



## COFFS HARBOUR ORCHID SOCIETY

PO BOX 801, COFFS HARBOUR, NSW, 2450. E-mail [coffsos@gmail.com](mailto:coffsos@gmail.com)

[www.coffsorchidsociety.org.au](http://www.coffsorchidsociety.org.au)

## COFFS ORCHID NEWS – SEP 2018

### GENERAL MEETING & ORCHID COMPETITION

1<sup>st</sup> THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 7.00 for 7.30 PM, UNLESS OTHERWISE ANNOUNCED, at NORTH COAST REGIONAL BOTANIC GARDENS, HARDACRE STREET, COFFS HARBOUR.

<u>PRESIDENT:</u>	ED PEARCE	0418 519908
<u>VICE PRESIDENT</u>	CAROLE DAVIS	6658 1354
<u>SECRETARY:</u>	PAM WARBURTON	0409 660465
<u>TREASURER:</u>	BRUCE HALL	6658 9891
<u>EDITOR:</u>	ED PEARCE	0418 519908

### SPONSORS

#### YELLOW BRICK ROAD – WEALTH MANAGEMENT

YBR offers a range of services such as home loans, financial advice, insurance, superannuation, cash and investments. Please contact Tim Klingbiel for advice. Shop 82 in City Square, Coffs Harbour Or call on 6653 7407, or [tim.klingbiel@ybr.com.au](mailto:tim.klingbiel@ybr.com.au)

#### CFS TRAVEL

See Julie Larkey at CFS Travel, shop 27A in the plaza (opp Big W) Personalised service for all your travel needs. 6652 6555 or [julie@cfstravel.com.au](mailto:julie@cfstravel.com.au)

#### LUDO'S OLD WARES

Buying and selling antiques, old wares and collectibles. Deceased estates. Ulmarra. 0402 044601

#### TINONEE ORCHIDS

Tinonee Orchids carries a wide variety of orchids and orchid growing supplies – coconut, pots, etc. They provide quick delivery of orders. 6553 1012 or [www.tinoneeorchids.com](http://www.tinoneeorchids.com)

#### COFFS COAST MOTORS

For Mazda and Honda vehicles, also second-hand vehicles, and ALL your servicing needs. Do your shopping while your car is serviced. 6652 3122, 41 Grafton St., Coffs Harbour.

#### COFFS HARBOUR PRODUCE

Coffs Harbour Produce is at 26 June Street in Coffs. They carry a good range of fertilisers, insecticides and fungicides for orchids, as well as general garden needs. 6652 2599.

#### BRUCE HALL

Bruce provides the raffle items which are a major fundraiser at our shows.

#### SHEARWATER RESTAURANT

Brekkie and Modern Australian dishes in a light, upscale locale with outdoor tables and lovely views over Coffs Creek. 321 Harbour Drive. [www.shearwaterrestaurant.com.au](http://www.shearwaterrestaurant.com.au) or 6651 6063

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### **1. CALENDAR**

- 6 Sep Bruce Hall - Vandas  
8/9 Sep Spring Show  
11 Oct Ian Warburton – Photography  
1 Nov AGM – Plant Forum  
11 Nov Woolgoolga Workshop  
6 Dec Christmas dinner at Shearwater.  
7 Feb First meeting of 2019  
7 Mar March Meeting  
4 Apr April meeting  
26/28 Apr 2019 Autumn Show

### **2. VALE**

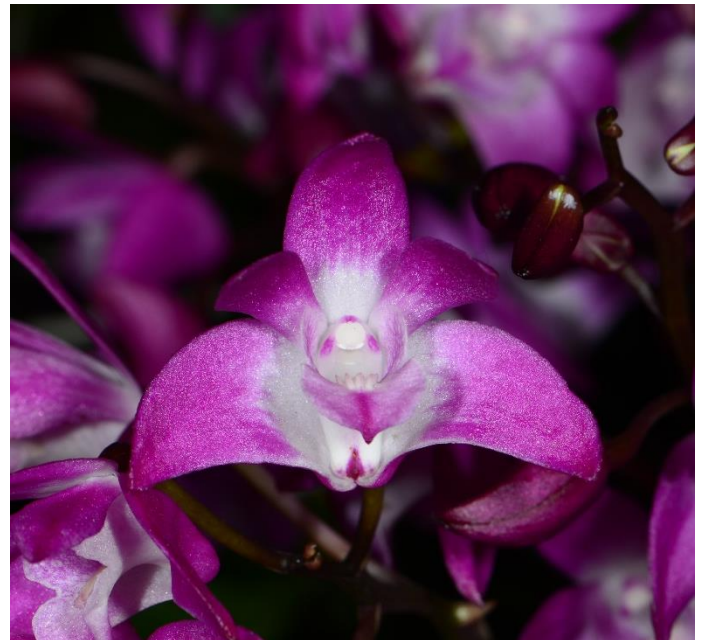
I'm sorry to report that Steve Clemesha died on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> August. Steve had been an active member of Coffs Harbour Orchid Society for 42 years and during that time he had been public officer, secretary, vice president and president. He was an accredited orchid judge and had a very deep knowledge of orchids and plants more generally.

Steve's funeral service was held at the Coffs Harbour crematorium on 24<sup>th</sup> August. We extend our sympathy to his wife Pauline and his family.

Sandy Anderson, another of our life members also died recently. Sandy was a very active member during the '80s and '90s and was the driving force behind a large orchid conference run by local orchid societies in 1992.

Sandy owned an orchid business and was a leader in developing soft cane Dendrobiums in Australia.

Sandy's son Neville is president of Woolgoolga Orchid Society and a member of our society. I'd like to express our sympathy to Sandy's wife Ollie and the family.



**There were a lot of beautiful orchids displayed at the AOC Conference in July.**

### **3. SEPTEMBER MEETING.**

Bruce Hall will talk on 'Vandas – Types, Breeding and Culture'. Bruce will deliver a photo presentation and discuss various aspects of growing Vandaceous orchids in our area. Bruce will be very happy to answer any questions you may have on growing Vandas.

### **4. AGENDA for SEPTEMBER MEETING**

Judges – Bob Southwell, Jean Wong

Welcome, Apologies, Visitors, New member(s)?

Minutes of Aug meeting – as printed in newsletter

Committee Meeting – newsletter

Inwards Correspondence

1. BCU statements

Finances

Sponsor's Spot – Shearwater Restaurant

Table talk

Growing Competition

General Business

1. Spring Show

Raffle, popular vote.

Plant Auction



With so many lovely Laeliinae at the Conference it was hard to choose a favourite

## 5. MINUTES of AUGUST GENERAL MEETING

Ed welcomed all to the August meeting.

**Apologies:** Judy & Ron Cowling; Kerrie Reeves; Sue Flanders; Silesa King; Leonie Everett.

**Visitors:** Barry Russell from Victoria.

**Minutes of July's meeting:** Moved by Ben Pron, seconded by John Sidebottom that the Minutes are a true and accurate record of what took place. Carried.

**Correspondence:** BCU statements, The Orchid Societies Council of Victoria & notification of Nambucca Valley Orchid Society Inc Spring Show.

**Sponsor's Spot:** Ed encouraged us to support Shearwater Restaurant at The Promenade for coffees & meals, as they continued to support our Society.

**Table Talk:** This month Ed gave the table talk and bought to our notice a delicate white *Jumellea sagittata*; *Dendrobium Avril's Gold "Ray"*, *Coelogyne Kirribilli Norm* and Peter Baker's spectacular *Arpophyllum spicatum*.

### **General Business:**

1. We were reminded of our Spring Show the weekend of 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> of September. We want as many orchids in flower as possible to give a good display to the public.
2. The Bellingen Show is on the 18<sup>th</sup> of August.
3. Raffle: (1) Sue Williams (2) Bob Southwell (3) Barry Russell.
4. Finance Report: Bruce reported a profit due to the sale of orchid mix and charcoal. The bus trip to Tinonee is to be finalized but also appears to have produced a small profit. The report was moved by Gary Suter and seconded by Bob Southwell. Carried.
5. Popular Vote: People voted Peter Baker's wonderful *Arpophyllum spicatum* as the best

orchid benched tonight. Roughly 50% shade and a bit of fertilizer is his "secret".

6. Growing Competition: 1<sup>st</sup> Pam Warburton, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sue Williams.

### **Auction.**

1. 42 items were presented for auction.
2. Everything was sold.
3. \$434 was made on the night.
4. Pam wants to look at ways of streamlining the process to reduce the stress of collecting the monies at the end of the night.



And lovely *Cymbidiums*. These grow really well in the Sydney area.

## 6. COMMITTEE REPORT

We had our committee meeting at Shearwater on 7<sup>th</sup> Aug. Matters discussed were –

- Arrangements for our show
- Supply of bark/charcoal
- Managing membership
- AGM
- Review of Tinonee bus trip
- New donations box for shows

## 7. VISIT to HELEN SEIVER'S HOME.

Early in August we had a home visit to see Helen Seiver's orchid house and to talk with her about how she grows such beautiful orchids.

She has an excellent set-up which Helen uses to grow a variety of orchids, particularly *Cattleya* types. Husband Doug has worked with her to provide a good growing environment with watering, misting and air movement.



**Some of Helen's orchids.**

Thanks to Helen and Doug for their hospitality.

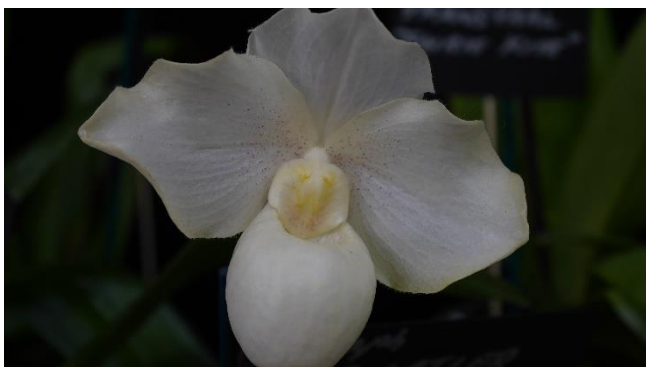
**8. AUSTRALIAN ORCHID COUNCIL CONFERENCE**

During July several of us attended the Australian Orchid Council Conference which this year was held at Windsor in western Sydney. There was a show with a wide variety of orchids exhibited – see photos in this newsletter – and a large number of orchid sellers (Yes, I bought some plants). I was surprised to see the variety of beautiful orchids in the display.

There were also several excellent guest speakers, such as -

- Dr Yam Singapore Botanic gardens
- Fred Clarke Catasetinae, Spotted Cattleya
- Ken Siew Breeding Orchids
- Kevin Butler Novelty Cymbidiums
- Profssor Mill Breeding Blue Phalaenopsis

And several others. I was particularly interested to learn more about breeding and to have the chance to talk with a few people who are doing some breeding in orchids.



**There were some beautiful slipper orchids at the show.**

**9. GROWING COMPETITION**

We are only just half way in this competition so it is still wide open. Remember young Cattleyas need plenty of light and regular growth fertilizer (higher

Nitrogen content) as we start the Spring growing period.

Don't forget to bring your plant for judging to the next meeting.

**10. SPRING SHOW**

The CHOS Spring Show will be conducted over the weekend of 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> September, 2018. Set-up will take place at the Coffs Botanic Gardens from 3pm on Friday, 7<sup>th</sup> September. We cannot obtain access to the Display Room until around 4pm so benching of plants will occur between 5 and 7pm on the Friday and again from 6.30 to 7.30am on the Saturday.

Judging of entries will begin at 8am and the Show will open to the public from 10am. Presentation of trophies will take place from 3pm on Sunday. The Roster for the Show has been e-mailed to everyone.

Additional help will be appreciated. Thanks to all those who have volunteered to assist.



**This lovely Coelogyne Jannine Banks was at the show.**

**11. SALES TABLE:**

Plants for sale at the Show are always welcome. Please deliver Friday afternoon or early Saturday. Sale Tags will be available at the Monthly meeting on Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> September or at the Show.

**12. ORCHID BARK**

The Society has bags of high quality Orchiata bark in two common sizes – 9 to 12mm and 12 to 18mm. Bags are priced at \$25 per 40 litre bag. Contact Bob Southwell (0417 695 834) for pick up or delivery at the next meeting.

### 13. GROWING MEDIA for ORCHIDS

*Are you confused about what material you should grow your orchids in? Here is the second part of an article written by Jim Brydie in the K Orchid Society newsletter which he has kindly allowed us to publish.*

*This is part 2 of this topic – part 1 was published in the August newsletter.*

#### 1 – Bark -



Bark (pine bark) is readily available, relatively cheap, and comes conveniently graded by the size of the bark pieces. One brand calls the bark fine, medium, or coarse, another sells by approximate particle size in millimetres. There are also more specialised

mixes such as Miscellaneous Mix (a combination of sizes and components perfect for Aust. natives) and Cymbidium Mix (in its various brands and forms). Some of the bark quality isn't what it was 20 years ago but it is still a very useful medium. I use medium and coarse barks for Laelias, Cattleyas, Vandaceous, and other coarse rooted, dryer growers, and a blended mix of sizes and components for more general miscellaneous orchids.

With bark, the pH in the pot can be a serious factor. It will usually start out around pH6, which is good for most orchids, but can eventually sink down to as low 3.5 to 4. The pH getting lower and lower is associated with the decay of the bark as it composts in the pot and is often exacerbated by watering too heavily. In overly wet conditions the bark can tend to go off fairly quickly, staying wetter and wetter after each watering, and the orchid may need repotting after as little as 1 or 2 years. However, judicious use of a little garden lime or dolomite, sprinkled over the top of the mix once a year, can extend the life of bark in the pot, and aid in balancing the pH. Just make sure you don't overdo it. A near level teaspoon of garden lime/dolomite sprinkled onto a 15cm pot is all you need.

When you use bark, make sure you feed the plants regularly and watch the wetness of the pot. If they look too wet they probably are, so either try to water less often or place the plants where they will dry out more quickly.

**2 - Sphagnum Moss -** Sphagnum Moss is an amazing medium. It has terrific remedial properties for sick plants and there is nothing better for striking backbulbs and divisions. It can be obtained as live moss, or in dried compressed blocks, and both work well. The dried product keeps well and the amount

you need can be rehydrated as needed. Every grower should have at least a small supply available.

Even for healthy plants it is a very good medium in its



own right **but like all media, it has its drawbacks.** It is expensive and it is getting harder and harder to obtain good quality moss. Good moss lasts about 12 months in the pot but less if it gets regular fertilizer. Once the sphagnum moss has "gone off", you need to get the plant out of it quickly

because all of its positive qualities are reversed and roots quickly die.

#### 3 – Peat and Perlite ("P&P") -

**Perlite** is an expanded volcanic glass that is completely inert & pH neutral. The perlite most growers use comes from Chillagoe in Queensland and comes graded in particle sizes called "coarse", "super coarse", and "jumbo", where jumbo is the largest (particles up to at about pea size). Perlite on its own doesn't provide any organic interchange buffer for fertilizer and once it starts to dry out, perlite by itself goes from moist to dry very quickly. It is usually used in

combination with another medium - Lithuanian peat moss - to provide the organic ion interchange. The basic formula most people use is 1-part peat to about 5 or 6 parts jumbo perlite. I



have experimented with ratios of 12, 16, and then 20:1 but I concluded that it doesn't work properly with less and less peat.

P & P mixes are very stable. The perlite is inert and the peat has already reached a point of almost nil decay over thousands of years in the ground. The combination has a slightly acid pH around 6.0 (perfect for most orchids) and lasts virtually forever. **However, you still need to repot relatively regularly** because plants outgrow pots and because dead roots eventually accumulate in the pot and need to be cleaned out.

Be Aware – peat and perlite mixes are generally wetter than fresh bark mixes. Some growers have tried it and rejected it because it works differently to other media and growers can have a problem if they use a wide range of media for different orchids and water everything together. Reduce your overall watering for best results. Varying the P: P ratio, choosing the grade of perlite you use, adding styrene foam, and/or mixing perlite grades together, can also give you some control over how quickly the mix dries. I use P&P mainly for

Pleurothallids, Dendrochilums, some Dendrobiums, and a few others.

#### 4 - Coconut Fibre - Although



commercial nurseries here and overseas have been using it for quite a few years, coconut fibre is a relatively new medium to most of us. It obviously has great potential. As a medium it is long lasting, slow to bio-degrade, and depending on the brand and the washing process, has a pH of about 6.0 – 6.5. The material comprises two natural materials which form the husk of the coconut. A coarse, stiff, woody, thread like material we call coir, which is the same fibre used to make coir doormats etc, and a peat like material that fills the spaces between the coir fibres. Sort of like an insulator and moisture absorber.

The commercial orchid potting material, is basically the chopped up fibrous husk off coconuts, a by-product of the copra production plantations in India and Sri Lanka among other places. It comes in dried, compressed blocks of more or less cubed chunks, pre-cut into specific sizes to different grades of fineness. There are various brands available - one used to be available from Bunnings hardware stores but I am not sure that source is still available. I believe that Ray Clement's 'Tinonee Orchids' still markets another type.

The material needs to be soaked and rinsed before you use it. Stories are told that some supplies are contaminated with sea salt from the discarded coconut husks being stored too close to the ocean before they are processed and compressed for horticultural use. I don't know if this is true, but I heed the need to wash and rinse.

To prepare the material for use, I soak a **half a dried compressed block** in a garbage bin for 3 or 4 days to let it stew, then tip it out into foam boxes fitted with a couple of layers of shade cloth in the bottom. A half a block fills 2 foam boxes after soaking. I then give the boxes a thorough rinse with a hose to wash out any salts released by the soak. Be careful when you rinse it however. All these coconut fibre products include a significant proportion of the fine peaty material and you need to retain a decent proportion of these fines as an integral part of the mix. If you remove too much of the fines by washing or sieving, the mix dries faster than is practical for most orchids and doesn't retain sufficient water. A dry mix can be a useful trick for one or two oddball orchids, but it isn't suitable for most.

As with bark and perlite mediums, you can adjust the moisture content of your coconut fibre potting medium by choosing the coarse or fine grades,

reducing the peaty component, or by adding other components like styrene foam. I experimented with various mixes of fine, medium, and coarse coco-fibre, added perlite, and added styrene foam. I was very impressed with results in the first 6 months or so but after that I began to experience rots killing off some plants and others just suddenly stopping their forward progress. I am not sure why, but I think part of the problem was that the finer, peaty materials may have washed out from between the coir strands and accumulated in the bottom of the pot, creating a bog zone, which would have resulted in root decline.

At present, I have cut back my use of coco-fibre to using it as an additive to some of my specialist mixes to purposely retain a little more moisture – such as for Paphs. However, I know that many nurseries and other growers are still getting excellent results in coco-fibre dominant mixes so the problem may just be the way in which I was using it.

***The last part of this article covers “fringe materials” and will be in the next newsletter***



**There were many lovely Vandas – Bruce will be talking about Vandas at our September meeting.**

#### 14. BUS TRIP.

Did anyone get an extra bag of perlite from the bus? There is one missing. Also there were a couple of labels left on the bus. If you can help with this please contact Ed.

**COFFS HARBOUR ORCHID SOCIETY (CHOS)**  
**TRADING STATEMENT FOR THE PERIOD OF 24 July 2018 to 26 August 2018.**  
**DATE OF THIS STATEMENT 24/8/2018.**

	<u>Receipt</u>	<u>INCOME</u>	<u>Cheque</u>	<u>EXPEND</u>	
<u>00/1</u>	Membership	\$ 10.00			Refer Receipt Book
00/2	Raffle	100.00			Monthly Meet, August.
00/3	Hall hire		679,686	\$ 120.00	Inv 932,920,945.
00/5	Affiliations		678	\$ 100.00	AOC
00/5	Affiliations		683	\$ 15.00	2Air FM
00/6	Statutory		682,684	\$ 220.00	P/Cash, Donation Box-N.McDonald.
00/7	Newsletter		680	\$ 28.00	Newsletter
01/2	Special Sales	575.00	676	\$ 450.00	Purchase Charcol, Bark/charcol Sales
04/2	Spring Show		681,685	\$ 1,168.00	Signage (Stickerman),prize Monies
05/1	Plant Auction/Bus Trip	592.00	677	\$ 337.60	Bus Payment/Plant Auction/Bus Payment.
	<b><u>TOTALS</u></b>	<b><u>1,277.00</u></b>		<b><u>\$ 2,438.60</u></b>	

**DEBIT/CREDIT TOTAL FOR THE PERIOD**      - **1,161.60**

**Bank Reconciliation for the above trading period.**

Opening Bank Balance 24/7/2018	<u>6,561.76</u>
Rec for above period	1,277.00
S/T	<u>7,838.76</u>
<b>DEDUCT</b> Exp for above period	<u>2,160.60</u>
Pre. u/presented cheques	-
S/T	<u>2,160.60</u>

**Balance of Income and Expenditure**      **5,678.13**      Refer BCU Statement @ 27/08/2018.

The following cheques 680,170 and 686 a total of \$278.00 have not been persented.

The following Accts paid nil at this stage.

**NOTES:**

CHOS has a sum of \$10,000.00 invested as a FTD with all interest earned rolled into the daily account and is shown in the appropriate trading statements.

HALL. B.G.  
Hon. Treasurer  
27/8/2018.

Aug

Member Name	Standard Cymbidium Hybrid Over 90mm	Intermediate Cymbidium Hybrid 60-90 mm	Miniature Cymbidium Hybrid Under 60mm	Cymbidium Species inc Australian Natives	Laelinae Exhibition Hybrid over 100mm	Laelinae Intermediate Hybrid 60 to 100mm	Laelinae Cluster Hybrid (min 5 flowers)	Laelinae Novelty Hybrid spotted flower non exhibition	Laelinae Species	Paph and Allied Species	Oncidinae Hybrids over 65 mm	Oncidinae Hybrids 25 to 65 mm
Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	8	9	10	13	14	15
<b>BAKER</b>									3			
Trever Bissett			3									
HALL B										5		
PEARCE Edward		5					2					
SEIVER H					5	5	3	3				
SIDEBOTTOM	3			2								
SOUTHWELL			2								5	3

Member Name	Vandaceous Hybrid under 60mm	Vandaceous SPECIES	Phalaenopsis Hybrid Over 75mm	Phalaenopsis Hybrid 50mm - 75mm	Dendrobium Hardcane Hybrid Non Native	Dendrobium AOV Hybrid Non Native	A.O.V Species Non Native	Australian Native Hybrid inc Dendrobium	Australian Native species inc Dendrobium	AOV Hybrid over 50mm	AOV species over 50mm	AOV species 50mm and under
Class	20	21	22	23	27	28	29	30	31	34	36	37
<b>BAKER</b>												
Trever Bissett			3				3		3			
HALL B	3	2				3		5				
PEARCE Edward				3		2				5	3	2
SEIVER H		3			3							
SOUTHWELL												3

P Baker

Popular Vote