



COFFS ORCHID NEWS – DECEMBER, 2021

PUBLICATION OF THE COFFS HARBOUR ORCHID SOCIETY

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1. EDITORIAL:

What can be said about 2021? Probably very similar words to what we said about 2020. They have been two years none of us will ever forget. The good news about 2021 is that it is nearly over and we have survived and looking forward to the “new normal” of 2022. The “light at the end of the tunnel” is starting to shine much brighter than it has all year.

Even though there have not been many monthly meetings and only one Show, the Committee has still been busy during the year with regular monthly meetings and always trying to keep members informed, up-to-date and in contact with each other. Thanks go to the Committee for all their hard work and dedication in this difficult year.

In between the five monthly meetings we have been able to conduct, the Newsletter, the Website and Facebook pages have been the main contact points for members. Thanks to those who contributed to the newsletter especially Dick Cooper and all those members who sent great orchid photos, jokes and other items.

A very special thanks to Paige Sinclair for her expertise and hard work with three Facebook pages. The interest both local and Australian wide as well as International has been amazing. Thank you also to Carole Davis for all the work she does each month on our Website. If you haven't looked at it lately then it is worthwhile spending some time there.

The Virtual Spring Show held on Facebook was fantastic and created an enormous amount of interest. Congratulations again to Helen Seiver for taking out the Grand Champion and for Malcolm Ide with Reserve Champion. *Continued on Page 3*

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SPONSORS**SHEARWATER RESTAURANT**

Brekkie and Modern Australian dishes in a light, upscale locale with outdoor tables and lovely views over Coffs Creek. 321 Harbour Drive, Coffs Harbour.
www.shearwaterrestaurant.com.au or Phone 6651 6053.

LUDO'S OLD WARES

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

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. Phone 02 6652 2599.

COFFS COAST MOTORS

For Mazda and Honda vehicles, also second-hand vehicles And ALL your servicing needs. Ring for an appointment 02 6652 3122 or visit 211 Pacific Highway, Coffs Harbour.

You won't be disappointed .

TINONEE ORCHIDS

Tinonee Orchids carries a wide variety of orchids and orchid growing supplies—coconut fibre, pots, etc. They provide quick delivery of orders. 02 6553 1012

www.tinoneeorchids.com

BRUCE HALL

Bruce provides the raffle prizes for both the Autumn and Spring Shows.

SUPPORT THEM BECAUSE THEY SUPPORT US

CALENDAR, 2021-22

- 4 Dec— Lunch at Green House Tavern. Awards & Presentation—12 noon
- 25 Jan—Committee Meeting. 10.30am—Shearwater
- 3 Feb, 2022 - Ray Clement—Coffs Botanic Gardens. 7.30pm
- 3 Mar, 2022 - Member's Workshop
- 2 Apr, 2022—50th Anniversary Luncheon at Opal Cove Guest Speaker - Jody Cutajar.
- 7 Apr , 2022— Bruce Hall "Preparing Plants for the Autumn Show"
- 22 Apr—Show Set-up from 1pm
- 23-24 Apr—Autumn Show
- 5 May— Helena Axelsson— "Growing Orchids in Small

CHOS BANK DETAILS

BSB No: 533-000

ACCOUNT No: 32817199



Continued from Page 1:

Next year is looking brighter. It is planned to have a full year of normal activities with some great speakers, member's participation and a number of workshop activities. While it has been a "life saver" to be able to hold meetings at the Coffs Harbour Uniting Church during the later part of this year, it is with happy hearts that we will return to "our home" at the North Coast Regional Botanic Gardens from February, 2022. The year will start with a normal February meeting with Ray Clement from Tinonee Orchids. With many Covid restrictions lifted, life will almost be back to normal. We are all looking forward to a great 2022.

Best wishes for Christmas and a Happy and Healthy 2022.

Bob Southwell, Editor.

3. Popular Vote winner at the recent November Monthly Meeting. Malcolm Ide's *Dendrobium* Calico Twist 'Mandy Lea' FCC/AOC (NSW).



The lighting at the monthly meeting was not sufficient for a proper photo so this is the official photograph from 2020 when the plant was awarded an FCC award. This year the plant has more spikes and is even more magnificent than when it was previously awarded. Photo on the right shows the plant this month. Congratulations to Malcom.



4. President's Message:

I do not need to reiterate our activities and accomplishments as they were covered in the official Annual Report, but as well as all our hopes for 2022 with brighter lights at the end of shorter tunnels, I think I have a sure sign that things are definitely opening up. During the week I received a visit from a door-to-door salesman (offering me the opportunity of purchasing shutters for my windows), very much pre-COVID whether welcome or otherwise!! Of course, it is more likely a hail-related economic imperative but, as we have learned over the past couple of years, the focus must be on solutions rather than problems, with a proactive vision to ensure that our Society grows and meets the needs of all members.

So – thank you again to everyone for your continued support in often constrained circumstances. The New Year holds lots of positive promises, including our delayed 50th celebrations in April, more external activities, and of course the continued performance of our beautiful orchids, nurtured by so many excellent growers. Now, don't forget our Luncheon at The Greenhouse Tavern on 4th December prior to celebrating Christmas (a *Happy* one) and the New Year (a *Healthy* one).

Warm regards and very best wishes to everyone.

Carole Davis, President.



CHRISTMAS "DAD JOKES":

- ◆ What is the best Christmas present in the world?

A broken drum, you can't beat it.

- ◆ Why does Santa have three gardens?

So he can Ho Ho Ho

- ◆ What did Adam say the day before Christmas?

"It's Christmas Eve!"

- ◆ What happened to the man who stole an Advent Calendar?

He got 25 days!

- ◆ Why are Santa's Reindeer allowed to travel on Christmas Eve?

They have Herd Immunity.

5. MEMBERS CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON:

Instead of a formal December Monthly Meeting we will hold a member luncheon (though you can bring your spouses, partners, etc) on Saturday, 4th December at the Greenhouse Tavern from 12 noon. Details are provided in the poster on the right of this page.

Members are encouraged to bring one plant for a Popular Vote Competition.

If you wish to attend please contact Paige Sinclair to secure your place.

Looking forward to seeing as many members as possible so together we can celebrate the end of 2021 and look forward to a great Christmas and a fabulous New Year.

(Unfortunately, at this stage you need to be double vaccinated in order to attend the Greenhouse Tavern)

The CHOS Christmas Lunch 4th December 2021 Greenhouse Tavern 12:00 -15:30

**Two Course Meal for \$35 (less a \$10 subsidy) or
Three Course Meal for \$45 (less a \$10 subsidy)
Plus each person will receive a drink voucher for \$5.00**

Popular Vote Competition
Members are asked to bring one orchid
(prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd places)

**Please contact Paige Sinclair on 0427 59 1901
or via email to chorchidsociety@gmail.com
to secure your place and partners are welcome!**

6. A PRODUCT WORTH TRYING:



The name says it all!

If we are looking to save time in the greenhouse and still achieve a worthwhile result then this product may be the answer. As the name suggests it controls three of the orchid growers worst enemies—fungus, insects and mites.

Trifend works in three ways; it provides systemic control of some fungus disease, kills insects by contact and stomach action and controls two spotted mites.

Available sizes: 200ml, 500ml and 1Litre containers.

Paige Sinclair reports that it is highly effective against sucking insects such as Aphids.

Google your local supplier or purchase online from sources such as eBay, Nuleaf or Fernland. If you have already used this product then let our members know of your results.

7. IS IT *Coelogyne pandurata* OR SOMETHING ELSE?

Coelogyne pandurata is one of the spectacular green *Coelogyne*'s that every *Coelogyne* collector aims to grow. They have been difficult to obtain in Australia until recently when flaked supplies of *Coelogyne pandurata* have increased and some are now available from the better orchid suppliers.

Many a grower has purchased a plant labelled *Coelogyne pandurata* (and probably paid good money for it), had high expectations, only to be deflated when the plant flowered and revealed itself to be the hybrid *Coelogyne Burfordiense* (and usually a less expensive plant). *Coel. Burfordiense* is a large plant, has a large semi-pendulous spike and has patches of **brown warts** on the keels of the lip.

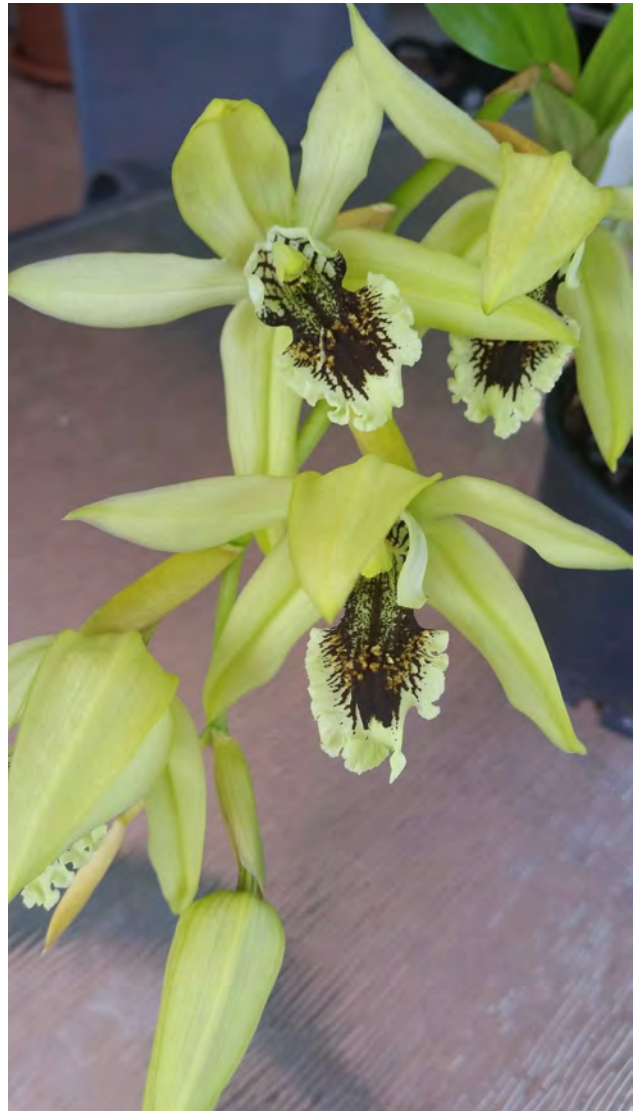
A true *Coel. pandurata* has ink black markings on the flowers and no brown hairs or brown warts.



Bruce Hall's *Coel. pandurata*

Could also be confused with *Coelogyne mayeriana* which is another of the green flowered *Coelogyne*s. *Coel. mayeriana* is also a large plant but has smaller, upright flowers. The pseudobulbs are rounded in cross section.

Coel. pandurata has flattened pseudobulbs.



Carole Davis's *Coel. Burfordiense*.

(This is a hybrid between *Coel. pandurata* and *Coel. asperata*)

8. COMMITTEE MEETING REPORT, NOVEMBER, 2021:

The November Committee Meeting was held at 6 Sunrise Drive, Boambee East on 9th November, 2021.

Topics discussed included:

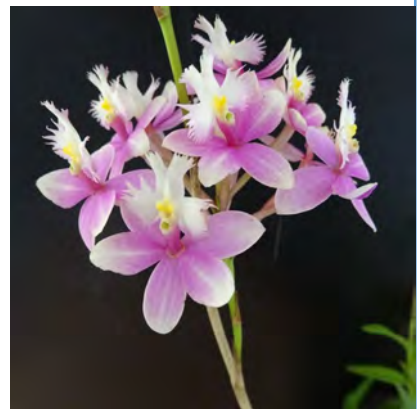
- Welcome to two new Committee members—Ann Deans(Committee) and Annie Houston (Secretary). (Annie retires shortly and will officially take up her duties from January). Congratulations to all of the Committee on their re-election (full list on page 2).
- Allocation of additional Committee duties for 2022.
- Christmas Meeting and Awards Luncheon on Saturday, 4th December at 12 noon at Green House Tavern. All members are to be subsidised at \$10 per head for the lunch and given a \$5 drink voucher. Total meal costs are 2 courses for \$35 or 3 courses for \$45. Paige is collecting the names of those attending. Attendees need to be double vaccinated. Details of payment methods will be negotiated with the venue and details given to members prior to the event.
- New membership approved for Tracy King and Matt Connell (Fees paid for 2022).
- Growing Plant Competition for 2022—*Epidendrum* Princess Valley ‘Blushing’. 35 plants sold and allocated to interested members.
- All monthly meetings and the Autumn and Spring Shows have been booked at the Coffs Botanic Gardens for 2022.
- Monthly Meeting Guest Speakers, Member Workshops and other activities are in the planning stage for 2022 (See Calendar on page 2 for those already confirmed).
- Next Committee Meeting scheduled for 25th January and will be held at Shearwater Restaurant from 10.30am.

9. 2022 GROWING PLANT COMPETITION:

The new Growing Plant is *Epidendrum* Princess Valley ‘Blushing’.

35 plants have been sold and the draw for allocation to members took place at the November Monthly meeting. The first judging for the 2022 competition will take place at the February meeting. There are five (5) plants still available (Sorry, only one per member) at \$10 each. Why not purchase a plant for your collection. You don’t have to go into the Competition if you don’t wish to.

Message or ring Bob Southwell to buy a plant (0417 695 834).



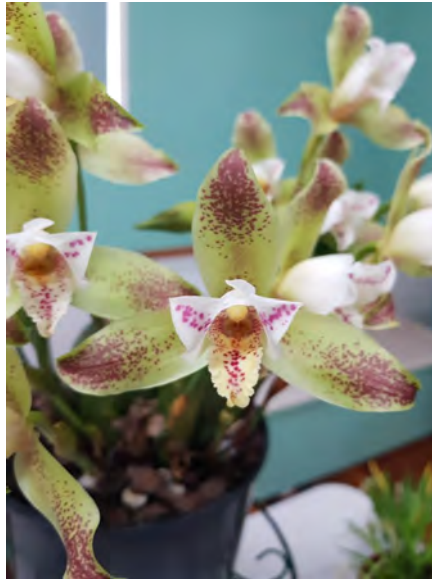
10. FACEBOOK REPORT: (From Paige Sinclair)

Coffs Harbour Orchid Society Facebook November 2021 – Currently, the Coffs Harbour Orchid Society has 219 likes and 243 followers on our Facebook page. This is up by 10 people for the October 2021 period.

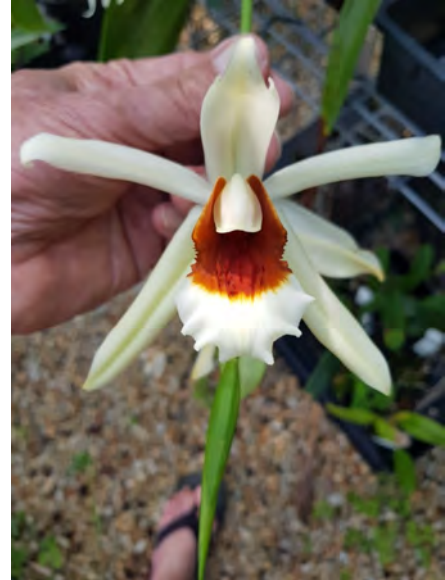
What's in Bloom Facebook Page - The 'What's in Bloom' Facebook page had the following insights. Posts Comments Reactions Members 32 38 476 84 Please continue to post images of your flowering orchids over the next few months, as our next meeting is not until February 2022



Dendrobium loddigesii



Lycaste deppei (B & J Lennon)



Coelogyne Kirribilli 'Hubert Dixson'
(One of the largest Coelogyne flowers)

11. SPONSORS SPOT: Shearwater Restaurant

They support us so please support them

Shearwater Restaurant, offering you cherished moments alongside friends and loved ones within its serene, tucked-away location on the water's edge of the scenic Coffs Creek.

With mother nature's panorama serving as a backdrop to the marvellous food and beverage creations we serve, time spent at Shearwater is a community treasure, worth sharing.



Shearwater's for sharing. With friends, family, companions and colleagues. Atop our weatherproof balcony, for an experience well-remembered.



Indulge in the fruitful creations of our virtuous chefs and bar staff after work, over the weekend, amidst the holidays, or during your lunch break.

Located at The Promenade, 321 Harbour Drive, Coffs Harbour. Book a table on 02 6651 6053.

(12). SLOW RELEASE—FAST RELIEF:

How often have we heard the following? :-

- . 'I don't have time to fertilize my orchids'
- . 'Orchids need to be fertilized "weekly, weakly"'
- . 'It is best to alternate fertilizers '
- . "Use "Bloom Boosters" (high potassium, high phosphorus) on flowering sized plants and high nitrogen fertilizers on seedlings'
- . 'Slow release fertilizers are no good for orchids because they burn the roots'
- . 'My orchids grow alright without any fertilizer'

If we accepted each of these statements at face value we could be excused for believing that fertilizing orchids is quite complex. While there is an element of truth in each of these comments, overall there is also about as much myth as fact. For those who value simplicity, the following may assist with your fertilizing program.

The Basics

Orchids cannot grow and flower unless they are supplied with all of the major and minor (trace) elements (TE). The major elements (ie. those required in the greatest amounts) are nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K). Calcium (Ca), magnesium (Mg), sulphur (S) and iron (Fe) are required in lesser amounts. The elements that are required in trace amounts only are boron (Bo), copper (Cu), manganese (Mn), molybdenum (Mo) and zinc (Zn). Orchids grown in organic media, such as bark or sphagnum, can obtain some of their nutrients from the medium itself. However, inorganic media, such as diatomite, granite ('pink rock') or Quinkan do not supply any nutrients. All nutrients must be supplied from external sources. For dedicated souls, there is no cultural reason why these nutrients should not be supplied by regular foliar applications of a highly soluble complete fertilizer (ie. one containing all nutrients in the correct proportions). There is however a simpler way to fertilize and still obtain equivalent results. For those who are time poor, lazy or who want to use their time more efficiently, a simple and highly effective solution to your fertilizing problems is to use an appropriate slow release fertilizer.

There is a bewildering array of slow release fertilizers at most garden outlets. Which one is best for orchids? Should I use a 3,6,9 or 12 month type? The choice is simplified if we understand that '3month' means that at an ambient temperature of 21degrees Celsius and in the presence of moisture, the granules will release a steady stream of nutrients

over about 3 months. However, for every 10 degree rise in ambient temperature, the active life of the granules is halved. Thus, at 31 degrees, a 3 month fertilizer will remain active for about 6 weeks and at 41 degrees it will remain active for only 3 weeks!!! At these higher temperatures, the release of nutrients is so rapid that the roots may burn and the supply of nutrients is soon exhausted. Basically, in our region, slow release fertilizers last for between 50 -60% of their stated time. For that reason, it is recommended that 9 month forms are used. They have a much greater margin of error and minimize the number of yearly applications required. An application of 8-9 month in Spring will provide a steady supply of nutrients for about the next 5 months. Another application in Autumn, when watering frequency and temperatures are both decreasing, will provide nutrients for about 6-7 months. Spring and Autumn applications are required for those orchids that are in continuous growth or that flush at least twice/year. The cattleya and oncidium alliances, hardcane dens and the vandaceous group are examples of this type of orchid. For orchids that have a winter dormancy, such as softcane dens and catasetums, the dose should be restricted to a single application in Spring only.

Not all slow release fertilizers contain all of the required elements. Since we are trying to simplify the system, the first step is to choose a slow release fertilizer that specifies NPK + Mg + TE. The only nutrient that is lacking is calcium (Ca). Under most circumstances, town water contains sufficient Ca for optimum growth and flowering of most orchids. However, there is no Ca in tank water. Symptoms of calcium deficiency (progressive blackening of the tips of new growths generally with a yellow halo preceding the blackening) can occur where tank water is used exclusively. The deficiency can be corrected by using calcium nitrate as a foliar spray. Even though town water is used, calcium deficiency can occur, particularly in some cattleya alliance clones, when high amounts of NPK are used. Top dressing the medium with powdered dolomite (Ca + Mg) will correct the deficiency.

For flowering-sized plants, optimum growth and flowering is promoted by using fertilizer that has an NPK ratio of about 10:5:15. However, N ratios up to 15 are quite satisfactory for both flowering-sized plants and for seedlings and help reduce complexity in that one fertilizer fits all. A top dressing of 8-9 month 15:5:15 + Mg +TE at re-potting will help the plant to establish and maintain vigorous growth. A note of caution....Addition of slow release fertilizer to organic media will accelerate the rate of breakdown of those media. There are therefore distinct advantages in using inorganic media particularly if heavy applications of fertilizer are used. Heavy applications of slow release also seem to deter cockroaches from taking up residence in orchids potted in diatomite. The definitive studies have not been done but it is my experience that the heavier the application of slow release, the fewer the cockroach problems. This observation is confined to diatomite, certainly not to bark and charcoal, which cockies just adore. Perhaps someone should do some further investigating!

Application Rates

These depend on your particular set of growing conditions eg watering frequency and

type of medium, but for most orchids growing in 7-15mm diatomite in 100mm pots, I apply a level teaspoon of 8-9 month 15:5:15+Mg+TE at each application in Spring or Autumn. For a 200mm pot containing mainly 15-25mm diatomite I increase the dose to a heaped tablespoon.

For plants growing on slabs, I put the required amount of slow release in a piece of stocking and tie it to the top of the slab so that each watering provides a steady flow of nutrients to the roots below. For those who want maximum performance from their orchids, there is no cultural reason why appropriate concentrations of foliar fertilizers should not be used in conjunction with the slow release fertilizer.

The availability of a huge range of slow release fertilizers allows the selection and use of the type best suited to your conditions. Appropriate types have effectively eliminated the need for the time-consuming task of fertilizing 'weekly, weakly'. The results speak for themselves. Next time you re-pot or plan your fertilizer schedule, maybe you should try an appropriate slow release fertilizer.

You might be surprised at the results!!!

Friendii. [Printed with permission from the newsletter of the Rockhampton Orchid Society]

13. BARK SUPPLIES FROM CHOS FOR THE CURRENT POTTING SEASON:

The Society stocks 40 litre bags of NZ Orchiata Bark selling at \$27 each and 35 litre bags also selling at \$27 each (Sorry, but there has been a slight price rise). There are four sizes – 6 to 9mm; 9 to 12mm; 12 to 18mm and 18 to 25mm.

Contact Paige Sinclair on 0427 591 901 or paigesinclair@me.com.

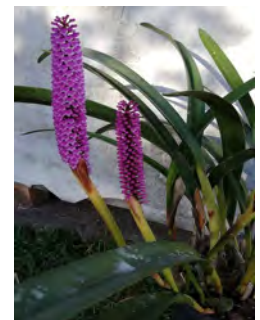
Remember if you desire quality plants then always use quality potting mix. We now have new stock on hand and now available from Paige.

PLEASE NOTE THAT PAIGE IS NOW HANDLING ALL CHOS BARK SALES

14. ORCHID REQUEST:

Do you have any spare plants of the Candlestick Orchid, *Arpophyllum spicatum* for sale. Hans and Sue from Dark Star Orchids are interested in purchasing one or more plants.

Contact Hans Schaible on 0416 195 832 or email Sue or Hans at info@darkstarorchids.com.au.

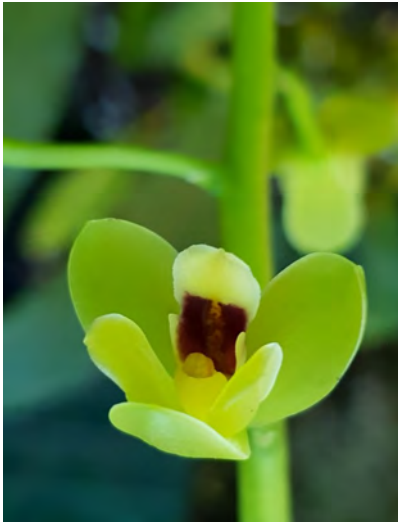


Your orchids are not looking healthy? You cant get rid of fungus infections? It could be that the pH (acidity/alkalinity) of your town or tank water is too high or the pH of your potting mix is too acidic.

First step is to test the pH of the water supply and of the potting mix. The Society has a pH Meter that all members can borrow (comes complete with instructions) and measure the respective pH. You can then use a variety of methods to alter the pH if required (Eg: Lime,etc). Contact Bob Southwell (0417 695 834) to borrow the meter.



ORCHIDS IN FLOWER THIS MONTH



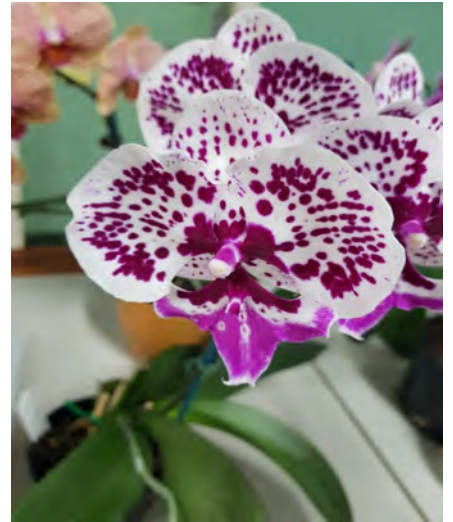
Cymbidium madidum

(Bob Southwell)

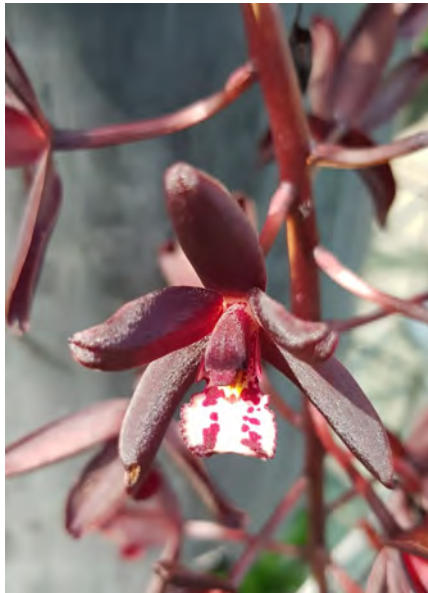


Dendrobium Bohemian Rhapsody

(Bill & Jenny Lennon)



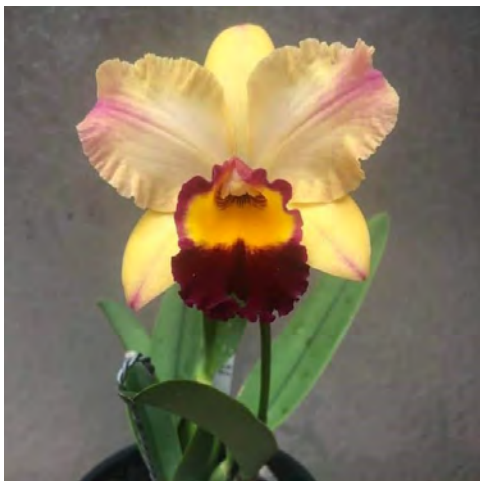
Phalaenopsis Princess Leila



Cymbidium Australian Midnight 'Tinonee'



Dendrobium thysiflorum



Rlc. Toshies Magic 'Southern Cross'

(Helen Seiver)



Cattleya schilleriana

