

SUTHERLAND SHIRE ORCHID SOCIETY

Junior's Journey

Hi my name is Daniel Coulton and I am a junior member of the Sutherland Shire Orchid Society and lately on a number of occasions I have been asked how I started growing orchids. On all occasions I avoided giving an answer but when S.T. Ho asked me to write an article I stupidly said yes. So here I am writing this article.

Okay well it all started about four years ago. As with many gardening stories it starts with the humble strawberry plant (yes I know its cheesy) but its true after coming back from a friends birthday party I found out that my father had bought three plants one for each of us kids though both my sisters ignored there's but I cared for mine, I still can't explain why, but I did and even though it never produced any sizeable fruit it was the start of it all.

So from there came a series of random plants and then bonsai came on to the scene but though I could grow the plants well I found that I didn't have the eye for it or the patience so after just a year of being interested in that I started to neglect them but I was still interested in plants and still liked the satisfaction of growing.

While down at a local market at Berry I came across a man selling orchids (what I now know was a cymbidium) for an okay price of \$25 so I brought it home and cared for it with no special treatment. After about six months of owning this plant and buying a couple of others. In May of 2005 I attended the first meeting, it was auction night and I bought a further three plants.

After having an enjoyable experience I returned for the June meeting. At this meeting I was almost locked into and became hooked on orchids when I was approached by Neville Roper with the offer of a selection of orchid seedlings I was delighted and know I was hooked.

At the September meeting I became a member of the society which was so expensive at \$2.00. I then competed for the first time in the society's spring show at Swansea and being the only junior cleaned up the class with that first plant that I had bought such a while ago. It was a great event and I had lots of fun.

Moving on and in May of 2006 I started going to Ho's orchid classes which were very helpful, both in meeting more members and growing orchids. In June two more important milestones arrived one I reached 100 plants (I know that pityful little orchid that I began with looks sad) and I finally got a shadehouse only three metres by three metres but it's a start.

In October of 2006 another major event my very first placing in an open class a second with the plant I purchased at the auction at that very first meeting though I think that there were only two or three plants entered into that class it still gave me a sense of achievement and a feel that I was actually getting somewhere in growing orchids.

So that is the story of how it all started, along the way I have met many great people and had a fabulous time. I've learned so much and hope to continue with this great little hobby. So to all of you that asked here is the answer of how it all started.

Daniel Coulton
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