

June 2019 ...

Volume 61 ... no. 6



The
TASMANIAN
ORCHID SOCIETY

GREENHOOD

Statistics show that 74 per cent of over 70s are “digitally disengaged” and approximately 34 per cent of Australians aged 50 years and over (about 2.7 million people) had either low digital literacy levels or did not use digital devices or the internet.

Well at our next meeting Monday 17^h June @ 7.30 pm at Legacy House is when one of our favourite members **Sally Johnson** will show us how she uses technology to document the cataloguing of all her orchids and her labelling processes. Accomplished grower **Noel Doyle** will share his interest in using the potting media **Fernmania** to grow those orchids we all wish to grow.

June is competition night... will you “bench” by 7.15 pm ?

Your “wow” Orchids for Division 1 and Division 2.

Competition Floral arrangement is “Fit for the Queen”



A couple of **Corybas aconitiflorus** (spurred helmet-orchid) growing together. Tiny helmet orchid growing to only 20mm tall, usually single flower on heart shaped leaf that is green above and purple underneath. Locally common growing in moist soil in lowland scrub.

Photo by Geoff Curry

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Copy Deadline is the

3rd July 2019

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2019/20**

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**COMMITTEE
MEMBERS**

Noel Doyle

Peter Manchester

Shirley Jackson

Andrea Gerrard

Jim Smith

**TAS. ORCHID SOCIETY MAJOR other EVENTS
THROUGHOUT THE YEAR...**

TOS Spring Show 26th Sept. to Sept. 29th, 2019

Sarcochilus & Masdevallias Show 9th November 2019

TOS Christmas meeting December 9th, 2019

Sunday Getogether July 21st, August 25th, October 27th

GREENHOOD editor Peter S Manchester 0477432640 ...
milingandi@vision.net.au

WEB MANAGER Michael Jaschenko ... <http://tos.org.au/>

**TASMANIAN ORCHID SOCIETIES GENERAL MEETING
DATES**

July 17th – Geoff Curry - Dendrodium speciosums

August 19th – Talk “Benching for the Spring Show”

September 16th – Preparation for the Spring Show

October 21st – Presentation night

November 18th – Gary Hill -Trip to China.

State Orchid Conference with Spring Show 2nd October 2020

Conference to be held on the Saturday 3rd October, Town Hall

...Chairperson Sally Johnston

Committee meetings for 2019/2020 are ... July 1st; August 5th; September 2nd;
October 7th; November 4th; December 2nd; January 7th; February 3rd; and March
3rd,

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information. The opinions and views are those of individual authors and not of the
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FROM THE DESK OF PRESIDENT PETER WILLSON.

Our May Autumn Show for 2019 was a good presentation of orchids in most classes, despite many members were unable to exhibit because of “fickle” growing conditions. It was pleasing to see many new members participating and ask Division 1. Members to advise and encourage the new exhibiting members in the future.

*It appears that the number of “benching” of the competition plants **Sartylis Bravehart ‘Sandy’** the members are enjoying the challenge of growing their plants. As indicated in earlier Greenhood editions... a selected grower will be asked **“How they are developing their culture of growing the Sartylis”**.*

As an incentive, a one-off interim prize from the President’s collection will be awarded.

Our Tasmanian Orchid Society committee has been working hard to improve members experiences as members. Such changes have been a new member’s membership form. ... new publicity pamphlets and handouts.... Incentive methods to wear name tags Endorsement of the Sunday Get togethers aims and objectives at each general meeting members will now be able to peruse the committee’s meeting deliberations along with the treasurer’s monthly report in a folder at the Secretary/ President’s desk..... re indorsement of sashes and rosettes for the Spring Show... the decision not to award spoons but a new “hand crafted- Tasmanian wood” quality biro and recognition of our monthly winners.



I look forward to meeting all members at our next June meeting.



All members are invited to submit floral arrangements for judging on the following topics.



***June 17th** “Fit for a queen”*

***July 15th** – “A design using minimal plant material”*

***August 19th** - “Design in a Teacup”.*

A. Tasmanian Orchid Society Orchid Mix ...prepared by the Tasmanian Botanical Gardens staff for our members to purchase. **Bags are available now.** The T.O.S Orchid mix (40 litre bags), are available at \$15 for members and \$20 for non-members. The keeper of the mix is our President Peter Willson. Please phone Peter on 62484375 who lives near Cambridge to make arrangements for PICKUP time and payment.

B. 2019 COMPETITION PLANTS every meeting.

Sartylis Bravehart'Sandy' AM/AOC The competition is well on its way. Seven to Eight members are bringing them in. Some are looking better than others.

At supper time members can check out all the plants. After supper a couple of the plants would be selected and the owners would be asked to share their cultural tips. This would continue through to the close of this phase in December.

C. Tasmanian Orchid Society payments and treasury matters.

Members should be aware that the new Treasurer is Christine Doyle and can be contacted by email: noel.doyle3@bigpond.com by phone 62729820 or at all general meetings. Should payment be required preferred method is by direct debit.

Direct Debit details are ... Tasmanian Orchid Society Inc. BSB – 067000 CBA Acc. No. 2803512

Please put your name/s in the description area, and inform Christine by sending an email.

Cash / cheque can be paid directly to Treasurer Christine Doyle at a meeting or posted to GPO Box 467 Hobart 7001.

D. June Sunday Get-Together



“I would like to give a very big thank you to Sally and her husband, Michael, for hosting our May gathering. Every time we visit Sally’s collection, I am amazed at how far she has progressed in such a short space of time. Sally is now one of our leading Masdevallia growers.”

Coordinator Shirley Jackson

Our next gathering is on Sunday the 23rd of June. We are being hosted by Jenny Allford and her husband Grant. Jenny doesn’t have a specific orchid grow house. Her orchids are spread throughout her extensive garden. Jenny has been growing orchids for over 40 years and has been able to successfully grow, and flower, them as a part of her complete garden. Jenny has a lot of tips to share, such as using shade cloth in the heat and choosing the right orchids for her conditions.

We don’t have a venue for July, if you have any ideas please let me know. What do you think of having lunch somewhere?

Jenny’s address is 38 Grove Road Glenorchy. Please bring a plate to share. Her contact no. is 62738220. Shirley Jackson is 0429030355.



	WATER REQUIREMENTS	FERTILISER REQUIREMENTS	PEST CONTROL	OTHER COMMENTS
AUSTRALIAN NATIVE DENDROBIUM	Reduce water in May according to weather conditions.	Low nitrogen blossom booster fortnightly.	Minimal problems at this time of year.	Remove shadecloth in May to ensure maximum light.
CATTLEYA/LAELIA Alliance	Gradually reduce water to every one to two weeks.	Half strength balanced fertiliser fortnightly.	Minimal problems at this time of year.	Remove shadecloth in May to ensure maximum light.
ODONTOGLOSSUM	Water approximately weekly to keep moist.	Fortnightly with a low nitrogen fertiliser.	Minimal problems at this time of year.	Remove shadecloth in May to ensure maximum light.
CYMBIDIUM	Once or twice weekly ensuring plants remain moist at all times.	Fortnightly with high nitrogen fertiliser at half strength.	Minimal problems at this time of year.	Remove shadecloth in May to ensure maximum light.
COELOGYNE	Once or twice weekly ensuring plants remain moist at all times.	Fortnightly with high nitrogen fertiliser at half strength.	Minimal problems at this time of year.	Remove shadecloth in May to ensure maximum light.
DISA	Keep constantly moist, watering daily during hottest spells.	Weak fertiliser fortnightly. Use organic in sphagnum moss.	Watch for aphids on flowers and growths.	Increase humidity with damping of floors and frequently.
MASDEVALLIA	Keep constantly moist, watering daily during hottest spells.	Weak fertiliser fortnightly. Use organic in sphagnum moss.	Watch for aphids on flowers and growths.	Remove shadecloth in May to ensure maximum light.
ONCIDIUM	Keep moist but not wet.	Half strength balanced fertiliser fortnightly.	Minimal problems at this time of year.	Remove shadecloth in May to ensure maximum light.
PLEIONE	Keep constantly moist.	Half strength balanced fertiliser fortnightly.	Watch for aphids on flowers and growths.	Remove shadecloth in May to ensure maximum light.
GENERAL COMMENTS	Avoid using chemicals on flower spikes or buds.			

The listings are BASIC cultural information for our HOBART area. It is stressed that the information contained in these charts is to be used as a brief, basic guide depending on your own particular environment. Growing conditions vary from grower to grower depending on many factors, eg type of housing, potting medium, local weather conditions and the area where you live. Should you require more detailed information on any particular cultural aspect, it is suggested you seek the advice of advanced orchid members of TOS or a specialist orchid nursery.



Autumn Show Results of members who were successful.

Results were compiled by show steward Jim Smith and sent to the editor Peter Manchester. The qualified judges of TOS are Vic. Dawes, Marcus Smith, Ian Woodgate and Jim Smith. Trainee judges assisted in judging the entries.

No entries were received in the classes of Cymbidium Hybrid over 90 mm and under and Australian Native Terrestrials Species or Hybrid.

Grand Champion.

Den. Hilda Poxon **M Smith**

Reserve Champion.

Oncsa. David Butler **M Smith**

Best Cultured Plant.

Gom. uniflora **I Woodgate**

Class 2 Cymbidium Hybrid 90mm. and under

- 1st *Cym. Emma's Love 'Cherry Chip'* **D & V Cleaver**
2nd. *Cym. Unknown* **J & B Smith**

Class 3 Cattleya and Allied Species or Hybrid

- 1st *L. anceps 'Purple Globe'* **M Smith**
2nd *L. anceps ('San Bar Gloriosa' x 'Mendenhall')* **T Dicker**
3rd *C. Natalie Clark x Sib.* **S Jackson**

Class 4 Oncidium and Allied Species or Hybrid

- 1st *Onc. Unknown.* **A Millward**
2nd *Mtc. Yellow Monarch x Odm. uno-skinneri 'Cherry Crumble'* **E Mulder**
3rd *Onc. Heaven Scent 'Redolance'* **W Glidden**

Class 5 Gomesa and Allied Species or Hybrid

- 1st. *Oncsa. David Butler* **M Smith**
2nd *Gom. longipes* **J & B Smith**
3rd *Gom. uniflora* **I Woodgate**

Class 6 Masdevallia and Allied Species

- 1st *Masd. bonplandii* **I Woodgate**
2nd *Masd. floribunda* **J & B Smith**

3rd. *Masd. paivaeana* J & B Smith

Class 7 Masdevallia and Allied Hybrid

1st *Masd. Midas Touch x veitchiana* J & B Smith

2nd *Masd. Parlatoresana x hymenantha* S Johnson

3rd *Masd. Latin Sun 'Beenak' x Midas Touch 'Crown Point'* J & B Smith

Class 8 Dracula Species

1st *Drac. sodiroi* J & B Smith

Class 9 Dracula Hybrid

1st. *Drac. Transilvania* J & B Smith

2nd. *Drac. Transilvania* V Byers/G Durkin

Class 10 Any Other Orchid Species (Not listed elsewhere)

1st *Ptst. tenicauda* G Curry

2nd *Paph. gratixianum* J & B Smith

3rd *Cym. erythrostylum* M Smith

Class 11 Any Other Orchid Hybrid (Not listed elsewhere)

1st *Phal. Unknown* S Greatbatch

2nd *Brsdm. Golden Gamine 'White Knight'* J & B Smith

3rd *Paph. Robert Patterson* J & B Smith

Class 12 Sarcocilus and Allied Species or Hybrid

1st *Sarco. M & M* J Dicker

Class 13 Dendrobium Species or Hybrid (Excluding Australian Native)

1st *Den. chordiforme x hepaticum* P Willson

2nd *Den. Maybelline x fuliginosa* D & V Cleaver

3rd *Den. lawesii* S Jackson

Class 14 Australian Native Species or Hybrid

1st *Den. Hilda Poxon* M Smith

2nd *Den. Brimbank Jazzy* S Jackson

3rd *Den. Ellen* A Gerrard

Class 16 Best Species

L. anceps 'Purple Globe' M Smith

Class 17 Best Hybrid

Den. Hilda Poxon

M Smith

Class 18 Foliage or Fern

1st Fern

J Dicker

Floral Art Classes

Judge Shirley Jackson

Floral Art Special Award Best Overall "Arrangement Without Flowers"

G Allen

Class FA1 Floral Art "In an Unusual Container"

1st A Gerrard

2nd S Greatbatch

3rd K Lyne

Class FA2 Floral Art "Arrangement Without Flowers"

1st G Allen

2nd K Lyne

3rd A Gerrard

Class FA3 Floral Art "Tools from the Shed" (men only)

1st. P Manchester

Are you interested in this !!.... a tip for the Southern growers.

FrostBLOCK Premium Frost cloth is an extra thick garden cover material designed to create a barrier to insulate plants from *frost* and damaging weather. Protects seedlings, flowers and trees.

Extra thick 35GSM material to protect plants

UV Stabilised polypropylene material can be used season after season

Width is 0.915m and length 20 metres.

Where ? The editor purchased his from .. you guessed it Bunnings. !!!





A Personal Visit to the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens Orchid area in Hobart. by editor Peter Manchester

It was nice to visit the orchid section of the gardens with President Peter Willson, Helen Willson and Kathryn Lyne on the 8th April 2019 under the guidance of TOS member and RTBG employee Margot White.

Our Tasmanian Orchid Society, over the years have not only given orchids, grants but also 8 of our members offer their services to repot and maintain their collections in order to improve the orchids “culture”.

This gesture of goodwill was initiated by our President Peter Willson. In the last year the committee of TOS decided to purchase \$1000.00 worth of catalpas from Victoria which was recommended by the curator. Most Fridays up to 8 volunteer TOS members ... Donna, Greg, Noel, Sally, Glenn, Vic, Elaine and Ian spend a few hours, looking after the RTBG orchids in terms of repotting, watering, fertilizing etc., Such a wonderful activity by these members.



Editor Peter thought that members would like to know how our donations are given to good us, especially when we see them in the conservatory of the gardens.

There are three major areas in the gardens (all unique) that have orchids.

- a. **Growing area containing, catalpas, oncidiums, miltonias, epidendrums, laelias, paphs, stanhoepa and sarcs. etc.**



b. An open shade cloth area containing mainly cymbidiums and specie eg tracyanums, along with some sarcs. and others.



c. The major conservatory containing mainly orchids that are flowering and/spikes.

Some interesting observable features observed by the editor.

- There are about 400+ robust cymbidiums. Many not labelled because many are random donations. There is a need to name, label and photograph the collection especially when flowering.
- For catalyas/ocnidiums they like to use “squat” (called crout !!) sized black pots, because they are short rooted not like deep pots for the cymbidiums.



- Potting media is bark from Horticultural Supplies- Brighton with some added fernmania (recommended I. Woodgate). Orchids appear to be growing well.
- Watering is mainly by hand watering, except for the cymbidiums (automatic – twice a day for 5 mins). Watering is at a minimum of twice weekly generally ... three times a week in summer .. in order to increase the humidity which is about 60% - 70% . Light level unknown.
- Pests – aphids (yellow), scale, mealy bugs (treated with metho) and use white oil. They mainly use bio-controls. All orchids have virus checks – very good results and very little “iffy” types.
- Fertilizer – liquid feed with STRIKEBACK – an arrangement with Neutrog – pelletized + Peter’s Professional ... add phosphorus for flowering.
- RTBG like to deal with straight specimens rather than hybrids.
- “mainlanders” “love” our cymbidiums because of our cold climate so the old collections are looked after.

Our Tasmanian Orchid Day at Ross Sunday May 5th 2019.

An overview by editor Peter S Manchester

Nearly 60 orchid enthusiasts from all parts of the state but mainly members from the 4 state orchid societies attended this annual event at the hall at Ross from 9.00am to about 3.00 pm. Initially attendees were given the opportunity to buy orchids and orchid accessories from Brian Heath of Rosella Orchids, Jo Pinner from Pipers Brook and accessories from Bev Woodward. A competition conducted by Jim Smith was placed on the stage and various orchids and plants were ready for the raffles later in the day. Socialisation with like orchid interests were a major part of the Getogether.

Particular mention must be made of the food for the enthusiasts this year. Organised by Vicki Cleaver and her many TOS members with main meal catering by the Ross Hotel nearby. It was certainly felt that the plentiful food was excellent and well presented. Thank you for all concerned.

*The main purpose of this mini conference was to hear the “imported” speaker **Brian Heath of Rosella Orchids** from Grafton in New South Wales, who talked to the enthusiasts on the business and the growing of **Mini Cattleyas**.*

Brian presented two talks by way of excellent power points.

- 1. Business development of Rosella Orchids*
- 2. Brian Heath “my favourite orchids”*

Lecture 1. Business development of Rosella Orchids



*South Grafton
N.S.W*

They have just over 3000 sqm. of covered growing area.

Statement ... “We continually strive to devote more time to our growing standards and nursery hygiene, we also select only the most vigorous and healthiest plants available to use in our breeding program.” Brian Heath and 3 other part time workers work in the nursery. All working toward supplying customers with what they believe are the best quality plants available. Rosella Orchids are specialist in mail order, and attend various Orchid Shows throughout the year.

Brian spends 3 days preparing for ebay uploads. From ebay they sell 100 boxes per week which is about 600 plants or about ¼ million a year. The growing area has between 350 000 to 400 000 plants.

There are about 3 different groups of buyers ..

- *The serious grower for exhibitions*
- *Addicted growers which are the biggest market*
- *One- off buyers who live in units with balcony’s in Sydney*

If one misses out on ebay Brian informs that they have reserves. It is a commercial nursery and does not show but sells to others. People buy as trays and then wholesale them to markets.

They also buy collections of orchids.

Rosella Orchids do grow and prepare exhibition orchids for showing once a year. With the demand they **concentrate on mini-cattleyas**. (note that Diamond Orchids grown by Peter Lyne, grow thumb size orchids for exhibition). But unfortunately they very rarely win.

What are the characteristics of growing mini-cattleyas?

- **No larger than 15 cms tall**
- **Have the same characteristics as other cattleyas**
- **Generally smaller flowers**
- **Have been around as hybrids for 100 yrs. (see website Hughes Cattleyas 2017)**

Why should you grow mini-catts?

- **They are easy to grow in most areas**
- **They flower two or more times per year**
- **Most flower in 100mmpots or smaller**
- **They flower more quickly from a flask than do larger catts**
- **A flower can be developed in a 120mm pot or smaller**
- **One can see the results very quickly in about 3-4 years**

- They come in a range of colours
- Some are perfumed and some growers are working on this trait
- Many hybrids now have a good shape
- Much easier to transport
- They are flowered in 55mm tubes
- Catts usually last up to 12 weeks .. which is a good selling point

Some current parents used in producing mini-catts.

Rth Free Spirit 'Lea' ; Slc. Rosella spice 'Sunshine' ;Angel Flare 'Cynthia' ; Lana Coryell'Deborah' AM/AOC ; Lana Coryell 'Alex L' AM/AOC ;Rth. Mem Warren Eggins; Sic Rosella Fire 'Rosella' ; Dal's 'Good one' Janelle AM/AOC; Rolf Coconut Lee; Sc. Beautifort"Lea' ; Momilani Janet '001'; Pot. Dal's Emperor 'Allen" ; Po Dal's Ambition 'Tara' ; Dals' ' Good One'Cynthia;

Some of the results – AEP – Rlc (Dal's charm x Love Sand)

Precious Jewel 'Tik'

Rlc. Burickin Delight "Dreamtime" X C. Lana Coryell

One of the most popular is Precious Opal X C. Dal's Good One 'Janelle' in 100mmpots.

They usually keep up to 500 pots for flowering. Many are graded as NQR ?? (not quite ready).. or EOL (end of the line) and will sell on e Bay.

Buying seedlings is like a lotto Most are mini catt. clones

Most are grown in Spag. Moss = fine Blood and bone ... then later in perlite + quoa p – dolomite.

***** in the last 2 years cattleyas are grown in 60& bark ; 40% super perlite ; The humidity is very high ; fogger @35 degrees.*

Water is very important .. use 135, 000 litres /day in summer

They have healthy thick roots with growth on the ends.

Plants that are clones ... Rth. Rosella Tokyo'hot lips' in 120 mm pots

Rth. Chungfong smile'cluster"

Rth. Petit 'lucky' *****

Rosella Orchids sell community pots.

They are not concerned with roots hanging out of pots. Especially in cold climates.

Secateurs... VIP

They have 300 sets of secateurs in a “killing virus” liquid. (sodium orthophosphate or napsan or domeston.

All secateurs are used once to cut then placed in a container as above ... rotation occurs.

They compute 1280 @ \$ 2.30 /plant into sphagnum most with some perlite and use 1400 – 1500 flasks/year.

They do not sell if they don't flower are a few comments made by Brian Heath in lecture 1.



Cattleya Orchid. *Rlc* Dal's Horizon x *Sc* Dal's Choice 'Rosella'



Select Cattleya Orchid. div. *Rlc* Rosella Tokyo



Cattleya Orchid. *Rth* Rosella's Sound



Cattleya Orchid. *Rth* Momilani Jewel '001' x *Rth* Rosella's Shining



Cattleya Orchid. *Rlc* Glenn Maidment x *C.* Rosella's Royal Flare

Brian Heath lecture 2. ... “my favourite orchids”

This lecture was by Brian at his orchid society (Coffs Harbour). Most members are invited to give a 2-minute talk on their favourite orchid... interesting thought for T.O.S. meetings?

His favourite orchid is the mini- cattlyas which are spotted.....(for obvious reasons!).

- 1) *Most are small growing*
- 2) *Usually have a large range of colours.*
- 3) *Grow in similar conditions to large cattleyas*
- 4) *Easy to grow*
- 5) *Flower @ this time of the year*
- 6) *All flowers are a bit different to others.*

He has some other favourites as well ?

a. *Indian Dendrobiums*



b. *Bulbophyllums*

c. *Miniature cymbidiums*

d. *Coelgenes*

e. *Oncidium twinkle*



f. *Tolumnias*



He also has a lot of vandas

Generally he grows most of his orchids in bark with a little perlite.

The fertilizer used is Osmocote with a “pinch” of blood and bone.

He does not use fans in his orchid house.

*Some snaps
the 2019 Ross*



*from
Orchid*



*the “action” at
Day.*



Selling at the Jo Pinner stall.



“Frantic” selling at the Brian Heath stall



Brian Heath lecturing.



The three “amigos” conducting the Auction



The orchid enthusiasts at the show.



Competition orchids on stage.



*It is not the editorial policy to conduct a “name the sexiest orchid grower in the Society” from a photograph **but** the person who can guess correctly who this person is in the photograph contemplating whether the masdevallia has a virus or not, will win a night in a tent at Saltwater River .*

No correspondence or abuse will be entered in to.

Someone Else !!!! By Anonymous. *I know all of you were saddened to learn recently of the death of one of our most valuable members – SOME ELSE. Someone’s passing created a vacancy that will be difficult to fill. Else has been with us for many years and for every one of those years Someone did far more than the normal persons share of work. Whenever leadership was mentioned, this wonderful person was looked to for inspiration as well as results. Someone Else can work with that group. Whenever there was a job to do an event to direct or a meeting to attend, one name was on everybody’s lips, “let Someone Else do it”. It was common knowledge that Someone Else was among the great doers in the organisation. Whenever there was a job to be done, everyone just assumed that Someone Else would do the job. Someone Else was a wonderful person, sometimes appearing superhuman, but a person can only do so much. Were the truth known, everyone expected too much of Someone Else. Someone Else left a wonderful example to follow, but who is going to follow it? Who is going to do the things Someone Else did? **Remember we cannot depend on Someone Else anymore.***

We all like RESTING !..... Orchids do also.

*Most of us growers deal with the growth of our orchids.... But of almost equal importance to the successful flowering of a well grown plant is that part of culture known as **“RESTING”**.*

*The question of when and how to rest an orchid causes much confusion among amateur growers , and even more experienced growers cannot offer precise guidelines on the subject. **In most cases, resting a plant is merely cooperating with the orchids’s natural desire to slow down its rate of growth during the winter months.** This is usually less critical with hybrid orchids than with species which, in their natural environment, would adapt their growth pattern in order to survive a seasonal period of drought.*



In extreme cases, all foliage is shed in order to reduce the plant’s moisture requirement, and severe shrivelling of the pseudo-bulbs is occasionally evident.

Requirements of Deciduous Orchids.

With orchids that naturally become completely deciduous during winter and early spring – most pleonies, calanthes, nobile-type dendrodiums and catasetums, for example the supply of water should be gradually reduced as the foliage begins to turn yellow during early autumn.

Simultaneously, the amount of light and air given to the plant should be increased. This can be achieved by reducing the shading or by means the orchid to a brighter position in the greenhouse. Where possible, it would be advantageous to reduce the temperature slightly.



Another indication that the orchid is approaching a natural period of rest is a reduction or even a complete stop in root activity. When this occurs the velamen (the greenish-white outer layer of absorbent cells) grows partially or completely over the normally bright green root tips. This is the plant’s way of saying that winter is approaching, and the velamen covers the very tender root tip as a form of protection from both the elements and physical damage.

With negligible root activity and partial or complete loss of leaves, the moisture requirement of the plant is very small. Unless severe shrivelling of the pseudo bulbs is noticed, all watering should be withheld until new growth is apparent with the onset of brighter, warmer conditions the following spring. An occasional overhead spray will prevent excessive desiccation of the plant during its resting period, but this light spray should be applied infrequently, for example, during the occasional spells of brighter winter weather.



Requirements of Evergreen Orchids

Not only deciduous orchids require a rest; evergreen types also undergo a period of reduced activity, usually coinciding with the duller days of winter. Within an orchid that discards its foliage – providing this is for natural reasons – and thus loses water, the moisture requirement is obvious minimal. However, with orchids that retain their foliage for several seasons, the grower must be



more critically observant ; taking careful note of the root tip activity . The foliage also offers subtle guidelines; if leaves become lank, or in extreme cases slightly desiccated, the plant has been left too long without water. But just before this stage, the leaves of many genera take on a bluish tint, an indication that water should be applied before dehydration of the tissue causes permanent damage.

Duration of the rest

The duration of rest may vary from a few weeks to several months, but the plant will indicate when normal culture should be resumed by recommencing growth. In sympodial orchids, a new shoot will start to grow from the base of the current pseudobulb and this resurgence of activity will frequently coincide with the development of the overwintered flower buds that have remained wholly or partially dormant during the resting period.

*Spring flowering **cattleyas** that produced a flower sheath the previous Autumn will send up their flower buds within the sheath; in **dendrodiums**, the nodes of thye pseudobulbs will start to swell and produce flower buds. When this occurs some moisture will be required, but do not try to hurry the orchid into growth by applying too much water before the new shoot is growing vigorously.*

A final “tip” for overcoming a problem ? from the editor.

The support or staking of my orchids especially the small, newly planted and your orchids

(like our competition plants), has often been a problem for the editor. What should I use? bamboo? skewers? twigs, plastic spoons... etc. Up until recently the green thin bamboo ones were ok ... but they became very “whippy” (bending) especially if wet. After a period in the medium they broke easily... in fact the porous nature of the bamboo does house bacteria and even “virus”.



As a frequenter of the “op and recycling shops” I purchase non plastic knitting needles with the marked size knobs on !!!... 50 cents for a pair... They are brilliant, tough, can be wiped clean and do not bend.

I am now just about ready to compete with Christine Doyle!