



Sarcophilus australis

# MARIBYRNONG ORCHID SOCIETY

(The FRIENDLY Society)

MAY 2008 BULLETIN

[www.mosorchid.org](http://www.mosorchid.org)

Affiliated with the Australian Orchid Council  
Incorporated in Victoria Reg No 1193Z

**Disclaimer:** The Maribyrnong Orchid Society Committee will not take any responsibility for actions taken on advice or views expressed in: this or any future Monthly Bulletin, or by Guest Speakers. It is always advisable to get a second opinion.

**BULLETIN CONTRIBUTION DEADLINE – 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month**

## Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Maribyrnong Orchid Society will be held at the Maribyrnong Community Centre, Randall Street, Maribyrnong on Tuesday the 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2008.

The Early 'new growers' group starts at 7.15pm and is conducted by the informative Steve Stebbing. This group runs for approximately 30 minutes prior to the start of the monthly meeting. We also have 'Pots and Ferts' and plant sales tables operating at every meeting. Members may bring 10 orchids to be sold on the sales table each month. The Society deducts 15% commission on the sale of all plants. Please note that all plants must be labeled correctly and state whether they are hot/cold growing and expected floral colour, if not in flower. Plants are also to be listed on a sales form, available from members on the Sales table, to be filled out by the selling member.

## Guest Speaker this month

Our guest speakers this month will be Merle & Bernie Arrah, who will be talking about Paphiopedilum Culture.

We thank Mr. Andrew Francis of Castle Creek Orchids for his presentation on potting orchids. It was very informative and members were surprised by his orchid expertise which he shared.

## Supper Roster

For the May meeting we kindly have Hubert Nyssen and Alex Wild on Supper Duties. All members are welcome to bring a plate of goodies to be enjoyed after the Evening's Speaker has finished their presentation.

## New Member

The club wishes to welcome Barry Harrison and Tony Troja. We look forward to seeing you both at the next meeting, when you will be presented with your name tag and complimentary orchid.

## APRIL 2008 COMPETITION RESULTS

As per judges sheets

### OPEN SECTION

#### **Cymbidium – Small**

1<sup>st</sup> Valentine's Love "Leanne" M Pearce

#### **Dendrobium - Australian Native Hybrid**

1<sup>st</sup> Duno Super locks x Jazz J & D Sharam

2<sup>nd</sup> fuliginosa x nugentii A Wild

#### **Dendrobium - Australian Native Species**

1<sup>st</sup> bibbicum compactum 'Mauve showers'

J & D Sharam

2<sup>nd</sup> Den schneiderae

A Wild

#### **Sarcochilus Species/Hybrid**

1<sup>st</sup> Velvet "Chocolate" G Downie

2<sup>nd</sup> Elise x Velvet G Downie

#### **Paphiopedilum - Exhibition**

1<sup>st</sup> Redstart x Holdenii J W Crawford

#### **Paphiopedilum - Species**

1<sup>st</sup> sukhalculii 'virginia' J W Crawford

#### **Cattleya - Novelty**

1<sup>st</sup> Caudebec x Batemaniana J & M Lattimore

2<sup>nd</sup> Lc Tokyo Magic x Blc Cherry chip  
J & M Lattimore

#### **Odontoglossum - Hybrid**

1<sup>st</sup> Odm Bic Ros A Evans

#### **Masdevallia Hybrid**

1<sup>st</sup> wellischii x decumana x Red Baron  
M Pearce

2<sup>nd</sup> Machu Pichu 'Jay Vee' M Pearce

#### **Any Other Hybrid**

1<sup>st</sup> Phrag Noirmont J W Crawford

2<sup>nd</sup> Phrag Sorcerer's Apprentice M Pearce

#### **Species any Genera**

1<sup>st</sup> Dendrochillum magnum 'Golden Rod'  
M Pearce

2<sup>nd</sup> Dendrochillum uncatum G Campbell

#### **Best in Section**

**Dendrochillum magnum 'Golden Rod'**  
**M Pearce**

### INTERMEDIATE SECTION

#### **Dendrobium - Australian Native Hybrid**

1<sup>st</sup> Colonial Surprise x Autumn J & N Marshall

2<sup>nd</sup> Colonial Surprise x Star of Gold  
J & N Marshall

#### **Cattleya Novelty Type**

1<sup>st</sup> Slc Firelighter J & N Marshall

2<sup>nd</sup> Slc Jillian Lee x Mem Jerome Schultz  
E Walker

#### **Oncidium Hybrid**

2<sup>nd</sup> Onc Unknown A Scerri

#### **Best in Section**

**Slc Firelighter** J & N Marshall

### ADVANCED NOVICE SECTION

#### **Cymbidium - Large**

2<sup>nd</sup> Sommer Pearl x Michael Herbert G Bourtzis

#### **Cymbidium - Medium**

1<sup>st</sup> Kusuda Shining G Bourtzis

2<sup>nd</sup> Sue Almeer 'Esmeralda' R Ryan

#### **Cattleya - Novelty**

1<sup>st</sup> Slc Wendy's Love x Lc Firebright  
A & G Hardingham

#### **Any other Hybrid**

1<sup>st</sup> Wilsonara Hilda Plumtree 'Purple wings'  
A & G Hardingham

2<sup>nd</sup> Burr Nelly Isler G Bourtzis

#### **Best in Section**

**Slc Wendy's Love x Lc Firebright**  
**A & G Hardingham**

### NOVICE SECTION

No Entry

### NON SECTIONAL

#### **Seedling Flowering for 1<sup>st</sup> time**

Den Tosca J W Crawford

#### **Best Cultivated**

Phal heiroglyphica J & M Lattimore

#### **Popular Vote**

Den schneiderae A Wild

#### **Judges Vote**

**Dendrochillum magnum 'Golden Rod'**  
M Pearce

### **18th AOC Conference**

We are most grateful to announce that the following orchid businesses have paid for advertising in our Conference schedule booklet:

Australian Orchid Nursery, Cedarvale Orchids, Orchid Species plus, Maxicrop, Western Orchid Laboratories, Tinonee Orchids, Orchidaceous Books, Dark Star Orchids, Sims Orchids and Laboratory Services, David Keanelly Orchids, Easy Orchids, Dendi Orchids, Mt Beenak Orchids, Woolf Orchid Culture, Aranbeen Orchids, Casetech Horticulture, Orchids on Newbold, and Van Schaik's.BioGro,

Their financial assistance has been truly appreciated and we hope that our members support their businesses in return, as "one good turns, deserves another".

## 2008 COMMITTEE

As a result of the A.G.M. held last month the following members have been nominated onto the Committee.

President: Mr Anthony Scerri  
Vice Presidents: Mrs Elizabeth Walker  
Mr Mick Condon  
Secretary: Mr Eric Wilde  
Treasurer: Mr Neil Marshall  
Other committee members are:  
Judith Marshall  
Frances Wilde  
George Downie  
Steve Panagiotou  
Peter Carlesso  
Wilma Carlesso  
Peter Caly  
Jeff Walker  
Hubert Nyssen  
Heather Young  
Anna Medic  
Ron Ryan

We are pleased to advise that there were no members that retired from the Committee this year. In Addition we gained the services of two new members: Anna Medic and Ron Ryan. Thank you for joining our committee.

Peter Kiernan will continue to act as our Show Co-ordinator, Lee Halil will remain as Editor and Doris Portelli will continue as Publicity Officer.

Thank you also to those members who are not on the Society Committee but kindly help our club on meeting nights and during the Orchid Shows. Thank you also to members who bring supper along each month.

### Social Function

The next bus trip will be on the 15<sup>th</sup> June. The bus will be traveling to Castle Creek Orchids in Shepparton. The cost of this trip will be \$25. It will leave our Club rooms at 8 a.m. and returning at 5.00 p.m. Those interested in attending may book a seat at the next meeting. There are still some vacant seats, so be quick if you would like to attend.

### Growing Competition

For those members who purchased a cymbidium as part of the Growing Competition, we would like to advise that the cymbidiums are going to be white, upright and mini.

## ORCHID SHOW CALENDAR

### Maribyrnong 2008 Orchid Shows

Autumn Show: 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> May  
Winter Show: 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> July  
Spring Show: 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> September  
Sarcophilus Festival: 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> November

All Maribyrnong Orchid shows are conducted at our club rooms, which are located at Maribyrnong Community Centre in Randall Street.

### Other 2008 Orchid Club Show Dates:-

1. Victorian International Orchid Fair  
16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> May  
St Sava Hall, Greensborough
2. Orchid Spectacular 15<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> August  
Collectors Corner, Springvale

### Orchid Auction

The Victorian Regional Judging Panel are holding an Orchid Auction.

Date: Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> May  
Venue: Red Cross Centre  
Gate 8  
Repatriation Hospital  
Waterdale Road Heidelberg  
Viewing: From 9 a.m.  
Auction starts 10 a.m.

Approximately 350 lots will be auctioned.  
BYO Lunch 12.30 p.m. to 1.15 p.m.  
Tea and Coffee will be provided  
Free Parking

For those wishing to view the catalogue of orchids available for auction, may download the catalogue from their website:

<http://www.geocities.com/vicaoci/>

For further information you may contact John or Dianne Sharam on (03) 9478-9764



### Get Well

Our orchid Society would like to wish a very special Get Well to three of our members who are currently not feeling very well.

We wish Michael Breuer, Rene Queck and Chris Hack a speedy recovery and look forward to seeing you all back at our monthly meetings.

## **MARIBYRNONG AUTUMN SHOW - May 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>**

I am very happy to remind all the members that our first Show is happening this month.

Sales tickets, entry forms and tickets, etc. for the Autumn show can be picked up at the May meeting, or anyone not able to go to that meeting can phone 5283-1364 and they will be posted out to you.

New members please note, you may exhibit as many orchids as you want in the show. But in order to be eligible for an award the orchid must have been grown and owned by you for a minimum of 6 months. Orchids that have been owned by you for a lesser time may be exhibited in the Non-competitive section.

In the Autumn and Winter show, members may also exhibit other plants, cacti, bromeliad, fern, etc. They too must have been grown and owned by you for a minimum of 6 months. Awards for plants other than orchids come under a single section, meaning it is not divided up into Open, Intermediate and Novice.

If you wish to sell plants at our shows you must exhibit on the show-bench, the usual allowance is 10 plants to one exhibit.

If any members would like to offer their help during the show it will be greatly appreciated. Please let Peter Kiernan know and he will allocate you a designated duty. Those members who help all day are given a lunch voucher, in appreciation.

## **MAXILLARIAS: PLEASE DON'T DISTURB by Brian Milligan**

The genus *Maxillaria* comprises at least 700 species that are distributed throughout the Americas between Florida and northern Argentina. Most species carry only one leaf per pseudo-bulb, although some carry up to four. Each stem carries a single flower but some species compensate for this by producing several flowering stems from each pseudo-bulb. Most species require a heated glasshouse but a few may be successfully grown in a shade-house fitted with a solid roof.

By far the most common of the cool-growing species is *Maxillaria porphyrostele*, which produces its yellow flowers on rather short stems in October (if grown without

heat). The column of the flower is purple (*porphyrostele* means purple column). In common with many other maxillarias, this species resents being divided. Its divisions may take a year or more to settle down before they flower again.

Another species that grows and flowers well for me without heat is *M. cucullata*, which has orange/yellow flowers in spring. According to the books, *M. densa* should do the same but it has refused to flower ever since I moved it out of my glasshouse five years ago. *M. tenuifolia* also grows well for me outdoors but no longer flowers as prolifically as it did when grown with heat. It produces its brick-red flowers, smelling of desiccated coconut, in December when grown in the glasshouse. Regrettably, there is no longer room for it there.

Another fairly common maxillaria species is the miniature *Maxillaria sophronitis*, which grows well for me under either cool or intermediate conditions. The species epithet indicates that the flowers have the same colour as those of *Sophronitis coccinea*, that is, bright red. Unfortunately, *M. sophronitis* produces its flowers reluctantly. My plant in the shade house produced five flowers in September, while that in the glasshouse provided only two! Occasionally one sees spectacular specimen plants in flower but that is the exception, not the rule!

Other maxillaria species that grow and flower regularly for me in the glasshouse, and that I recommend, are *M. cogniauxiana*, *M. grandiflora*, *M. juergensii*, *M. luteo-alba*, *M. meleagris*, *M. picta* and *M. variabilis*. The large, white flowers of *M. grandiflora* are especially attractive, while those of *M. juergensii* and *M. cogniauxiana* are small and dark in colour - their small plants and flowers are curious, rather than showy. In all cases, I find that re-potting or division sets back their growth, so I carry out these operations as infrequently as possible.

## **ORCHID ROOTS & REST PERIODS by Brian Milligan**

What's most important to an orchid - its roots or its leaves? Actually, it all depends on the orchid. Some orchids never have leaves. One example is the Australian native terrestrial *Dipodium roseum*, commonly called the hyacinth orchid because its pink flowers resemble those of the hyacinth. It's often found flowering under trees in the mountains in summer. *Dipodium roseum* and many other saprophytic orchids rely on mycorrhizal fungi

growing in association with tree roots to provide them with all the nutrients that they need. Other leafless orchids, such as the epiphytic *Polyrrhiza lindenii* and *Chiloschista lunifera*, are not saprophytic and need to manufacture their own sugars and other components necessary for plant growth. They do so in the same manner as leafed orchids, that is, by photosynthesis from water and carbon dioxide, using the green pigment chlorophyll as catalyst. The only difference is that these leafless orchids carry chlorophyll in their roots, whereas it's present in the leaves of most orchids.

Many orchids have leaves for only part of the year. Common examples in our collections are *Bletilla striata*, *Pleione formosana* and many of our native terrestrial orchids. The first two lose their leaves in autumn, leaving only their tubers to survive the icy winters of their natural habitats. In contrast, greenhoods (*Pterostylis*) and donkey orchids (*Diuris*) lose their leaves in late spring, leaving their tubers underground to survive our hot, dry summers.

Some epiphytic orchids survive stressful times in their native habitats, usually cool dry times, by entering what orchid growers call a rest period. They indicate their intention of entering this phase by gradually extending the protective layer of velamen that normally covers most of the root until the green, actively growing tip is completely encompassed. At this stage the root tips absorb water and nutrients much less efficiently and the plant drastically slows its growth. Flower spikes may continue to grow and buds to open, but the energy for these processes is derived from nutrients already stored in the pseudobulbs. As orchids absorb little water or nutrients, through their roots during the rest period, frequent watering and fertilising at this time is unnecessary and may be harmful.

Common examples of orchids that enter a rest period during winter are *Laela anceps*, *Oncidium varicosum* and its hybrids, epidendrums and cattleyas. But not all orchids have a rest period during winter; these plants continue to grow, albeit at a reduced rate. Cymbidiums are a prime example. They benefit from continued watering and fertilising during winter, although at a much less frequent rate than in summer.

So, how do you tell which orchids need a rest period during winter from those that don't? It's simply a matter of examining the root tips. If they are green and shiny, the orchid is still growing actively. But if the root tips are no longer shiny and are completely sealed with velamen, then the orchid has entered its rest period and it should be watered much less frequently, perhaps once every two or three weeks. Occasional misting of the foliage of these plants, especially in bright weather, will help to keep them from excessive dehydration.

As spring arrives, these 'resting' orchids will show signs of re-awakening by developing fresh root tips. Sometimes the old roots also develop new branches with shiny green tips. These are signs that you should gradually resume normal watering and fertilising. Because of the importance of active root tips in absorbing water and nutrients, it is vital to the well-being of your orchids that these tips should not be damaged. Ensure that your plants are secure in their pots and use snail bait to kill snails, slugs, slaters and earwigs.

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Further articles can be viewed at [www.oscov.asn.au](http://www.oscov.asn.au)

### President Report May 2008

The first bus trip which was held on Sunday 20 April 2008, to Australian Ferns and Orchids and Mt Beenak Orchids, was a great success. I would like to thank all the people that helped through the day it makes my day much easier. Liz will do a full report on the bus trip later.

The bus trip in June is full, but we have another one on the 17 August 2008, so place your name down at the May meeting if you would like to go on this bus trip.

It was good to see some new member come on to committee at the April AGM and I would like to thank the new committee for committing for the next year.

The first show for the year will be our Autumn Show. This show will be on Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 May 2008, which is only one meeting away. As usual we are requiring HELP over the weekend and on Friday night. If you are going to sell orchids at the show, pick up your cards for selling plants from Frances at the May meeting and do not forget that you will require some one to count in your plants.

I look forward to see you all at the May meeting.

Anthony Scerri