

THE SPECIES ORCHID SOCIETY OF WA ( INC )

[http://members.iinet.net.au/~emntee/species Newsletter.htm](http://members.iinet.net.au/~emntee/species%20Newsletter.htm)



Vol 27 No 6 November 2015



Anne O'Callaghan Cultural Award  
October 2015  
*Phalaenopsis schilleriana*  
Chris

# NEWSLETTER

**NEXT MEETING - TUESDAY 10 November**

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# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING

13 October, 2015,

**Present:** 33 present as per the register

**Apologies:** As per register

**Visitors:** Mark Brundrett, Carl Andersen.

**New members:** Nil

**Minutes:** Minutes of the September meeting accepted: (Paul, Noel)

**Business Arising:** Nil

**Financial Report:** Tabled by Charly  
Current balance is \$2,696.06. We also have \$6,000 in a term deposit. (Mavis, Margaret)

**Correspondence:**

**Inwards:**

- John – fees
- City of Canning – booking application for 2016.

**Outwards:**

- Nil

**General Business:**

- Congratulations to Tony and Bruce for recently awarded plants.
- Thanks to the ever efficient Mavis for producing the 2016 Home Visit schedule.
- Our next OS order is to be from Mundiflora in Ecuador. Let Ken know your order ASAP as it takes 40 days for Canberra to process it. We hope to get the plants in early December.
- Ooi Leng Sun orders should also go in to Ken by later this month or early November as they have to re-establish them on inorganic mounts (@\$1.50).
- Maxine was thanked for her hosting of the last Home visit.

- There is a scheduled inspection of quarantine plants next week.

Mark Brundrett then gave us an interesting talk about the classification/identification of our terrestrials. He also mentioned experiments on re-establishing them. He demonstrated how to use his book to good effect.

Norm Stockton auctioned five plants for us and the winners were Graham, Paul, Tony, Brenda and Siva.

**Anne O'Callaghan Cultural Award:**

Awarded to Chris for a well grown *Phalaenopsis schilleriana*

**Raffle:** Jim, Paul, Ken, Tony and Courtney

**Name Badge:** Charly

## NOTES FROM YOUR COMMITTEE

- Many of you at our last meeting enjoyed hearing from Mark Brundrett, however we did not get to see his slideshow as we did not have our laptop, projector and screen. Thankfully, Mark is able to come to the November meeting and will complete

his presentation to us. Mark's excellent publication on Western Australian terrestrial orchids will also be available at \$45 a copy.

- There is no home visit in either November or December.
- Tuesday 2 December will be our annual Christmas Party. The Society provides beer, wine and soft drink and some hot food, and we ask members to bring a plate of festive season food to share.

We also have a Christmas gift for each member/family. For this purpose, we use left-over sale plants, plants donated and whatever else we can find. If you are able to donate a plant (it does not have to be a species orchid) for this purpose, please bring it on the night..

- If you haven't paid, your annual membership is now well overdue. Please pay the Treasurer at the next meeting. Should you see any members who may not regularly attend meetings, you might mention this to them.

### Quiet Achievers

2013	Ian
2014	Chris
2015	Margaret

**President:** Ken Jones

**Vice President:** Adrian

**Secretary:** Graham Bowden

8 Bedelia Way, Hamersley, 6022.

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**Editor:** Ken Jones

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### Committee:

Chris Sharon

Maxine Paul

Michele Tony

Mavis

### Life Members

Barry (dec'd)

Gordon

Maxine

Ken

Joan (dec'd) & Ted (dec'd)

Trevor

Neville

Noel & Eva

Tony & Mavis

Barry (dec'd)

# NOTICEBOARD

## FORTH- COMING EVENTS

### Home visits:

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

- \* Nov - no home visit.
- \* Dec - no home visit
- \* 30 January - Ezi-Gro Orchids, Lansdale
- \* 28 February - Jim & Jeanine Giorgi, 22 Walkington Rd, Eden Hill, WA

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## FOR SALE/WANTED

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### Imported plant news

Plants from both Thailand and Taiwan were released at our inspection on 22 October and have been passed on to members. This release includes large plants of *Aerides flabellata* and *lawrenciae* and *Dendrobium thrysiflorum* which will be used a club plants over the next few months.

The order has been lodged with Mundiflora and it is hoped that it will be shipped in early December. I am also compiling the order for Ooi Leng Sun Orchids for shipment on March/April 2016 –if you wish to be involved please give me your list as soon as possible

*Ken & Chris Jones*

# MONTHLY PLANT

## *Aerides flabellata*

**Country of origin:** Burma, Thailand, Laos, and southwest. China.

**Description:** a typical moderate-sized vandaceous species

**Difficulty:** .Easy to grow, requires protection from cold, wet winter weather

**Cost:** \$10.00



Photo source: <http://www.orchidspecies.com/orphodir/aeridesflabella.jpg>

These plants were provided by Sakdisri and Daughters Nursery and have recently been released from quarantine.

*Aerides flabellata* Rolfe ex Downey 1925 is found in Burma, Thailand, Laos, and the Yunnan Province in southwest. China. In Thailand, this species is found in the north in low mountains at 800 m in the Chiang Mai region, and in China, on tree trunks at the edge of forests and sparse woodlands at 600-1700 m.

This species requires filtered sun, and is hot-cool growing epiphyte that flowers in spring on long, pendant inflorescences carrying up 15 pleasantly fragrant flowers.

These plants will be sold bare root and will need to be potted or mounted taking care not to damage active root tips. If you are able to provide high humidity, a wooden or similar slab should suffice, otherwise pot the plant in a basket or pot with large pine bark to help maintain humidity around the

roots.

High humidity, accompanied by strong air movement all year round is required to maintain health and vitality when growing this species. Regular fertilising when in active growth (ie active root tips) will enhance vigour and flower production.

This species will need protection during our cold and wet winter months. So if you are growing in a shadehouse, some cover will be necessary. The genus is generally resistant to many of the orchid pests and pathogens, however as a monopodial, care should be taken to ensure that water does not sit in the top leaf axil as it can lead to rot that will destroy the plant.

### Graham & Margaret

*Pterostylis aff picta*  
*Sarcochilus falcatus*

### Chris

*Cattleya intermedia alba*  
*Coilostylis falcata*  
*Cymbidium bicolor ssp obtusum*  
*Dendrobium lindleyi*  
*Dendrobium nobile var. nobilor*  
*Guarianthe aurantiaca*  
*Lycaste lassioglossa*  
*Paphiopedilum kolopakingsii*  
*Phalaenopsis equestris*  
*Phalaenopsis philippinensis*  
*Phalaenopsis schilleriana*  
*Phalaenopsis stuartiana* "Yellow"  
*Sarcochilus hartmannii*  
*Trichocentrum ascendens*

### Maxine

*Bulbophyllum longissimum*  
*Bulbophyllum sinapsis*  
*Cattleya mossiae*  
*Dendrobium chrysotoxum*  
*Dendrobium mohlianum*  
*Phalaenopsis manni*

### Ken & Chris

*Ansellia africana*  
*Cattleya aurantiaca*  
*Cattleya intermedia var. orlata* 'Crown Fox'  
*Coilostylis parkinsonianum*  
*Dendrobium lindleyi*  
*Dendrobium nobile var. virginalis*  
*Guarianthe skinneri alba*  
*Vanda tricolor*

### Adrian & Deanna

*Cleisostoma arietinum*

## PLANTS DISPLAYED October 2015



*Cattleya intermedia* var. *orlata* 'Crown Fox'  
John Steele  
Ken & Chris Jones



*Dendrobium chrysotoxum*  
Maxine Godbeer

*Dendrobium faciferum*  
*Dendrobium keithii*  
*Dendrobium mortii*  
*Luisia curtisii*  
*Phalaenopsis equestris*  
*Vanda lamellata*

**Peter & Shirley**

*Dendrobium chlorostylum*  
*Dendrobium farmerii*  
*Dendrobium monophyllum*  
*Dendrobium primulinum*  
*Phaius tankervilleae*

**John**

*Cattleya intermedia* var. *orlata* 'Crown  
Fox'  
*Guarianthe skinneri* 'Casa Luna'

**Siva**

*Renanthera monachica*

**Howard**

*Paphiopedilum chamberlainianum* var.  
*kalinae*  
*Paphiopedilum glanduliferum* var.  
*praestans*  
*Paphiopedilum micranthum* var.  
*eburneum*  
*Paphiopedilum rothschildianum*  
*Paphiopedilum sukhakulii*

**Tony & Mavis**

*Chilochista* spp  
*Phaius tankervilleae*  
*Phalaenopsis parishii*  
*Phalaenopsis philippinensis*  
*Phalaenopsis stuartiana*  
*Tolumnia variegata*

## PLANTS DISPLAYED October 2015



*Paphiopedilum micranthum* var.  
*eburneum*  
Howard Tan



*Paphiopedilum glanduliferum* var.  
*praestans*  
Howard Tan

## The *Dendrobium bigibbum* Complex - Jim Brydie

This surely has to be Australia's most beautiful native orchid, but at the same time, *Den. bigibbum* has been the centre of a confusing hotpot among taxonomists for a long, long time. Bigibbum is a member of a small group of about 3 to 6 closely related *Dendrobium* species in section *Phalaenanthus*. The section gets its name for the fancied resemblance of their flowers to butterflies. The reason I say 'about 3 to 6 species' is because the number depends on whether you regard some as separate species, or just as variations of *Den bigibbum*.



*Den bigibbum* var *bigibbum* – Garrie Bromley

For many years the understanding was that there was one species (known at the time as *Den. phalaenopsis*) that occurred in eastern Indonesia on the islands near Timor, and that everything that occurred on the Australian mainland, was *Den bigibbum*. However, work by Steve Clemesha in 1978 proposed that *Den. phalaenopsis* was the same as *Den. bigibbum* and he proposed the name *Den. bigibbum* subspecies *laratensis* for the Indonesian form.

Later, in 1989, after studying herbarium specimens in Europe, Mark Clements (one of Australia's most eminent taxonomists) said that he believed that the type specimen being used to define *Den. phalaenopsis* had actually been collected in Queensland (which would make it a bigibbum), but that *Den. phalaenopsis* and *Den. bigibbum* were none-the-less valid and separate species.

In his opinion, at the time, *Den. phalaenopsis* occurred mainly on the eastern side of the Great Dividing Range in northern Australia, and that *Den. bigibbum* was found on the drier, western side of the range as well as the Torres Strait islands and PNG. Clements also considered that the species, known for many years as *Den. bigibbum* variety *compactum*, was a third, separate, Australian species, and gave it the name *Dendrobium lithocola*. The suggested changes left the Indonesian species without a name, and he therefore formally described it as *Den. striaenopsis*.

That meant that the bigibbum complex now comprised 4 separate but very closely related species. (*Den. bigibbum*, *Den. phalaenopsis*, *Den. lithocola*, and *Den. striaenopsis*)

Four populations is still 'sort of' where we stand today but there are a few more twists in the story, with which we need to grapple. In 2006, in his magnificent new edition of "Native Orchids of Australia", among many other name changes, David Jones proposed



a new genus name “*Vappodes*” for the Phalaenanthe group, which made *Dendrobium bigibbum* into *Vappodes bigibba*, and *Den. phalaenopsis* into *Vappodes phalaenopsis*. I think this is a fantastic book, but the use of many proposed new names like “*Vappodes*” makes it difficult for hobby growers to use it without constant reference back to the index against the older names with which they are more familiar. Luckily for us, it seems hard to get a majority of taxonomists to agree on much at all, so these changes are not widely accepted (.yet?). This leaves us with much confusing variation among names for the same species.

Also in 2006, in the new edition of “*Dendrobium and its Relatives*”, Lavarack, Harris, and Stocker also recognise 4 separate populations but they still regard the three Australian populations as varieties of *Dendrobium bigibbum*, and the Indonesian one as *Dendrobium strianopsis*. This is the nomenclature I favour, and their descriptions follow :

- *Den. bigibbum* variety *bigibbum* “occurs at low altitudes on the Cape York peninsular, the Torres Strait islands, and in southern New Guinea. It grows in hot conditions with an extremely dry winter, in open forests and on rocks. The pseudobulbs may reach 120cm (over a metre) but are usually 40 – 60 cm. The inflorescences can carry up to 20 flowers, about 3 to 5cm diameter. They usually have a white spot in the lip.”
- *Den. bigibbum* variety *superbum* (the one others call *Den. phalaenopsis*) “occurs on the southern part of the Cape York peninsular in open forests and dry scrubs often near beaches. It is an epiphyte (trees) or lithophyte (rocks) in areas with a hot climate and extremely seasonal rainfall. The pseudobulbs are similar to variety *bigibbum* but often a little longer and stouter. The inflorescences are similar but the flowers are larger, at 3 to 7cm across. They are less reflexed than *Den. var bigibbum*, and they lack the white spot on the lip.”
- *Den. bigibbum* variety *compactum* “occurs in a small area near the coast of the wet tropics in northern Queensland. It grows almost exclusively on rocks at an altitude of 250m. This area gets a little more rain in winter, but there is still a rather drier period in winter and spring. The pseudobulbs are commonly only 10 to 15cm long and 1 to 2cm thick. The flowers are similar to variety *superbum* but the inflorescence is shorter.”
- *Den. strianopsis* “has been recorded only from the island of Larat in the Tanimbar group south west of Irian Jaya. It grows on limestone cliffs, and on trees, just above sea level, in a hot seasonal climate. The pseudobulbs are long and slender, up to a metre long, and about 1cm thick. The inflorescences are long and arching and carry up to 30 flowers. The flowers are 4 to 7 cm across. Colour varies from deep purple, to white, and bicoloured flowers with purple and white.” (JB Many typical flowers exhibit darker pinkish striations on a paler pink background. Hence the name *Den. strianopsis*).



*Den bigibbum var. bigibbum*

*Den. bigibbum var. superbum*

*Den. bigibbum var. compactum*



*Den. striaenopsis*

For the pictures above, I selected rather good clones of each type, and as you can see, in select clones there is sometimes little difference between the flowers. Plants from the wild will exhibit a much wider range of variation, especially in characteristics like the folding back (reflexing) of the tips of the petals on variety bigibbum. In addition, although the white lip spot is distinctive in this picture of variety bigibbum, it varies dramatically and can be almost invisible in some cases. As you might imagine, all this makes it extremely hard to distinguish types when benched.

Probably an even bigger problem for us hobby growers (and even the judges) however is that man has hybridised and line bred the different forms of bigibbum between the varieties, and with just about every other compatible species and hybrid, about one thousand times. This breeding includes many where a parent is named as *Den. phalaenopsis*, which is still a name accepted by the RHS hybrid registration board. Most of what we just call hardcane dendrobiums these days, are at least 75% bigibbum/ phalaenopsis, sometime 90-95%, and look just like huge bigibbums on steroids. Some look more modest and might even just look like a very good bigibbum, despite the fact they may even contain genes from a number of other species from Australia, New Guinea, and the Pacific Islands. Sometimes they are benched or sold as a bigibbum of one type or another, sometimes they themselves are used as 'bigibbum' parents in creating what are purported to be select forms of bigibbum. I am not saying that this applies to all line bred bigibbums, just that it is impossible to tell.

Ian Chalmers, the Registrar of Judges at the OSNSW, recently wrote :

*"Plants of the varieties of Dendrobium bigibbum exhibited are difficult to differentiate. It would be a brave person to be certain at monthly meetings or shows.*

*... yes Den. phalaenopsis is recognised (by the RHS as a separate species). However, unless we have the providence proving the origins of the plant, it is better to treat them all as Dendrobium bigibbum complex. The RHS register has two problems -*

1. *The registered parent is what the breeder thought it was at the time.*

2. *There has been a history of name changes between phalaenopsis and bigibbum alternating over the years. So who knows what was really used? None of this is simple. The more research I do the less comfortable I am at differentiating between the cultivated varieties of Den. bigibbum and between the species and the hybrids."*

Just the same, no matter what they really are, these are all gorgeous orchids, and very popular. At our last Kuringai meeting, when discussing his lovely *Den. bigibbum*, which was selected Best Species of the Evening, Garrie Bromley gave us a few tips on growing them. He grows his plant in an enclosed but unheated glasshouse but it can be grown in a shadehouse provided it is under a roof and can be given no water at all during its winter rest period. After the flowers finish around May, Garrie says they should be hung up high where there is good light and air movement, and should be given no water at all until the new growths are well under way in spring. Something like the culture regime we have been taught for *Catasetums* in recent years.

*Thanks to Jim Brydie for permission to reprint this thought-provoking article*

## 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 (1<sup>st</sup> 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 (1<sup>st</sup> 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.

*Contd overleaf*

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

## Next meeting Tuesday 10 November

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.