new pseudobulbs can be up to one metre long with leaves on the top 2/3's of the stem. They are papery and about 8cm in length.

The inflorescences are short and usually develop from the opposite side to the leaves. An inflorescence can have a “bunch” of up to 40 flowers that look very spectacular high on a bare pseudobulb. The flower colour varies from yellow to orange with a bright red blotch at the base of the labellum. The flowers are tubular with the petals and sepals slightly reflex and slightly triangular.

A truly stunning plant to have in a collection, the only draw back is that it grows at an elevation of 500 – 1000 metres so requires heat and with canes up to a metre long does take up valuable space.

## **Dendrobium speciosum** – exhibited by – Sandra Crosby and Tony Costa

(H.Chan also won Intermediate plant of the night with his speciosum, see Pg 1 for photo.)



Commonly referred to as the Rock Lily or Rock Orchid, this orchid was named from the latin *specios (ou)* meaning showy or beautiful by Sir James Smith who was given a plant from the Port Jackson area of NSW. This plant is now at the Herbarium of Linnean Society of London.

Dendrobium speciosums are found in Victoria, all along the coastal areas of NSW, even over the Great Divide but here in the Sydney area the plants growing in harsher conditions tend to be smaller and stunted in comparison to the Eastern types and on up into Northern Queensland.

One of the most spectacular orchids, it is capable of producing possibly the largest display plants and the most spectacular shows of mass blooms.

This species nearly always grows as a lithophyte growing on or among rocks but can grow as an epiphyte high in tree forks. It has a large range of habitats ranging from sea level to high mountain tops. It prefers high sand stone cliffs where it is exposed to the harsh elements where it receives little or no shade, usually with a north or eastern exposure. It does not like deep shade and is rarely found in valleys. Usually found growing high up on cliff faces where there is usually a cool updraft of air and usually with a northerly or easterly exposure to take full advantage of winter sun.

The large pseudobulbs are either straight or curved and can grow up to 60cm tall and taper from 5cm to 7cm at the base to about 3cm at the first leaf. The leaves which number two to five are large and leathery and can stay on the plant for 8 years or more. The roots tend to form a dense, matted bed for the plant as it spreads across the sandstone rock.

One of the nicest things is the aroma which can be smelt from some distance. Flower stems are erect, long and either straight or slightly arching with very long racemes where the flower count can number up towards seventy but usually less. Flowers are usually well spaced out, are thick textured and about 2.5cm in diameter, but on newer clones are bigger and open flatter. Colours range from white, cream to strong yellow with a white labellum that can be spotted and veined with red to purple. A down side to D.speciosm is that for some genus it may take up to 10 years from seedling plants till they flower. Some are less.

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This is one of the easiest orchids to grow and can be grown in the garden, tied to a tree, stump or on a rock. The preferred method is in a pot with a course mix and because the root system grows so vigorously will need regular re potting. They like plenty of sun.

Here are a few more photos added by the President/Temporary Editor:

Cockatoos also love speciosums—  
I lost 23 spikes to these pests this year!!



One of my speciosums  
binned due to suspected virus—  
very “sus” pattern on an old leaf and  
odd coloration on the new



Take a look at this beauty – perhaps the owner would like to give us a talk soon on how to grow them?!?!

## Rhonda’s plant in full glory a few years ago



NOTE: The comments in the above article, researched from various sources and from growing experience are those of the writer George Birss, are his opinions and not those of the Sutherland Shire Orchid Society committee.

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## YOU KILLED IT

### Are your orchids suffering from insect and pest problems? Read on.....

Catching insect problems in the early stages is **very** important. If your plant is completely covered with mealy bug or scale, getting rid of all of them is very difficult, sometimes dumping the plant in the bin is the best method.

The most important thing is “vigilance”. Things can get out of hand quickly if you don’t closely inspect your plants regularly. If you can detect the nasties early removal is a lot easier. How often do you hear somebody say “I don’t know where the bugs came from!!!!”.

A good tip when purchasing new plants is to quarantine them from your other orchids for four weeks and keep an eye on them.

**MEALY BUG** – The name of this pest pretty much describes what the bug looks like – mealy or cottony



masses.

The pest is a small white crawling insect that is about 3mm long and 2mm wide and after they have been in an area they leave a white sticky substance. Usually found on growing tips, buds, flower stems and under leaves. There is a type that is found on the roots on orchids. Early detection can be removed with a cotton bud and some metho. Bigger infestations will require insecticide treatment with Confidor and Neem oil or Eco oil.

**SCALE** – A creature that comes in various forms, but most have a shell that serves as a protective armour for the soft insect body. I describe scale as “like a periwinkle found on rocks along the beach”, only smaller.



The shell must be penetrated by the pesticide chemical or removed by rubbing it off. Frequently found on the undersides of leaves or on some plants like Cattleyas, they attach to the pseudobulbs. The scale attaches to the plant and “sucks” out the goodness leaving an unsightly yellowy spot on a green leaf or pseudobulb. This insect is very difficult to totally eradicate but with persistence it can be controlled.

**SNAILS** – Snails and slugs are on the list as one of the most destructive orchid flower eaters. They can do extensive damage to young orchid roots and leaves and flower spikes. As a matter of fact they will eat anything but they seem to be very selective and usually find the prize orchid to attack.

Snails usually come out at night, so if you suspect them go out with a flashlight in the evening to search for them, you may be surprised where they are and how big some are. I have actually found them on plants hanging from the roof of my shade house, they have obviously by passed a lot of plants to get all the way up there.

**KATYDID** – Boy what a strange name, but this is one insect that does extensive damage to flower spikes. Commonly known as grasshoppers, you know those big brown types that have the big spiky back legs and a big head with big beady eyes and great big chompers that not only eat your spikes but seem to latch onto a finger if you can catch them.

They like to hide behind pots or mounts and usually come out when you water and have your hands full and can’t catch them then and can’t find them later. Another one of those “I don’t know how they get in my green house” bugs. If I can catch them I not so gently remove their heads and back legs and feed them to my carnivorous plants.

**NOTE:** Great pictures of KATYDID’s in last Sundays newspaper but the writer obviously doesn’t grow orchids as he / she stated how critically important these creatures are to the ecology.

(NOTE: The comments in this article, researched from various sources and from growing experience are those of the writer, George Birss, are his opinions and not those of the Sutherland Shire Orchid Society committee.)

## Monthly Show Bench Results

Submitted by Jan Robinson

Pam Davies probably knows more about our Show Bench plants than we do. Why is that? Because she checks EVERY NAME of EVERY PLANT that gets a first, second, third, fourth, or fifth place IN EVERY CLASS in our monthly show bench competition. Using the internet and specialised software called OrchidWiz, Pam makes sure that the names we are putting on our cards are the fair dinkum registered names of each of our orchids. If the name we wrote on our plant registration card does not come up on Pam's Google searches, she puts a "???" next to the plant name in the results list. There are several of these in the September results. Here is what Pam has to say when I asked about the question marks:

"In relation to the plant names with ??- 99% of the time it is because that plant is not recognized either on Orchidwiz or google. The other 1% is because I can't figure the writing but that seems to be better now that I have had a word to a couple of them even if that made me unpopular. So unless it is a brand new registration it should be appearing on one of these. If it doesn't the name on the card is generally wrong. Not necessarily the members fault as it may have been wrongly labelled when they acquired it.

So let's look at Class 9:

3<sup>rd</sup> place – There is no Den Fless listed anywhere hence ?

4<sup>th</sup> place – Den. Robbie McInnes this is probably Den. Australian Robbie McInnes – hence ?

5<sup>th</sup> place (yours) – This is probably Den. Australian Rose-Beauty. There is NO Den Australian Rose listed on either site.

Unless I am absolutely sure I don't change it but you can see by the above that each entry is checked."

Thanks, Pam, for the heads up. After getting this info from Pam, I went back and checked the label on my plant which had won 5<sup>th</sup> place in Class 9. I got this plant from a very reputable orchid nursery and the label had been "professionally printed", not handwritten. The label says "Dendrobium Australian Rose, exact remake Cobber 'Lavender and Lime' x kingianum 'Speckles'. Well, the plot thickens. When I looked up Den. Australian Rose-Beauty on OrchidWiz, it says the parents are Den June Mac x Den Lawrose – not Cobber x kingianum like the label on my plant says. There is only one photo of Den Australian Rose-Beauty on Orchidwiz and it is not a good one, showing the flower as very red although the description says it's purple and white. So am I now stuck with yet another "unknown" plant??? One of the lessons to be learned here is that you can't always trust the label as being correct when you buy an orchid, even from a commercial nursery!

Why is getting the names of our plants so important? Well, if we were a garden club and grew heaps of different plants besides orchids, maybe the names of our individual orchids wouldn't matter that much. But we are an orchid club and should know—or at least learn—the proper names of our plants. Thank you, Pam, for helping us to achieve this goal.