

COFFS ORCHID NEWS – MARCH, 2022

PUBLICATION OF THE COFFS HARBOUR ORCHID SOCIETY

P.O. Box 801, Coffs Harbour. NSW 2450

Email: chorchidsociety@gmail.com

Web: www.coffsorchidsociety.org.au

1. EDITORIAL:

2021 marked fifty years since the Coffs Harbour Orchid Society separated from the Coffs Horticultural Society in 1971 and became a stand-alone organisation. It was planned to celebrate this event with a luncheon at Opal Cove Resort during October last year but Covid-19 intervened and, like the Japanese Summer Olympics, the event was postponed to April this year. Preparations are now in full swing and everything is in order for an awesome luncheon at Opal Cove, Coffs Harbour, on Saturday, 2nd April, 2022. The only ingredient we are missing is you as a member of CHOS.

When someone turns fifty years of age, when a couple reach fifty years of marriage or any organisation marks fifty years of its existence, it is always a time for celebrations. Like a Golden Wedding Anniversary this is a time when we need to celebrate together the success of the Coffs Harbour Orchid Society which continues to go from strength to strength. I am asking you to join us at Opal Cove for a few hours on the 2nd April. This will provide the opportunity to celebrate the Society, its membership and its achievements. Tickets will be subsidised at 50% by the Society and priced at \$25 per person. Spouses and partners are welcome to attend (at the reduced price). The tickets have now available for purchase from Paige Sinclair. Details of how to contact Paige are published elsewhere in this newsletter. You can pay in cash, cheque or by Direct Deposit into the Society's bank account (list 50th Luncheon in the Reference Section). Each ticket is numbered and a Lucky Door Prize will be awarded during the luncheon. If you have already purchased a ticket please note the new luncheon date on your calendar so you don't miss this important event. If you wish to purchase or reserve tickets then please contact Paige Sinclair in the near future.

Members are asked to bring along one flowering orchid for judging in the "Orchid Of The Day" competition. Prize money and a trophy will be presented to the winner.

Refreshments will be provided on each table and there will be a bar operating for those who wish to purchase additional drinks.

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CHOS COMMITTEE 2022**CONTACT DETAILS**

<u>PRESIDENT:</u>	CAROLE DAVIS	026658 1354
<u>VICE PRESIDENT:</u>	BOB SOUTHWELL	0417 695 834 bssouthwell@bigpond.com
<u>SECRETARY:</u>	ANNIE HOUSTON	0410 628 662 anniehouston@bigpond.com
<u>TREASURER:</u>	PAIGE SINCLAIR	0427 591 901 paigesinclair@me.com
<u>COMMITTEE:</u>	ANN DEANS	0466 265 357
	LEONIE EVERITT	0427 146 149
	JUDITH WHITING	0438 187 028
<u>NEWSLETTER EDITOR:</u>	BOB SOUTHWELL	0417 695 834 bssouthwell@bigpond.com

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 new Mazda 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

3 Mar, 2022 - Member's Workshop—Deflasking for Everyone

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 Spaces"

2 June— Member Presentations

21 July—Hans Schiabe— "Dendrochilums"

4 Aug—Malcolm Ide— " Growing Cymbidiums"

Note: The Committee meets on Tuesday following the Monthly Meeting.

CHOS BANK DETAILS

BSB No: 533-000

ACCOUNT No: 32817199



Guest Speaker is Jody Cutajar from the NSW Central Coast. Jody is a highly qualified and acclaimed orchid grower, judge and a well respected member of the orchid growing fraternity. Jody will talk on his "Brazilian Orchid Road Trip" which contains a nice mix of orchid and cultural information.

It will be a great event and I look forward to meeting you there so we can celebrate the Golden Anniversary together.

Bob Southwell



3. MEMBERS' ORCHIDS IN FLOWER THIS MONTH:

From the greenhouse of Helen Seiver:



Aerides odorata var. alba x sib



Den. bigibbum



Den. Red Ballerina



**Rlc. Goldernell 'Burdekin'
x C. Circle of Life 'Winsome'**



Cattleya Mini Purple 'Tamami'



Left: Rlc. Mem. Floyd Irvin Bachrach 'Hsinying'
Right: Rlc. Angels Horizon 'Rosella'



4. DEFLASKING WORKSHOP AT MARCH MONTHLY MEETING:

Instead of a guest speaker at the next monthly meeting, the Committee has decided to fund a deflasking workshop to be held after supper. This will provide members with the skills and knowledge on how to remove seedlings from a flask and place in plastic tubes filled with sphagnum moss. Flasks can be purchased with as few as six to twelve plants in them and they would be ideal to share between two or three members. This will enable members to obtain new, improved varieties of orchids for a relatively small shared cost.

It is planned that each member will take home two or three different seedlings from the workshop.

The three flasks that will be used are shown below. Each flask holds thirty to forty seedlings.



Cattleya Rth. Nel Hammer Vanda Robert's Delight 'Katzuura' Rhyncostylis gigantea 'Ply'

5. MONTHLY MEETING COMPETITIONS:

Please note that plants must be benched by 7.15pm (also includes the Growing Competition Plants). Judging will begin from 7.20pm.

Plants are now awarded 1st (Blue Dot), 2nd (Red Dot) and 3rd (Green Dot) place and awarded 3, 2 and 1 points respectively. Popular Vote will receive three points and shared winners receive three points each.

It is very important that the Monthly Competition Cards are filled out with the plant name and the correct category number. You need to record your name on the back.

NO NAME OR NO CARD EQUALS NO POINTS SCORE

Copies of the Monthly Competition Cards are available at the monthly meeting or can be downloaded from the CHOS website (Go to About/Forms).

Congratulations to Paige Sinclair on achieving a great result in the OSNSW/AOC Orchid Judges theory and practical examinations. Paige is now an Associate Judge.

Congratulations!

MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR 2022:

2022 Membership Fees for CHOS are now due and must be paid by Thursday 5th May. Single membership is set at \$10 and family membership at \$15.

You can pay Paige Sinclair, Treasurer, with cash or cheque at a Monthly Meeting (place in an envelope with your name on the front). You can also use a credit card at the meeting or pay by Direct Deposit into the Society BCU Account (include your Name and Membership in the reference). Bank details are on page 2 of this newsletter. You can also post the membership fee to CHOS, PO Box 801, Coffs Harbour 2450.

IT WOULD BE APPRECIATED IF FEES COULD BE PAID ASAP



Mick walks into Paddy's barn and catches him dancing naked in front of a tractor.

Mick says, "Oh, no, Paddy, what ya doing?"

Paddy says, "Well me and Mary haven't been getting on in the bedroom lately & the therapist recommended I do something sexy to a tractor."



6. CHOS AUTUMN SHOW:

Dates: Saturday 23rd April and Sunday 24th April. **Venue:** Coffs Harbour Botanic Gardens

Benching of Entries: Friday 22nd April - 3pm to 6pm. Saturday 23rd - 6.30am to 7.30am

Judging: 8am to 10am Saturday 23rd. Show Opens to public from 10am.

Presentation Of Prizes: Sunday, 3pm. **Show Set-up:** Friday from 1pm.

Raffle tickets and plants will be available for sale.

The Show Schedule and Duty Roster will be available soon.

DATES TO NOTE:

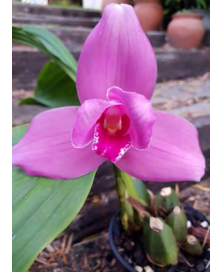
Tinonee Orchid Nursery Open Day (probably the final one) : 9 and 10 July, 2022. The Society usually visits Tinonee on the Saturday. Guest Speakers and lots of orchid bargains. More details as we get closer to the event but a good one to mark on your calendar.

St. Ives Orchid Fair—19-21 August, 2022. St. Ives Showground, Mona Vale Road, St. Ives. Considered to be one of the best Orchid Fairs in NSW.

AOC Australian Orchid Conference and Show : 31st August to 4th September. Logan Metro Sports and Events Centre, Crestmead Qld.

7. AGENDA FOR GENERAL MEETING , 3RD MARCH, 2022:

1. Welcome **(Judges: Bruce Hall and Betty Pittaway)**
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of February Monthly Meeting – as printed in Newsletter
4. Correspondence - Annie Houston
5. Treasurer’s Report – Paige Sinclair
6. Sponsor’s Spot – Coffs Harbour Produce
7. Presentation to New Members.
8. Table Talk.
9. Popular Vote – Bruce Hall/ Judith Whiting
10. Results of Growing Competition—March Judging
11. Raffle – Judith Whiting
12. General Business – Membership Fees now due (\$10/\$15)
 - Tickets for 50th Anniversary Luncheon—2nd April, 2022
 - CHOS Autumn Show— 23 to 24 April, 2022
 - Agricultural Show Display—13th May, 2022
 - Other General Business
- 13 Supper Break – 15 minutes
14. Deflasking Orchids—Bob Southwell and Assistants—Members Workshop



8. CHANGES TO THE CHOS COVID-19 MONTHLY MEETING PLAN:

Finally most Covid-19 rules have been relaxed or completely lifted or remain as optional.

It is suggested that you be aware of the following:

- Use the Hand Sanitiser supplied if you wish.
- Each member to sign the CHOS Meeting Register. You do not have to use the QR Code or sign a Covid -19 Register.
- The 2 square metre rule per person has been lifted.
- Masks DO NOT have to be worn inside the room. However, if you feel more comfortable by wearing a mask then please do so.
- Members are asked to bring flowering orchids for the monthly competition.
- Please bring something suitable for a shared supper. CHOS will provide tea and coffee.
- Once again we will provide members with name tags for wearing during the meeting.

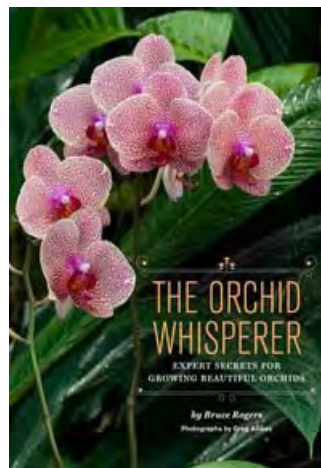
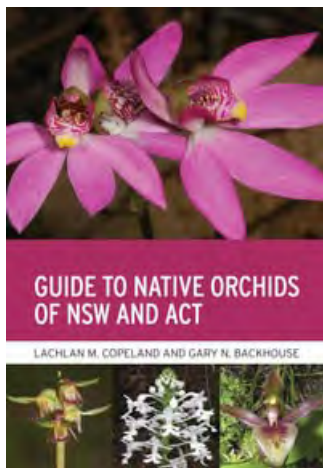
If you have any Covid-19 symptoms or are positive from a RAT or PCR Test then please do not attend.

9. COMMITTEE REPORT:

The Committee Meeting was conducted at Shearwater Restaurant, Coffs Harbour, on Tuesday 8th February. All Committee members were in attendance.

- Discussion of final plans for the rescheduled CHOS 50th Anniversary Luncheon at Opal Cove on Saturday 2nd April, 2022.
- Pepper Print are unable to print the updated version of our Orchid Care Pamphlet. President Carole will approach other printing firms in an attempt to have it printed before the Autumn Show. Consideration is being given to transferring all our printing business to a more reliable firm.
- A Deflasking Workshop will be held during the March Monthly meeting. Procedures discussed. An instruction sheet will be issued to all members attending.
- Autumn Show—23rd and 24th April at Botanic Gardens. Show Schedule approved and published. The Show Roster is almost completed. Plants are requested for the Sales Table. Those selling NSW Native Orchids will be required to complete the Native Licence Form held by the Society.
- Coffs Harbour Agricultural Show—14—15th May. CHOS to conduct an orchid display. More details will be provided when they are available.
- New Library books (donated by Annie Houston) are available for loan. They are (a) "Guide to Native Orchids of NSW and ACT" and (b) "The Orchid Whisperer".
- Bunnings have asked the Society to conduct a BBQ during either March or May. Dates yet to be confirmed.

Next Committee Meeting will be held at Shearwater on 8th March, 2022.



POPULAR VOTE AT THE FEBRUARY MONTHLY MEETING:

Congratulations to Peter Gough for this colourful Vanda which took out the popular vote.

Vanda Trevor Rathbone

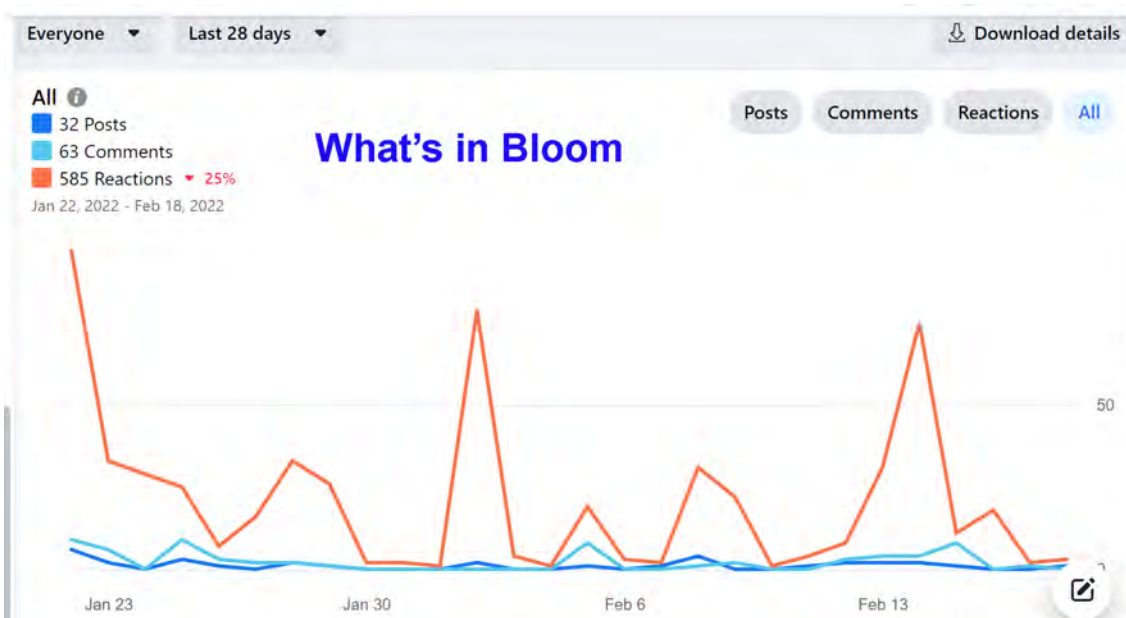
10. FACEBOOK REPORT: (From Paige Sinclair)

Coffs Harbour Orchid Society Facebook

February 2022 – Currently, the Coffs Harbour Orchid Society has 255 likes and 272 followers on our Facebook page. This is up by 10 people for the January to February 2022 period.

What’s in Bloom Facebook Page

The ‘What’s in Bloom’ Facebook page had the following insights.



Please continue to post images of your flowering orchids for everyone to enjoy.

11. SPONSORS SPOT: Coffs Harbour Produce

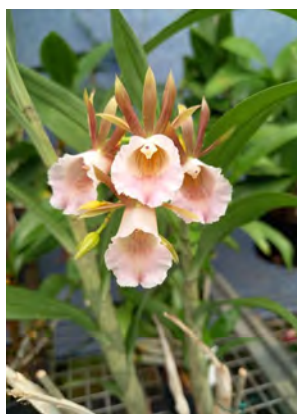
Coffs Harbour Produce is located at 26 June Street in Coffs Harbour. They carry a good range of fertilisers, insecticides and fungicides for orchids, as well as general garden needs. When you next visit let them know you are member of the Coffs Harbour Orchid Society. Phone 02 6652 2599.

They support us, so please support them

From the Orchid House of Malcolm Ide:



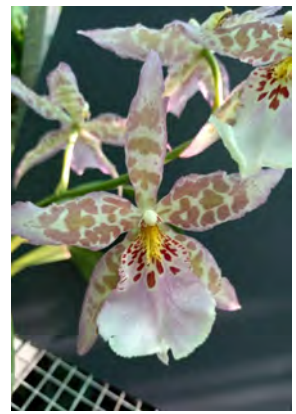
Catasetum Orchidglade



Galeandra lucastris



Dendrobium dearei



Beallara Tropic Tom

12. BITS AND PIECES:

- ◆ The CHOS 50th Anniversary Luncheon was postponed from October, 2021 due to Covid-19 restrictions. This has now been rescheduled for Saturday, 2nd April from 12 noon at Opal Cove, Coffs Harbour. Jody Cutajar will be the Guest Speaker. Tickets are available from Paige at the subsidised price of \$25 each (plus bring your spouse or partner). Make your reservation by purchasing a ticket at the March meeting.).
- ◆ Growing Competition, 2022: Don't forget to bring your Epidendrum along for judging at the March meeting. Remember to include the numbered tag in the pot. It was great to see so many plants benched at the February meeting.
- ◆ Dick Cooper recently sent me the following item about the suspension of Malathion.

"I found out recently that Malathion (aka Maldison 500) was suspended by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority from manufacture in, or imported into, Australia with effect from 30 March 2016. Stocks could still be sold and used but most suppliers of horticultural products have now sold out.

Malathion (aka Maldison 500) is an organo-phosphorus insecticide manufactured by NuFarm and was banned for health reasons. The Govt regulator indicated that it could be a safety hazard and may be harmful to people because it can interfere with the nervous system.

The Manager at Ace Ohlson Horticultural Supplies, Woolgoolga recommended Conguard® RTU as an alternate product. Conguard is produced by Searles Garden Products. A similar product is known as Confidor (produced by Bayer). Last time I priced them, Conguard sold at a lower price.

For humans these are reported to be of low toxicity but are designed to kill pests on contact and systemically via plant saps. When spraying on orchids or other affected plants, spray both the top and undersides of the leaves. They should eliminate most sap-sucking insects. Note: For effective control and safety, always apply insecticides as per the product directions."

Queensland International Orchid Fair
Friday & Saturday
25th & 26th February 2022
Open Friday 8am-4pm &
Saturday 8am-3pm

Leading Queensland, Interstate & International Orchid Nurseries, and nursery supplies.

Venue
Belmont Shooting Complex
1485 Old Cleveland Road
Belmont

FREE ADMISSION

BUSES WELCOME
Refreshments Available

Enter Complex from Old Cleveland Road & follow signs

Vendors include the following

Alice's Orchids	Orchids Mackay
Brisbane Orchid Supplies	Orchid Species Plus
Dark Star Orchids	Pacific Beach Orchids
Daryl Banks Orchids	Robertson Orchids
Fame Orchids	RoIn Farm orchids
Fong Ping Orchids	Rosella Orchids
M n S Orchids	Salcison & Daughters
Nicky's Slippers	Thornes Orchids
Orchid Mania	Wendernere Nursery

For more information contact: ...
Barry Kable 0414 725 294, Steve Swan 0407 748 532,
Todd Marshall 07 3206 4305 or follow us on Facebook

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. VALE ALAN MERRIMAN:

Members will be saddened to hear of the passing of Alan Merriman. Alan spoke at a pre-Covid Woolgoolga District Orchid Society meeting at which he passed on some of his vast experience in orchid growing, especially on the topics of fertilizers and pests and diseases. Many members also used Alan's products and received copies of his informative newsletters. Alan will be sadly missed by all.

We pass on our condolences to Alan's wife, Miriam.

Below is an article written by Alan's good friend Jim Brydie and printed with permission from the KOS February Bulletin.

Farewell to a good friend and teacher - Alan Merriman (By Jim Brydie)

On the 11th December, 2021, our Sydney orchid community lost one of its most generous hearted and hard-working members. Alan was aged 83 when he died and despite declining health in the past couple of years he would still always begin a conversation with his famous catchphrase "Now what can I do to help you today my friend".



ABOVE- Alan & Miriam at a Flower Grower seminar



ABOVE- An Annual prize giving at BM&PDOS, Alan's favourite club

Like just about every orchid club in Sydney and also dozens more in country areas, and even interstate, our society (KOS) asked for Alan's help as a guest speaker many times over the years and he always agreed and he always came. He was a hugely knowledgeable grower in all aspects of orchid culture but his knowledge and expertise in pesticides, fungicides, fertilisers and other orchid culture chemicals was unmatched.

Miriam, his wife and partner in life, tells me that he began growing orchids in 1963 after his aunt left a plant on his doorstep and he had to find out what to do with it. It is a testament to his determination to learn and understand that Alan became one of the most experienced and knowledgeable orchid growers in Sydney. In the early days, Alan mostly grew Cymbidiums, Cattleyas, and Paphiopedilums, but like most of us he progressed to growing just about every orchid his environment would allow.

For over twenty years, Alan was head grower at Cecil Park Orchids in Sydney's outer western suburbs, which was the biggest export nursery in Australia at the time, and he maintained that position until the nursery was taken by the government as part of its development of the M7 motorway project.

At the same time Alan was involved with the administration of a number of orchid clubs, and at different times was President of Parramatta society and also Blue Mountains and Penrith District society. Wherever he went, Alan always had a special interest in introducing new growers to the wonderful hobby of orchid growing and he did his best to make sure that new growers quickly learned the underlying basics of orchid culture. From 1988, he and Miriam even ran regular beginners classes at their home at Glenbrook in the Blue Mountains. Alan was the main teacher at those classes, but he also organised experienced growers and topic specialists from all over Sydney to join in as guest lecturers. His classes continued right up until the covid crisis eventually closed them down just a few years back. Alan and Miriam's classes must have been responsible for many hundreds of orchid enthusiasts getting started with a sound background and I feel sure that many of them today are the backbone of many of our Sydney societies.

On a personal level, I was proud to be asked to help out at one session of Alan's famous classes. It was a wonderful experience seeing such enthusiastic new growers keen to soak up as much information and experience as could be supplied, and it was all achieved in such a family friendly environment. I also frequently asked for Alan's help to vet articles that I was preparing for Ku-Ring-gai society members. He was always happy to offer his help, and I was very thankful to benefit from his advice and expertise.

He was such a wonderful, generous hearted man who never expected a thank you. Many of us will miss him greatly but we can all at least celebrate him for what he did and for his great attitude to life. Farewell Alan my friend.

15. THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY/SLIMY:

Part 1 - No free pass for the baddies

by Jenny Richardson

(Printed with permission from Jenny Richardson, KOS Bulletin, Feb, 2022)

I love Mother Nature in all her beauty and wonder but also in her weird and wonderful. I don't mind *most* creepy crawlies & have even been known to assign 'pet' status to orb-weaver spiders - providing they don't spin their webs across my regular paths through the garden. I'm sure any of you born in Australia know the feeling of walking into an orb-weaver's web - it's one of the strongest & stickiest there is and horrible to get off but although the spiders are quite substantial they are not aggressive, nor are they toxic to humans.

However, there are exceptions to every rule, and for me Dendrobium beetles are one bug for which I just can't conjure an affinity. Granted, the beetles themselves are quite attractive with their bright orange to yellow colour with distinctive black patterning. To some extent they look similar to one of our good bugs, the ladybird beetle, but more on that later.

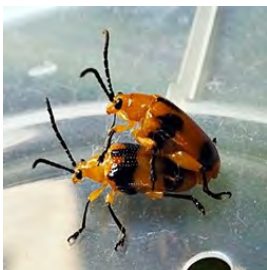


The damage done by Dendrobium beetles far belies their size (~12mm). The scientific name is *Stethopachys formosa*, and they are part of family Chrysomelidae, which is one of the largest beetle families with over 37,000 described species, possibly up to 60,000 if estimates of undescribed species are included. Australia has ~3000 species, of which over 250 can be found in Sydney. refer [Encyclopedia of Entomology, australian.museum/learn/animals/insects/orchid-beetle/](https://australian.museum/learn/animals/insects/orchid-beetle/)

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Research from 1994 documented Dendrobium beetles in NSW, QLD & around Darwin in NT. At that time beetles were reported on a total of 27 species and 67 varieties of orchid. ([Gough, Bartraeau & Montgomery, 1994 Australian Entomologist, 21 \(4\) July pgs 49-54](#)). In 2018 Wayne Turville from the Australian Orchid Nursery said that they don't see Dendrobium beetles in the Mornington Peninsula (75km south east of Melbourne) but noted that they seemed to start around Lakes Entrance in far East Victoria, so the rotters seem to be migrating further south over time, perhaps during milder winters.

It used to blow me away that my brother could accurately identify some little spec flying through the air some distance away as 'such & such' a beetle. However since becoming interested in orchids, and unfortunately via much practice, I can now identify a Dendrobium beetle in flight and have even caught the occasional one mid-air with a good swipe. With the cooler lead into summer this year I thought they were not going to be so bad but the onset of hot days we had several weeks ago was enough to trigger them hatching, and it has turned into a bad season. I have been squishing multiple beetles every day since the heat set in. NOT HAPPY JAN!



There are four stages in their life cycle: beetle - egg - larva - pupa, and back to beetle. Most of you who have been growing orchids in Sydney for a while will be all too familiar with the beetles - as shown by the action photo to the left, this is how the trouble starts.

When you are trying to study them and you see some on your orchid, it takes quite a degree of self-control not to go into eradication mode immediately. Instead you race into the house, grab your camera & hope the little devils have not moved onto another of your tender plants before you return having lost your chance to prevent the on-going banquet of your prized collection.

Personally, I have never seen their eggs but they are apparently little yellow cylinders, laid in a line with mucus joining them. Harold McQueen's (Goodna, QLD) photo above, was taken from lepidoptera.butterflyhouse.com.au/none/formosa.html. After about 10 days tiny larvae will hatch from the eggs. Each larva will eat until it reaches up to about 15mm long, then builds itself a little waxy spaghetti cocoon to protect it from dehydration whilst it pupates. In season, depending on the weather, the adult beetle will emerge in about two to three weeks. The life cycle lasts for a couple of months. <http://www.orchids-world.com/general/denbeetle.html>

I had seen the larvae before but not examined them in any detail as they had always grossed me out. Little grotesque, slimy blobs, that can turn your new growths, flowers & buds into gelatinous goo. But for the first time ever last month I got a good close up view through my camera lens. Oh my goodness – it was obvious how they can decimate your precious new growths in no time at all! Like most larvae and caterpillars their purpose in life is to eat & then eat some more, to grow & store enough energy for the final stage of their metamorphosis. Boy are they relentless.

I watched their little heads move in continuous curves, mandibles slicing through the fleshy outer layer of the tender new leaves of my Dendrobium leaving only the coarser veins intact, creating the characteristic 'skeleton' pattern of damage as shown in the photos below. Adult beetles cause the same telltale damage. I could actually see the moisture being squished out of the leaf tissue as the larvae powered through my delicate new growths. They don't pause, it's incessant, I don't know how the things breathe they certainly don't seem to have to stop eating to do it.



Larvae in action Larva with gloop removed Leaf damage Camouflaged larvae on Epi's Beetle bore holes

When my brother sent me a few of his photos (eg the one above of the Epidendrum) I noticed that the larvae feasting on the orange Epidendrums had bright red orange gloop (technical term) on the back of the larvae, compared to the dark green gloop on those devouring my Dendrobium leaves. I can't say I've ever paused to register the colour before as the whole slimy blob thing is overwhelming however, when you see them side by side it appears that they take on the colour of what they are eating at least it seems that way from a highly unscientific sample size of two.

I searched the internet but could not find anywhere an explanation of the gloop. It must serve a purpose but I don't know what. I was curious when watching down the camera lens & decided to see if it was attached. I gently pushed at it & it came away very easily (see top larva in 2nd photo above) so it appears to be an external layer of something not an intrinsic part of their body. I was fascinated by what was revealed. Two distinct, creamy coloured sides of the body separated by a wavy edged, transparent gap down the middle. The two sides of the larva were moving continuously in a mesmerizing, undulating motion. Maybe it's part of the digestion process, maybe it's how they breathe, I don't know but it was quite amazing to watch.

I suspect the gloop might be faeces. Perhaps it prevents dehydration or perhaps, like the orange/black of the beetle it is a warning to or protection from other critters because it just looks so unappealing. Perhaps it smells really bad?

I have to admit, the intriguing anatomy & movement of their little pulsating bodies al-

most made me want to let them continue their journey to beetle ... *almost but not quite*.

If you want to see the larvae in action check this out <https://youtu.be/oT75e1WpuUU>. Be afraid, be very afraid, they can chew the life out of all parts of your orchids, stems, leaves, buds & flowers. As the name suggests they do seem to have an affinity for Dendrobiums but I have seen them on Cymbidiums, Epidendrums, Stanhopeas, Cattleyas and as mentioned before, almost 30 years ago, they had been reported on 67 varieties of orchid. My (unsubstantiated) theory is that they attack whatever appeals to their taste buds/smells the best to them or is a colour they like that has active, tender new buds/flowers, growths or leaves at whatever time the weather is warm enough to trigger the beetle's emergence (or whatever was in that phase when the beetle laid her eggs). The last photo above shows typical beetle burrowing holes (for laying eggs) in a Dendrobium cane.

Pupating - If you've seen a pupa case you would not forget it. They look like a blob of twisted, polystyrene mini-spaghetti ~2cm long. The four photos below are from my brother. The first shows a vase full of cymbidium spikes I had given my sister-in-law. They appeared clean but must have harbored some stage of the beetles which over time, turned the pristine flowers to mush. The second photo shows that one larva somehow managed to reach the corner of the ceiling before making its cocoon - perhaps knocked off when my brother chucked the ruined flowers and with no normal host it made do with the ceiling. Quite a feat for something that size to travel that far! You can see the hole in the bottom where the beetle emerged. Pupa cases are often made at the base of a pseudobulb but they can also be found in the leaf axil (the space between the leaf & the stem from which it grows). As the remaining two photos show the larvae are pragmatic & will form their cocoon wherever is convenient at the appropriate time.



Looking pretty before the damage



In the corner of ceiling Cocoon in flower



Cocoon on spike stems

The final photo from my brother (to the right) shows a couple of cocoons he broke open. It must have been very soon after they started to pupate as you can still identify the head of the larvae but you can tell they have started to transform from the moist gloop covered larvae form in their journey to become beetles.

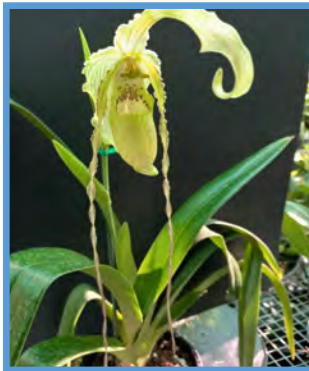
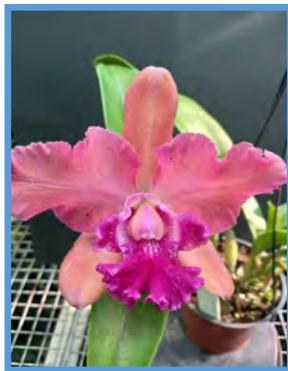


So what can you do about them? Prevention - a perfectly sealed orchid house & never accidentally introducing a plant harboring eggs or larva - not so easy. I'm not much for chemicals so I will give you the manual version which may provide a modicum of satisfaction. The beetles travel in pairs, so if you see one its mate won't be far away, cup one hand underneath & just touch the plant near the beetle with the other. As a protective technique, the beetle will retract its legs & fall into your hand 'playing dead'. You can then put them on a hard surface & take your revenge by squishing them, but be quick as they will try to fly very soon after being released. If you can't stomach the manual squash method, use a container of water with a bit of oil & place underneath to catch them. When I'm doing it, if I miss one & can't find it I give a light spray around ~20cm away from the plant with Mortein NaturGard spray (the one in the green can) & you will hopefully get the one you missed or at least give him a headache. If it's a stinking hot day, maybe skip the spray method so as not to risk burning your leaves, just keep watch for a while & it will re-emerge to continue its meal. Search 'Dendrobium beetle' on the [Australian Orchid Nursery](http://www.australianorchidnursery.com) site if you prefer chemical options.

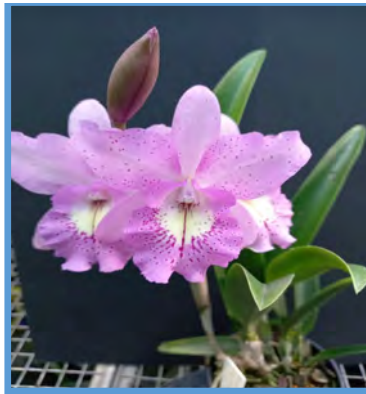
Some damage to the leaves won't kill the plant (it will just reduce the capacity for photosynthesis) so you can leave them as is or trim the damage away to make the plant look more presentable. Beetles often burrow into the stems to lay their eggs & that's not good. The larvae hatch & chew the new growth from the inside turning it to mush. If you have an issue with dendrobium beetles & you notice otherwise undamaged leaves on new growths starting to wilt & bend over that is a potential sign that you may have eggs that have hatched in the stalk. Feel the new growths & if they feel goeey/soft then go a clear 1cm down from any damaged tissue & cut the tops off. If you have/had eggs in the stalks the change in consistency/firmness of the stalk will be obvious to the touch. I know they are only doing what comes naturally but forgive me, *not if I see it first!*

PART 2 OF JENNY RICHARDSON'S ARTICLE DEALING WITH THE "GOOD" VISITORS WILL BE IN THE APRIL EDITION

FLOWERING ON THE BENCH THIS MONTH:



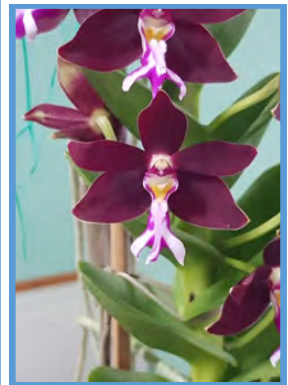
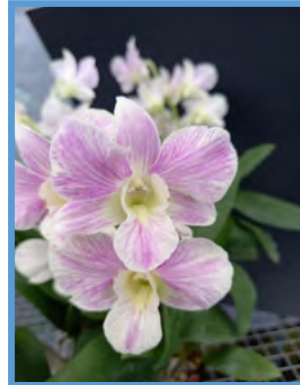
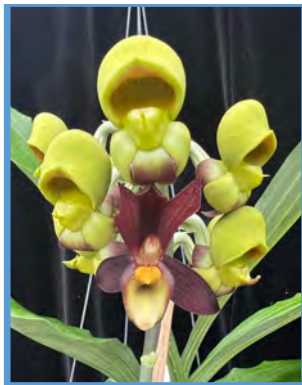
Mal Ide's Den. Excelsa Rlc Sunstate Colorchart Phrag. Court Jester 'Beau Prosthechea prismatocarpa
'Southern Cross' X C. caudebec



Mal Ide's Cym. Zig Zag 'Kiwi'

Bc. Little Mermaid 'Janet'

Helen Seiver's Blc. Marg Pitman



Male & female Catasetum
flowers on same spike

Paige Sinclair's
Gongora galeata

Mal Ide's Den. Silverwings
x Den. Nida 'Stripes'

Bruce Hall's
Triichoglottis atropuperea