



CULTURAL AWARD, October 2013

Microcoelia cornuta

Tony & Mavis

NEWSLETTER

NEXT MEETING - TUESDAY 12 November

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MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING

8 October 2013, 17.55pm

Present: 39

Apologies: Patricia, Ken & Chris, Gordon, Neville

Visitors: P. Atherton, S. Banks

New members: Lyn

Minutes: Published minutes accepted (Mavis, Vic)

Business Arising: Nil

Financial Report: Tabled by Sandra . Current balance of \$,9085.44 (Peter, Adrian)

Correspondence:

Inwards:

- Don – subscription renewal
- GCA – forms for 2013/14
- GCA calendar 2014 + order forms
- Orchid Digest
- Forms for Hall Hire 2014
- Various club newsletters.

Outwards:

- Nil

Business Arising: Nil

General Business:

- Trevor can no longer pick up & return the hall keys. Graham will do so from next month unless someone else volunteers.
- Copies of the two Maxillaria books ordered for the library have arrived. Graham showed a copy of the latest publication of Orchids of Western Australia by Andrew Brown, Kingsley Dixon, Christopher French & Garry Brockman. The Committee has authorised purchase of a copy for the

library.

- Sales plants at General Meetings are restricted to species or natural hybrids. There is no restriction on hybrids at the Silent Auction.
- The last Home Visit was held at Wally's home in Yunderup and although the weather was not the best there was plenty of cover to sit and enjoy the visit. Thank you to Wally and Ann for hosting the visit. The next Home Visit will be on Sunday 27th October at Sharon and Glenn's home. Usual requirements of a plate of food and a chair.
- Mich thanked those members who have helped to put out (and away) the library books while she has been away. She also enquired if all new members had received the CD of plants exhibited at the meetings 2009

A plant auction was then held for 2 plants offered by Peter on a 50/50 basis for himself and the club. Tom again was the auctioneer, thank you to Tom.

Leptotes bicolor fetched \$25 from Vic.

Cattleya amethystoglossa fetched \$21 from Barbara.

Cultural Award: A well grown specimen of *Solenangis (Microcoelia) cornuta* grown by Tony & Mavis. This leafless species from Madagascar has chlorophyll in the roots, and as is evident by its rambling, upwards growth habit, is generally found as a twig epiphyte.

Raffle: Judith, Maxine, Sharon.

Name Badge: Trevor

NOTES FROM YOUR COMMITTEE

- At last month's General Meeting, there was a discussion about plants to be offered for sale, and members were advised that consistent with our focus on species, only species and natural hybrids could be offered for sale on the sales table. Similarly, plants for the monthly display should be species or natural hybrids, however, we do understand that from time-to-time, new members (and more experienced growers) may be uncertain about whether an orchid is a species or not. Please feel free to bring your plant to the meeting and seek advice from one of the more experienced growers who might be able to help identify your plant.
- The December meeting is our Christmas party. The meeting will be on 2 December (the first rather than second Tuesday). For several years, we have given all members (family or individual) a raffle ticket in a plant raffle using plants donated by members as a way of sharing our hobby with others during the festive season. We realise that many of our newer members will not have spare species orchids to donate. A hybrid orchid or any other plant from your garden would be perfectly acceptable..

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Barry (dec'd)
Gordon
Joan (dec'd) & Ted (dec'd)
Neville
Noel & Eva
Barry r

NOTICEBOARD

FORTH-COMING EVENTS

Home visits:

At 10am on the Sunday after the fourth Thursday of each month. Please bring chairs and food to share.

* 1 December - Jeanine & Jim, Eden Hill, WA.

FOR SALE/WANTED

- 3m x 2.5m treated pine frame greenhouse with double plastic cover (inside and out) available. As Ken wants it removed, he is not asking for payment but suggests that you make a donation to the Species Orchid Society. It has been dismantled. Fans, hotbed and controllers also available - make an offer. Contact Ken 9309 3361.

Imported plant news

A further 40 plants and 20 compots were released on 22 October. I have now commenced preparations for the Taiwanese import and will advise all participating members on the plant prices and shipping and quarantine expenses once they are to hand.

As it is planned to import these plants in late November, payment will be required when pro-forma invoices are generated and e-mailed early November.

Ken & Chris Jones

MONTHLY PLANT

Paphiopedilum wardii f. *alba*

Country of origin: Northern Myanmar, and Western China

Description: Moderate sized plant.

Difficulty: .This is one of the easier species to grow and is suitable for shadehouse culture (with winter cover)

Cost: \$5.00

Paphiopedilum wardii is found as a terrestrial growing in leaf litter on the shady forest floor or occasionally in brighter light as a lithophyte on moss rock or cliff faces, at elevations of 1300-1800m. These plants were acquired from Trevor Burnett who deflasked and grew them from a flask purchased at the 19th AOC.

This species was initially introduced by Ward in 1920 and formally identified by Summerhayes. The *alba* form is predominantly green with some striping to the sepals and petals, and has the characteristic patterning on the pouch.

To grow this species well, Trevor recommends keeping them in an open, well drained mix and ensuring good air movement by providing space around the plant. They are more vigorous if kept drier than other species, and benefit from rest period.

You will notice the coarse beach sand on the surface of the pot. Trevor finds that



Source: Beasts & Blossoms Photography,
<http://www.beastsandblossoms.com>

this helps stabilise the seedlings and encourages root growth. Having just started using this technique, I strongly support his view.

By and large, *Paphiopedilum* orchids do better confined in smaller pots, so don't be tempted to repot too soon (these plants should be OK in the current pots/media for at least 18 months) or overpot. Fine-medium pine bark with added coarse perlite and charcoal with crushed limestone would be suitable mix for mature plants, but it is important to constantly check that it has not broken down and become soggy as this will lead to root death.

This genus is normally resistant to pests, but can be subject to fungus pathogens, particularly when overhead watered. Preventative treatment with a broad spectrum fungicide at the change of seasons will assist in keeping this under control, along with good air movement.

Ian

Cattleya intermedia var. *orlata* 'Crown Fox'

Graham & Margaret

Pterostylis aff. *picta*
Sarcochilus falcatus
Serapias neglecta

Chris

Coilostylis falcata
Encyclia seidelii
Phaius tankervilleae
Phalaenopsis schilleriana
Schomburgkia leuddemannii

Maxine

Cattleya amethystoglossa
Dendrobium linguiforme
Polystachya pubescens

Adrian & Dee

Cleisostoma arietinum
Sarcochilus falcatus

Sharon

Bulbophyllum sp. (Taiwan)

Peter & Shirley

Aerangis mooreana
Cattleya amethystoglossa
Cattleya intermedia var. *alba* (2 plants)
Dendrobium linguiforme
Dendrobium moniliforme
Dockrillia mortii
Leptotes bicolor

John

Cattleya intermedia var. *amethystina* 'Aranbeem'
Cattleya intermedia var. *orlata* 'Crown Fox'

PLANTS DISPLAYED OCTOBER 2013



Ascocentrum garayi
Tony & Mavis

Coilostylis falcata
Chris



Norm

Dendrobium falcorostrum
Dendrobium kingianum

Tony & Mavis

Ascocentrum garayi
Chiloschista sp.
Dendrobium venustum
Microcoelia cornuta (formerly known as
Solenangis cornuta)
Phalaenopsis parishii
Phalaenopsis philippinensis

Noel & Eva

Phalaenopsis equestris
Phalaenopsis schilleriana



Cattleya intermedia var. *ortata*
'Crown Fox'
Ian
John

Reflections on yesteryear - the Species Orchid Society of WA turns twenty five in 2013!

Continued from October 2013

Over the past twenty five years the Society has also assisted members to dispose of their orchid collections when the time comes to downsize, or when the active grower passes away. Arranging, promoting, coordinating and staging major collection auctions has meant that the families of these members receive fair value for their plants, at the same time enabling members to acquire many desirable species that might often be difficult to purchase. In this regard, the Society acknowledges its willing and capable auctioneers, most notably Tom Jackson who has always been ready to put his hand up to help, and is very successful in getting buyers to increase their bid a little more. The auctions of Reg's and Barry's collections are two examples of this activity that involved many members which demonstrate the friendly, caring and supportive values of the Society.

When Reg was President in 2002, he investigated and obtained approval to rescue dig terrestrial orchids from development sites, most notably the northern freeway extension. Graham and Margaret have continued this tradition and from time to time, have coordinated rescue digs where approval can be obtained. Participation in these rescue digs has led to much greater appreciation of the unique WA terrestrial orchids, and to many more members actively growing and displaying these plants. Most recently, Graham and Margaret coordinated the rescue of

terrestrial orchids from the Fiona Stanley Hospital site in Murdoch before construction began, and in June 2013, the replanting of rescued orchids in the hospital gardens. Graham and Margaret, and David grew these plants on for some 5 years before they were replanted. While some were inadvertently "weeded" by inexperienced contractors hired by the hospital, it is hoped that the majority will survive and be on view for patients walking in the gardens.

Over the past twenty five years, the Species Orchid Society of WA has firmly stamped its mark on orchid growing in WA and promoted the interest in species. This is evident in the increase in the number of species orchids now displayed in general society shows and offered for sale in WA. While this is broadly consistent with a worldwide trend, the broad membership of the Species Society by people who are often members of other societies has been one of the foundations of our success.

The Species Society has a reputation for being a friendly and welcoming group, where knowledge is freely shared and new members are encouraged and supported as they accept the challenge of cultivating species orchids. As a foundation member, these values are important to me and I firmly believe they are largely responsible for the success that we have enjoyed.

Ken Jones, Editor

PLANTS DISPLAYED OCTOBER 2013



Schomburgkia leuddemannii
Chris

Dockrillia mortii
Peter & Shirley



Photography by Tony

Growing orchids in your garden - tips for beginners

Contd from October 2013

To finalise this article, I will discuss some of the basics of growing terrestrial orchids in a garden. In WA, this can be quite a challenge as we generally want to water our gardens during the hot, dry summer months, even those with local hardy plants that once established, should need little water during summer. It should be remembered that even in their natural habitat, WA terrestrial orchids will receive some moisture from any rain that falls (some years we seem to get more frequent summer rain), so this can be managed by infrequent watering of about the amount that would fall in a heavy shower.

However, if you have the space, it is better to plant your terrestrials in any area that is not regularly watered (we grow them in an area near our gate and along the driveway in amongst *Anigozanthos* (Kangaroo Paws), *Grevilleas*, *Proteas* and other similar plants. These are deep hand watered once a week during the really hot months, and have individual drippers that

come on three times a week - while this watering is not directly onto the terrestrials, they would receive some moisture as we regularly apply soil wetter in the area. I am aware that some other members have WA terrestrial orchids growing in their lawns, and I have plants of *Microtis* that have come up in hanging baskets in my shadehouse.

The other problem affecting terrestrial orchids in the garden is fertiliser and salt build up, although I have found that organic fertilisers such as blood and bone and fish emulsion do not appear to do any damage. In fact I understand that some growers do make use of weak applications of such fertilisers to improve vigour and flower size. An option is to keep your terrestrial orchid in a plastic pot, and to remove the pot once flowering has finished so that they can be stored in a cool dry location. These pots can be placed back in the garden at the onset of winter once the plant has commenced growing.

Leafless Orchids

At the October meeting, Tony and Mavis displayed their very large specimen plant of *Microcoelia cornuta*, a leafless orchid species from Madagascar. While many of us have seen (and purchased) leafless orchids from Thailand, more specifically species of *Chiloschista*, I thought that it would be interesting to look a little further afield and discover more about these fascinating plants.

While relatively uncommon in the orchid world, they are more numerous than one might think. Those most commonly seen in collections are epiphytic, where the roots perform the photosynthesis functions otherwise undertaken by the leaves. However, there are also a number of saprophytic, primarily terrestrial species that have no chlorophyll whatsoever.

For the purposes of this article, I will focus on the epiphytic species where the roots perform the functions normally undertaken by the leaves. In these plants, the stem and leaves have been reduced to little more than scales (although sometimes diminutive leaves can be present). Principally, the plant consists of flattened, cord-like green roots with distinctive 'track marks' that are the pneumatodes that act as stomata enabling the photosynthetic roots to perform the gas exchange required to support photosynthesis. In common with other epiphytic orchids, the velamen coating both protects the inner layer root structures and acquires nutrient and water for the plant. Epiphytic leafless orchids are found throughout the tropical and sub-tropical zones.

While the leafless orchids are not common in collections, they do deserve our attention as although the flowers are generally small and insignificant, the plants make up for it by the number of flowers on each raceme and by flowering more frequently than many other species. Successful cultivation of these plants is conditional upon them being grown on some form of mount as the roots require exposure to sunlight for photosynthesis. I have seen and grown them on small terra cotta pots, wooden slab and tree fern mounts and on plastic mesh. Many of the recently imported plants have been mounted on plastic mesh as they do not have to be removed from the mount before shipping to Australia, however in my experience unless you are able to maintain high humidity and cooler temperatures during summer, the plants

do not do well as they tend to dry out and become desiccated.

While all the genera in the following list are not readily available in Australia, they are those that are more often seen in specialised collections:

- * *Campylocentrum* (not all species are leafless)
- * *Chiloschista*
- * *Dendrophylax* (previously *Polyrhizis*)
- * *Microcoelia*
- * *Microtatorchis*
- * *Taeniophyllum*
- * *Solenangis*
- * *Vanilla* (not all species are leafless)

Campylocentrum

This genus comprises some 90 species and occurs from Florida through Central America, the Caribbean and northern South America. They are seldom seen in hobbyist collections and can be challenging to grow as they require high humidity all year round. *Campylocentrum burchellii* is one of the species and demonstrates the typical growth and flowering habit.



Photo: www.brazilplants.com
Continued next month

ABOUT US

Monthly Meetings

Monthly meetings held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month (exc January) at Wilson Community Hall, Braibrise St, Wilson commencing 7.45 pm. Usually, the short formal meeting is followed by plant descriptions given by members. Supper follows to allow members time to socialise and discuss orchids.

All visitors are very welcome

Membership Fees

Family \$30 PA + 2 badges (1st year only) [Badges come in two versions. Pin fastening (\$11.50) or Magnet fastening (\$13.50) *Please indicate your preference.*]

Single \$20.00 PA + 1 badge (1st year only) [Pin fastening (\$11.50) or Magnet fastening (\$13.50)]

New members who don't live in Perth will not require name badges, therefore membership will be at the renewal fee only

Monthly Home Visit

On the weekend following the fourth Thursday of each month (generally on the Sunday morning), a home visit is held at a member's home. This gives members an opportunity to enjoy the fellowship that our mutual interest provides, and to see how others go about growing their orchids.

Monthly Plant Display

Given that the prime objective of the Society is to promote the cultivation of species orchids, only species or natural hybrids are acceptable for display. Since we all may be uncertain about the identification of a plant from time to time, we encourage members to bring plants along about which they are unsure since someone

may be able to identify them. There is no competition nor restriction on flower count, quality or length of ownership. We want members to be able to see species plants in flower. So even if your flowers are a bit past their best, bring them in as others may not have seen that species in flower.

Plant Sales

The Society provides an opportunity table for members to sell surplus plants and equipment, and for the Society to sell product from time to time. A commission of 10% is charged on all sales.

Plant Purchases

The Society endeavours to obtain a different species seedling for sale at each meeting, usually costing between \$6.00 and \$15.00. The Society makes a small profit on these sales which is invested in benefits to members. As it is always difficult to get new or different species, should members have 20 or more plants of one species which they feel might be suitable as a monthly plant, please contact a Committee member.

Raffle

The Society conducts a raffle each meeting and at home visits as a means of raising funds.

Plant Imports

The Society is able to use quarantine facilities provided by Ken & Chris to co-operatively import species orchids.

Management

In accordance with the Constitution, the Annual General meeting is held in May each year at which time the office-bearers and committee are elected. The majority of Committee members serve two year terms.

If unclaimed, return to
The Editor
204 Park Street, Henley Brook WA 6055

Next meeting is Tuesday 12 November 2013

Peter & Shirley Masters

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Peterskorner is now distributing a range of orchid products from

Easy Orchids (Murray and Jean Shergold) and we are happy to take orders, and bring them to the Species Society monthly meeting **(please confirm your order the week prior to the meeting).**

Check out our catalogue at www.peterskorner.com, phone Peter or Shirley on the numbers shown, or e-mail peterskorner@iinet.net.au.