

NEWSLETTER

June 2007

NEXT MEETING Sun 8th July 2007 at 1.30 pm.

Bring a friend!

SPEAKER: We are pleased to introduce **Russell Hutton** from **L & R Orchids** (Tuakau) who will speak about some of the species orchids he grows. Russell is very well known in orchid circles worldwide. A regular participant at the International Tokyo Dome Show, Russell is an expert and leading grower of rare and unusual species orchids from all over the world.

LAST MEETING: What a great adventure **John Scott** took us on into the wilds of the Northeast Australian outback. Illustrated with an amazing selection of enlarged graphic photos John showed us the topography, the type of rainforest and the orchids to be found in it. John's experiences were 'once in a lifetime' ones mostly educational, some amusing and a few difficult. But the audience I'm sure, went away better informed about a region very few have entered or should I say endured, and no doubt a lot wiser.

Thanks John for a great experience and an orchid adventure we are seldom invited to participate in.

RAFFLE: Another fantastic raffle with excellent orchids donated from many members plus a beautiful *Cattleya* purchased from Barbara Johnson in Whangarei. Without a doubt we have one of the best raffles of any orchid club and many members benefit from these plants, which can be added to your collections.

COMPETITION PLANTS: I will repeat what was told to you at the meeting so there are no excuses if the plants you purchased do not respond to the treatment you give them.

Tolumnias (Tol. on the label) are warm growers and will do well with the Phallies inside the house. They belong to the *Oncidiae* family and are sometimes referred to as equitant *Oncidium*s.

Over **winter**, as they are still only seedlings, look after them and keep moist (not wet) and warm. You can leave them in the containers you received them in but they do very well on a slab or tree branch.

If mounting on cork or similar, place a small piece of sphagnum on the mount first and then tie on the plant with a piece of stocking or something soft. (I use fine wire but cushion the roots with sphagnum). They may flower in the next 2 - 3 years if grown well.

Expect to get red to yellows with combinations in between. Many have splashed petals.

As you saw from the example they have a good-sized flower for such a small plant.

Mist spray at least weekly but increase frequency over warmer months.

These plants are more of a challenge than you might have had so we will be interested to see who can get some results. We will be asking you to bring these back to a meeting in approx 6 months to see who has got the best growth.

TEA ROSTER for Next Meeting: Norma Clarke, Pam Forde, Josc. Jamieson. Please phone Lea if unable to attend meeting. (575 5046)

CULTURE

Some more on TOLUMNIAS.

They come from the Carribean islands, so are warm growers. They like high humidity, good light and generally grow on small branches where they can dry off very quickly. This is very important.

On some islands certain species only get water from dew at nights while others get rain every day and dew every night. The most important thing with these is not to let them stay wet so **DO NOT** pot into a mix, which retains water. Misting is the best approach to watering.

President/Editor: Glenn Poffley Ph. 534 8689
Treasurer: Jackie Wee 250 4218

Secretary: Janet Wehman Ph. 537 1251
Vice Pres. Anton Wehman Ph. 537 1251

As they do not have a pseudobulb prolonged dry periods will be fatal.

As they are epiphytes good airflow is essential.

Do not cut flower spikes as these can branch; new flowers will form giving a long period of flowers.

They are very susceptible to scale insect, which can be a big problem to these small plants.

If you are successful these are very rewarding plants coming in a huge range of bright colours.

Yet again another of my hints has been totally contradicted by a 'letter to the editor' in the latest AOS magazine. In a reply to a question about nobile type Dendrobiums the AOS expert noted, that in his experience a drying off period made no difference to the way they flowered.

Despite my best efforts the Cymbidiums are not as good as I had hoped so will be changing to a different fertiliser next year in an effort to boost spring growth. I get many queries about these and must admit that mine flowered a lot better when we lived in Papatoetoe where it is a little cooler than Howick. I also had little bulb rot (in Pap) and wonder if possibly the higher humidity in the east could be the reason for this.

The cooler genera will be enjoying current conditions with clear warm days and cooler nights.

If you grow Vandas or tropical Dendrobiums they will need to be moved indoors now.

Milioniopsis also need to be kept warmer but humidity is required for all of these.

Just when I thought all the bugs and diseases were under control I've had 2 spikes chewed by caterpillars! Other members I've spoken to recently have experienced similar problems. (Maybe the aerial dose of poison Auckland received a few years ago has worn off)

If you give your seedlings 16 hours of light daily you will get better growth. This can be achieved with any fluorescent source from sunset to about 11pm.

PLANTS ON DISPLAY (June meeting)

OPEN

Grahame Leafberg: *Den.* Avril's Gold 'Tommy' HCC/NZOS, *C.* Mrs J.W Whitely, *Sl.* Dal's Buddy, *Zygo.* (Seagulls Landing x Athur Elle) x Brookside.

Glenn/Manee: *Coel. fimbriata*, *L. anceps*, *C.* Mem. Neil Ryan, *Den.* Hilda Poxon, *Max. grandiflora*.

Wolf Grausch: *Slc.* Medley, *Slc.* Mem. Frank Gronwell.

Michelle Tung: *Den. subclausum*.

Dieu Tran: UNKNOWNNS: Phalaenopsis, Dendrobium.

Burt & Evelyn Ong: *Paph. insigne*.

Julie Duff: *L. anceps* var. *alba**, *Zygo* Iron Baron, *Zygo mackayi*.

House of Orchids: *Den.* Sarah Jean 'Manly', *Dendrochilum uncatum*.

Anton/Janet Wehman: *L. anceps* var. *Sanderiana**, *Epi. ciliare*, *Bealleara* ?

William & Man Lo: *Plchs.* Harlequin x *Sarc.* Fitzhart (Court Jester x Spot On), *Paph. insigne* var. *sanderiae*, *Paph. primulinum* var. *purpurescens*, *L. perrinii**, *Zygo.* John Banks 'Bayswater' x River Murray, *Onc. ornithorhyncum*, *Paph. gratixianum*. (Labels well done William)

Ron Reeves: *Paph. insigne* var. *sanderiana*, *Odm. crocidipterum*, *Calanthe vestita*, *L. gouldiana*.

Peggy Bell-Booth: *Phal.* Marchenfee 'Peter Snow' x Rififi 'Rapiti', *Phal. aphrodite* Sub sp. *formosa*.

Alf Day (Display Only): *Paph.* Meadow Mist, *Odcdm.* Don Richardson x *Odm.* Alphazee, *Onc. tigrinum* x *Oda.* Joe's Drum.

NOVICE

John Muddiman: *Pts.* Nodding Grace, *Max. picta*.

Christina Chi: 2 x *Phal.* Unknown, *Cym.* Oriental Legend 'Cinnamon'.

John Sheppard: *Masd. veitchiana* 'P & G' x self, *Masd.* Tuakau Goldstrike, *Den.* Berry x Red River.

Verna Latif: *Cattleya* unknown.

OPEN: 1st **Burt/Evelyn Ong** (*Paph.*), 2nd **Jule Duff** (*Zygo*), 3rd = **Julie** (*Zygo*), **Grahame** (*Sl.*).

NOVICE: 1st = **John Sheppard** (*Masd.*), **Maurice/Audrey Roffey** (*Phal.*), 2nd = **J. Sheppard** (*Masd.*),

Christina Chi (*Phal.*), and somehow **Alf** got a whole lot of votes in the Novice Section!

*Name change or spelling error, please change label.

An in depth commentary was given by Alf aided by Glenn.

EDITOR'S COMMENT

As John's talk was a lot different to what we usually hear it's worth remembering some of the more interesting things he told us.

Daintree is in the far north of Queensland. To get there you must first fly to Cairns (usually via Brisbane) which is about 5 1/2 hours from NZ. From Cairns it is another long overland trip to Port Douglas and further north towards Cape Tribulation. The roads (or tracks) are now only 4WD in this area and the thick rainforest comes right down to the coast. Walking in the rainforest can be very difficult with many swamps, large rocks, creeks which may be impassable at bluffs and of course the many and varied flora and fauna.

There's 'Wait a While' the sharply hooked vine (similar to but nastier than NZ bush lawyer), which can trap you, inflicting nasty wounds to exposed flesh. The large Cassowary bird can be particularly dangerous if approached. There are few snakes but many crocodiles making any water including the sea very unsafe places for the unwary. As John mentioned, a falling leaf creating ripples in a pond revised his memories of the scriptures as he tried to emulate the 'walking on water' feat in his escape to a nearby tree.

Leaches had to be continually removed using salt to loosen their grip, invariably in those hard to get at places such as between the toes.

To add to the physical and mental effort of making headway through this unfamiliar terrain he had to contend with the constant sweating and thirst caused by the incessant 40 degree heat.

If these trials weren't enough the local settlements could be even more so as they are populated by a mixed bag of wierdos, aborigines, alcoholics and drunks (or a combination of any of these) all in the process of slowly 'going troppo' as the locals so aptly put it.

John's first encounter with an orchid in the wild was on a trip down the coast near Noah creek when he came across a very large Keiki off an orchid floating in the sea. With pulse increasing at a rapid rate he followed a trail of these along the sand and up towards the forest until there in a bush clearing just behind the beach was a big clump of flowering Dendrobiums covering the entire area.

What a sight that must have been!

As John searched fruitlessly for some large container in which to stash this loot we all reminisced about those pirates hiding away their treasures on remote tropical islands and thought of John's predicament as to how he could get it back to civilization.

Alas, it was not to be so John's answer was to buy a property in the area, build a house and start his very own wild orchid collection in and around the beautiful creek that flowed through the bush nearby.

Maybe it is the way of the wilds that man can only have so much influence on the land, then nature fights back. When the first big monsoon rains came the creek transformed from a gentle meandering flow into a raging torrent sweeping all of his painstaking efforts at orchid relocation and preservation before it.

Finally we were introduced to the local inhabitants, such as *Denrobium smiliae*, *Den. discolor*, *Cym. canaliculatum* and a *Bulbophyllum* all in vivid colour growing in profusion amongst the lush vegetation.

Thanks again John for such a great adventure and we are thankful to learn you escaped back to civilization before you too succumbed to that dreadful tropical disease which inflicted the rest of the population.

COMING EVENTS

Auckland Orchid Club David Banks - Monday 2nd July, 7.30pm 68 Lincoln Rd Bible Chapel, Henderson.

Seminar at NZOS (Mt Albert War Mem. Hall) September, Roy Tokunaga from H & R Orchids Hawaii.

NZOS Winter Show: Benching 19 July, Open 20 – 22 July, Mt Albert War Memorial Hall Gt. Nth Rd. Mt Albert. (HOS to mount display)

South Auckland O.S. Annual Show: Benching 17 Aug. 2 – 7pm. Open 18 Aug. 9am – 4pm.

Senior Citizens Hall, East St. Papakura.

Website: <http://hos.inetgardens.com>