

COFFS ORCHID NEWS AUGUST, 2022

PUBLICATION OF THE COFFS HARBOUR ORCHID SOCIETY

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1. EDITORIAL:

Have you ever pondered the question “Why should I belong to an Orchid Society and what would it do for me?”

Orchid Societies are groups of like-minded people who gather at regular intervals to share the joys, experiences and sometimes the frustrations of growing orchids. The primary aim of any Orchid Society should be to facilitate healthy competition, provide an educational program for its members and present opportunities for members to share their orchid knowledge. The essential ingredient here is passing knowledge onto new or inexperienced growers. Rather than new growers “fumbling around in the dark” and making poor judgements with their growing techniques, it is more rewarding for them if they are given some advice about the various aspects of orchid culture. With this in mind all new orchid growers should be encouraged to join their nearest Orchid Society and benefit from the local expertise. In last month’s Coffs Harbour Orchid Society’s newsletter there was an article on the “Ten Commandments for an Orchid Grower”. The final commandment was “Join Your Local Orchid Society” where you will interact with others who have a shared interest and are always happy to pass on ideas to improve your orchid collection.

Each Society meeting should contain an educational segment where members are exposed to new ideas and have the opportunity to learn new skills. It also should allow members to display their orchids so they can receive an assessment of their growing techniques and allow them to learn from other growers.

How does Coffs Harbour Orchid Society (CHOS) assist members to become better orchid growers?

The CHOS has a guest speaker or an orchid related activity at each monthly meeting. The aim is to cover a variety of orchid genera during the year to increase member’s knowledge and encourage them to try something new or improve their current growing methods. On occasions the Society does hold workshops (Deflasking, Mounting Orchids or Repotting Demonstrations) to improve members skills and again to encourage them to try a different technique.

Another initiative that CHOS has incorporated into their yearly program is allocating an advisor or mentor to all new members. This enables new members to link up with more experienced growers, who can provide members with the help they need to grow orchids successfully. (To page 3)

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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, 2022

- 4 Aug— Paige Sinclair— Orchid Photos 101
- 1 Sept— Dick Cooper—
"Judging Flowers"
Malcolm Ide —
" Growing Cymbidiums"
- 10 Sept—Show Set-Up from 1pm
- 11-12 Sept CHOS Spring Show
- 13Oct— Plant Auction
Bruce Hall, Auctioneer.
- 3 Nov— AGM and Elections—
Guest Speaker TBA
- 3 Dec—Christmas Luncheon and
Awards Presentation
- 2 Feb 2023— Feb Meeting—TBA
- 2 Mar 2023—March Meeting—TBA

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

CHOS BANK DETAILS

BSB No: 533-000

ACCOUNT No: 32817199



Continued from Page 1:

Societies should encourage members to try something new such as participating in a growing competition where seedlings are sold to members and judged each month. This enables members to experience growing plants with which they may be unfamiliar. CHOS has found this to be a great educational experience.

Ideally, an Orchid Society should provide a platform for healthy competition. Our Orchid Society conducts an Autumn and Spring Show where members can bench plants which are judged by a qualified judging panel. This provides participants with feedback on their growing methods and recognises the best grown plants. Friendly competition is also provided each month with a small scale flower Show at each meeting. Members are allocated points for outstanding plants and annual awards are presented to the best growers. Also, a popular vote each month creates much interest. Frequently an experienced member or guest speaker will talk about a few selected orchids from the monthly benching. This "table talk" provides an invaluable learning opportunity for all members.

Orchid Societies can provide a venue where plants may be swapped or sold enabling members to obtain healthy quality plants. Guest speakers often bring plants for sale. An annual plant auction helps boost Society funds and provides good plants for purchase. In addition members sales may take place at meetings and at the Autumn and Spring Shows. Significantly, the CHOS has obtained a licence for selling NSW Native Orchids. This entitles members to tag plantation grown NSW Native Orchids and legally sell them to the general public.

Most Orchid Societies charge a small fee for annual membership. A portion of this fee goes into affiliation with the Orchid Society of New South Wales (OSNSW) and the Australian Orchid Council (AOC). This provides each member with accident insurance during Society activities and allows them to take part in orchid shows and activities anywhere in Australia. In addition members have the opportunity to seek an AOC Quality Award or a Cultural Award for any well grown plant they may own.

Orchid Societies should be places where members enjoy the company of fellow orchid growers. So, if you don't belong to an Orchid Society, then it would be beneficial for you to join one as soon as possible and actively encourage others to do so.

If you are already a member of an active Society, then participate as much as you can, sharing your skills, knowledge and love of orchids. **Enjoy and be thankful.**

CHOW TIME, ROSCOE. SHE FEEDS ME EVERY DAY AND CARES FOR MY EVERY NEED.

SHE MUST BE A GOD.

AND HERE'S YOURS MUFFIN. SHE FEEDS ME EVERY DAY AND CARES FOR MY EVERY NEED.

I MUST BE A GOD.

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PLANT YOUR SPRING GARDEN

- Three rows of peas:
 - Peace of mind
 - Peace of heart
 - Peace of soul
- Three rows of squash:
 - Squash indifference
 - Squash hatred
 - Squash bullying
- Three rows of lettuce:
 - Let us be kind
 - Let us be compassionate
 - Let us love one another

Water with patience and cultivate with love

WHAT GIVES PEOPLE FEELINGS OF POWER

FEELINGS OF POWER

MONEY

STATUS

GROWING A TOMATO

3. VISIT TO TINONEE ORCHIDS' OPEN DAY: A group of around fifteen CHOS members visited Tinonee Orchids Final Open Day on Saturday, 9th July. The rain stopped, the flood receded, the sun was out and great day was had by all who attended. Many members had increased their orchid collection by the end of the day. Remember, you can never have enough orchids.



Jean, Lina and Frank at Tinonee Orchids



Bruce and Carole contemplating their next purchase



CHOS members listening to the Guest Speakers



Frank with a load of goodies for his orchid house

Photos by Paige Sinclair

4. JOKE PAGE:

1. A woman was flying from Melbourne to Brisbane. Unexpectedly, the plane was diverted to Sydney. The flight attendant explained that there would be a delay, hence if the passengers wanted to get off the aircraft they could re-board in 50 minutes. Everybody got off the plane except one lady who was blind.

A man had noticed her as he walked by and could tell the lady was blind because her Seeing Eye Dog lay quietly underneath the seats in front of her throughout the entire flight.

He could also tell she had flown this very flight before because the pilot approached her, and calling her by name, said, 'Kathy, we are in Sydney for almost an hour. Would you like to get off and stretch your legs?' The blind lady replied, 'No thanks, but maybe Max would like to stretch his legs.'

Picture this:

All the people in the gate area came to a complete standstill when they looked up and saw the pilot walk off the plane with a Seeing Eye dog! The pilot was even wearing sunglasses.

People scattered. They not only tried to change planes, but they were trying to change airlines!

True story...

Have a great day and remember...THINGS AREN'T ALWAYS AS THEY APPEAR.

2. Four old retired guys are walking down a street in London. They turn a corner and see a sign that says, "Old Timers Bar - All drinks 10p." They look at each other and then go in, thinking, this is too good to be true.

The old bartender says in a voice that carries across the room, "Come on in and let me pour one for you! What'll it be, gentlemen?" There's a fully stocked bar, so each of the men orders a martini. In no time the bartender serves up four iced martinis—shaken, not stirred—and says, "That'll be 10p each, please."

The four guys stare at the bartender for a moment, then at each other. They can't believe their good luck. They pay the 40p, finish their martinis, and order another round. Again, four excellent martinis are produced, with the bartender again saying, "That's 40p, please." They pay the 40p, but their curiosity gets the better of them. They've each had two martinis and haven't even spent a £1 yet.

Finally one of them says, "How can you afford to serve martinis as good as these for a 10p a piece?"

"I'm a retired tailor," the bartender says, "and I always wanted to own a bar. Last year I hit the Lottery Jackpot for £25 million and decided to open this place. Every drink costs 10p. wine, liquor, beer -- it's all the same."

"Wow! That's some story!" one of the men says. As the four of them sip at their martinis, they can't help noticing seven other people at the end of the bar who don't have any drinks in front of them and haven't ordered anything the whole time they've been there.

Nodding at the seven at the end of the bar, one of the men asks the bartender, "What's with them?"

The bartender says, "They're from Scotland. They're waiting for Happy Hour when drinks are half-price."

3. Two paddies were working for the city public works department.

One would dig a hole and the other would follow behind him and fill the hole in.

They worked up one side of the street, then down the other, then moved on to the next street, working furiously all day without rest, one man digging a hole, the other filling it in again. An onlooker was amazed at their hard work, but couldn't understand what they were doing. So he asked the hole digger, "I'm impressed by the effort you two are putting into your work, but I don't get it: why do you dig a hole, only to have your partner follow behind and fill it up again?"

"The hole digger wiped his brow and sighed, "Well, I suppose it probably looks odd because we're normally a three-person team, but today the lad who plants the trees called in sick".

4 A man fell overboard from his sailboat, and was thrashing around in the water when another boat pulled up. "Jump in, we'll save you," screamed the people in the boat. "No," cried the drowning man, "God will save me."

The scene was repeated twice more with different boats and then a helicopter hovered over the man.

"We came to rescue you," yelled the pilot. "No, God will save me," was the response again.

The man drowned, and as he crossed the Pearly Gates, he ran straight towards Jesus. "I placed my faith in You, and You still let me drown!"

"Hey!" said Jesus, "that's hardly fair, I sent three boats and a helicopter."

5. AGENDA FOR GENERAL MEETING , 4TH AUGUST, 2022:

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of July Monthly Meeting – as attached to the Newsletter
4. Correspondence - Annie Houston
5. Treasurer’s Report – Paige Sinclair
6. Sponsor’s Spot – Coffs Coast Motors
7. Presentations to New Members
8. Table Talk
9. Popular Vote – Bruce Hall/ Judith Whiting
10. Results of the Growing Competition—August Judging
11. Raffle – Judith Whiting
12. General Business: - September Meeting Guest Speakers—

Dick Cooper (Judging Orchid Flowers) and Malcolm Ide (Growing Cymbidiums)

- Spring Show—Set-up on Fri. 9th Sept, Show on 10th– 11th Sept

- Other General Business

13. Supper Break – 15 minutes

14. Guest Speaker: Paige Sinclair
“Taking Orchid Photos 101”

Monthly Judges:

SANDY HEALEY

AND

MARCIA LUSTED



6. MONTHLY MEETING PLAN:

It is suggested that you be aware of the following:

- Masks DO NOT have to be worn inside the room. However, if you feel more comfortable by wearing a mask then please do so. Hand sanitiser is available for your use.
- 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.

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

7. VALE IVY WHEELER: It is with sadness that we inform you of the passing of Ivy Wheeler, late of Bribie Island and formally of Coffs Harbour. Many older members would remember Ivy Wheeler as a long standing and active member of the CHOS. Ivy had a wonderful orchid collection with a number of greenhouses especially set up for specific conditions required by certain orchid genera. Ivy acted as the Show Marshall at both CHOS and WDOS on many occasions. She was always happy to give advice to new growers.

Our thoughts are with Ivy’s family and friends at this sad time.

8. COMMITTEE REPORT:

The July Committee Meeting was conducted at the North Coast Regional Botanic Gardens, Coffs Harbour, on Tuesday 26th July, 2022.

- The July General Meeting was well attended, considering the weather, and members heard a very informative talk on Dendrochilums from Hans Schaible of Dark Star Orchids.
- Good feedback was received from the members who visited the greenhouses of Paige and Helen and who travelled to the Tinonee Orchids Open Day. It is hoped to do more of this type of activity in the future.
- Discussion of Spring Show Schedule and organisation for the September Show. Revised Schedule approved. Copies will be distributed to members in the near future. Show Roster tabled. Some positions still need to be filled. Assistance from members would be welcome.
- Confirmation of CHOS meeting and show dates for 2023. Bookings to be made by Secretary with NCR Botanic Gardens.
- Proposed to visit Annie Houston's greenhouses in Boambee during September. More details in the near future.
- Visit to Rosella Orchids, South Grafton proposed for Monday, 31st October. Car pool to be organised.
- Changes tabled for the August and September General Meetings. Paige Sinclair to speak at the August meeting—"Taking Orchid Photos 101". Dick Cooper and Malcolm Ide to talk at the September meeting.

Next Committee Meeting will be held at the Botanic Gardens on Tuesday 9th August, 2022.



AUSTRALIAN ORCHID COUNCIL CONFERENCE

2—4 SEPT, 2022

LOGAN METRO SPORTS AND EVENTS CENTRE

357 BROWNS PLAINS ROAD, CRESTMEAD, QLD

<https://aocc2022.org>

Check out the website for program and speakers.

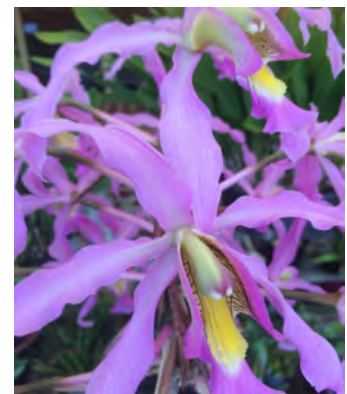
Still time to lodge your application form



9. POPULAR VOTE AT THE JULY MONTHLY MEETING

Congratulations to Silesa King for her superb *Schomburgkia superbians* being voted by the members as the best plant benched at the July meeting.

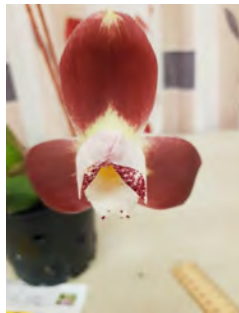
Recently this plant has been renamed as *Laelia superbians*



10. BENCHING HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CHOS JULY MEETING:



Paige Sinclair's *Arpophyllum spicatum*



Bruce Hall's *Lycaste*

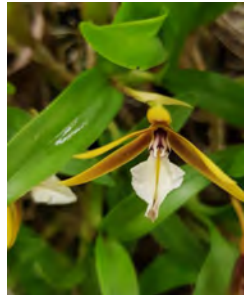
(*L. lasioglossa* x *L. Koolena*) x *L. Koolena*



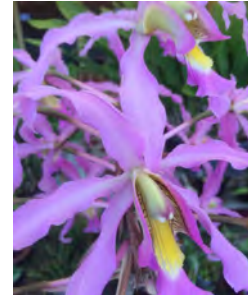
Jude Whiting's *Paph insigne*



Ann Dean's *Dinema polybulbon*



Silesa King's *Laelia superbiens*



11. SPONSORS SPOT: Coffs Harbour Motors.

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12. WHAT'S HAPPENING IN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER?

- There has been a change of plan for the Guest Speakers for the August and September meetings. Paige Sinclair will talk at the 4th August Meeting on the topic "Taking Orchid Photos 101". We all take orchid photos from time to time and some may use their SLR camera but most of us use our phone camera. Paige is an experienced and expert photographer and is happy to pass on her knowledge on how to improve your photography skills. It is hoped this talk will be Part One of a series which will continue in 2023.
- Dick Cooper will give a short talk at the September meeting on "Judging Flower Shape" and Malcolm Ide will address "Growing Cymbidiums in Coffs Harbour". Malcolm will present the basics of Cym growing at this meeting and is hoped that he will return in 2023 to provide more secrets in to how successfully grow this orchid group.
- The Nambucca Valley Orchid Society will conduct their three day Show from 1st Sept to 3rd Sept. This will be held at the Nambucca Senior Citizens Centre, 11 Kent St, Nambucca Heads. Plants can be benched between 2pm and 6pm on Wednesday 31st August. Judging will take place from 7pm. The Show will open to the public from 9am each day. The prize presentation will be at 2pm on Saturday. Benched orchids can be collected after that time.
- CHOS Spring Show— 11th to 12th September. Set up from 1pm Friday 10th September.

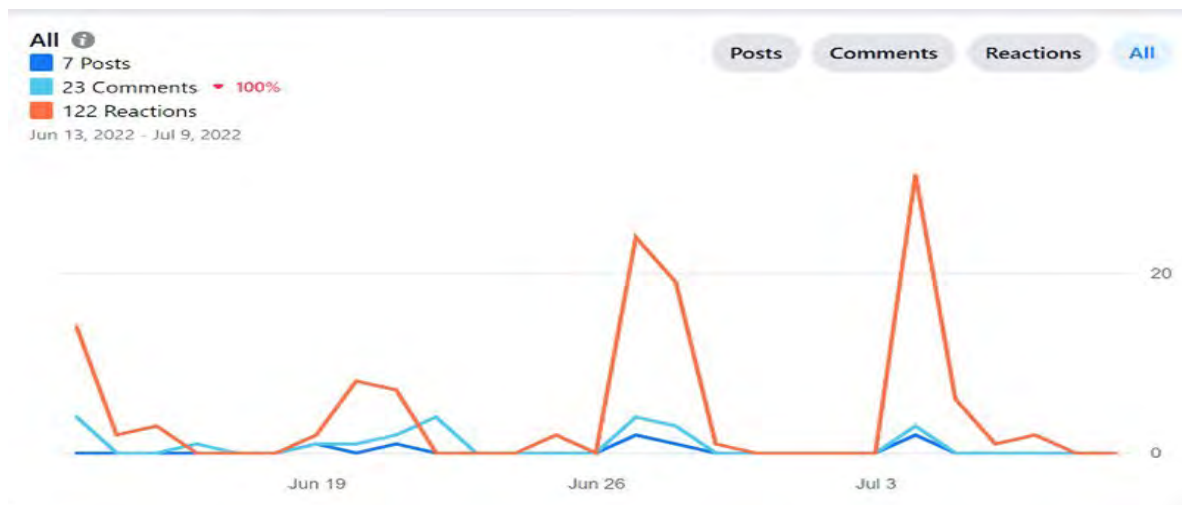
13. Coffs Harbour Orchid Society Facebook: By Paige Sinclair

July 2022 – Currently, the Coffs Harbour Orchid Society has 349 likes. This is up by 44 people from the last month. (No longer does Facebook show total followers) The image below shows a range of insights.



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.

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

The Society stocks 35 litre bags of NZ Orchiata Bark selling at \$27 each. There are two sizes – 9 to 12mm and 12 to 18mm. **Some fresh supplies have arrived so get in early before the Spring rush.**

Remember if you desire quality plants then always use quality potting mix.

We are expecting a price increase for future stock, so talk to Paige and get your supplies now.

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

15. WANT TO SELL OR BUY ORCHIDS? If you have orchids to sell then bring them to the August Monthly meeting. A table will be set aside for this purpose. These will be private sales between members and no commission will be charged by the Society. Attach a card to your plant with details and price. Native plants do not have to be tagged if sold to a member. IF YOU WISH TO BUY ORCHIDS THEN COME PREPARED WITH CASH.

16. FEATURE ARTICLE: What do you Know about Sobralias and Elleanthus? - by Jim Brydie

(Reprinted with permission from the KOS)

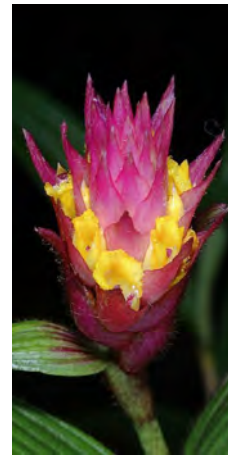
A goodly proportion of orchid growers end up with a Sobralia in the backyard somewhere at some point in their orchid growing lifespan. And why not? Sobralias are large flowered, absolutely spectacular, like big Cattleyas. Elleanthus on the other hand tend to have a multiflowered inflorescence of much smaller flowers.



Sobralia macrantha



Ell. Arpophyllostanchys



E. caravata



E. conifer

I know that most growers could do without the taxonomy stuff, but perhaps in time, I hope some may reach the same conclusion I have, that understanding relationships among genera and their evolution is key to understanding orchids.

Anyway, the two subject genera Sobralia and Elleanthus are the two largest of 4 genera in the subtribe Sobraliinae. You are unlikely to run across either of the other 2 - Epilyna and Sertifera, and presently the Epilynas are all regarded as Elleanthus anyway. Exactly where the subtribe itself fits is still being debated but it is somewhere in sub-family Epidendroideae which makes it vaguely related to the Cattleyas and Laelias, but not too closely.

There are about 100 Sobralia species and 118 Elleanthus. I used to consider the key difference between Sobralia and Elleanthus was that Sobralia were the ones with huge single flowers and Elleanthus had multiflowered inflorescences of much smaller flowers. However, more recent DNA analysis shows that the two genera are much more entwined than we used to think. The two genera are very closely related and it is proposed that Sobralia be split into two genera (Sobralia and Brasolia) and incorporating many Elleanthus into one or the other. You may have noticed that Brasolia is an anagram of Sobralia - not very imaginative but understandable.

It seems Sobralia and Elleanthus certainly have a common evolutionary parent but the evolutionary path to today is nowhere near as clear as once thought and the family tree shows mixes of the two on some branches. I am not sure how that can be so for the moment at least I will stick with big and showy Sobralia vs colourful/smaller Elleanthus. Other than the flowers, plants of the two genera are very similar. They both have thin, leafy, reed like stems (rather than pseudobulbs) and both have prominent plicate (pleated) leaves. Elleanthus plants are generally not as big.

Try a Sobralia ? – the 100 or more species of Sobralia, are distributed from Mexico all the way down through Central America to the tropics of South America, with around 40-50 in Colombia alone. They are pretty much all terrestrial growers, or at least what I call quasi terrestrials, in rocky mulch covered areas. They do occasionally occur as epiphytes but it is not common. Most Sobralia are bee pollinated but while some species produce nectar as a reward, others produce none so there are tricksters among them in attracting the bee.

These are tropical orchids and come from a wide range of elevations, from sea level right up into the mountains to over 3000 m. As terrestrials, most Sobralia habitats are from relatively moist areas with regular rainfall for at least a good part of the year although many do have distinct wet and dry seasons. Those from higher elevations probably also get moisture from afternoon cloud condensation and overnight dews.

Here in Sydney we generally only see a few species available through members plant auctions and sales tables, but

at least these are the ones that better tolerate our cool temperate climate. The most common we see are *Sobralia macrantha* and *Sobralia leucoxantha*. Both of which have big gorgeous flowers and grow well here.

Sobralia macrantha usually comes in lavender pink with a white and yellow throat in the lip but the colour is quite variable. Some are darker, some lighter, and there is a white flowered 'alba' form. *Leucoxantha* varies from good yellows as shown, to cream yellow and creamy white.

The smaller *Sobralia* species, including *macrantha* grow to perhaps only 45 - 60 cm tall. *Leucoxantha* can be from 60 – 90 cm but other species can be well over 3 metres. However, with the taller ones not all the length ends up as height. When visiting South America and thrilling to the sight of Lake Titicaca and Machu Picchu whilst also searching out orchids, I saw many plants of the tall *Sobralia dichotoma* growing in the mountains near Machu Picchu. They tended to grow up among other understory plants and to use their cane length to wend their way in all directions through other plants to get their flowers where they would be noticed by pollinators. Very untidy growers and impractical for horticulture.

Ah Yes. I can hear the more experienced growers whispering in the background, but he hasn't told them yet that these are rather short lived flowers. In a few species the flower only lasts a few hours but in *S. macrantha* it is 1 – 2 days which isn't too bad when you consider that a decent sized *Sobralia* flowers off multiple canes at the same time and also that other canes will throw up flowers so that a plant can have flowers for many days. They make a very eye catching display.

As the culture of both *Sobralia* and *Elleanthus* are substantially similar, I will discuss their culture together after I introduce *Elleanthus* and tell you about some the key differences.

Elleanthus - These are much more rarely seen in Sydney but I suspect that this is more to do with lack of their introduction to orchid growers in Australia. If you don't know about them, you don't look for them. However, many more of the *Elleanthus* grow up in the Andes mountains where their elevation makes them more compatible with our cooler winter temperatures and if you think a *Sobralia* is attractive I am sure you also find many *Elleanthus* attractive and worth a place as well.

Unlike the bee pollinated *Sobralia*, *Elleanthus* are hummingbird pollinated or occasionally moth pollinated. Which at least means that you are rather unlikely to get unplanned seed pods here in Australia.

I have tried 4 different *Elleanthus* species while experimenting but alas, several were warmer growers and I was still learning and I could not grow well enough to keep 3 of them going. My remaining *Elleanthus* (*E. robustus*?) was in full bloom in April on the wall at the back of my house and was a delight each time I passed. An *Elleanthus* inflorescence flowers sequentially from the bottom up but can have up to a third of the inflorescence in flower at any one time. Similar to *Sobralias*, each flower is relatively short lived, but as it flowers sequentially a head is in flower for perhaps a week or two.

Culture - I don't understand the habitat of every species but all the species of either genus I have grown have had similar characteristics in that they are coarse rooted clumping plants and all were what I call pseudoterrestrials.



***Elleanthus myrosomatis* in the wild**

Elleanthus oliganthus

Elleanthus blatteus

As you can see in the habitat picture above, the plant being photographed is on a hillside among other low scrubby plants and grasses. You can see either ocean or a lake in the top right hand corner so I suspect this location is not a very high elevation even though that species is found from about 400 m elevation right up to

2800 m. Hillsides are VERY well drained and I am guessing that the orchid would be growing in only 5 cm to 10 cm of "soil" at best and that the "soil" would be mostly open mulch like humus mixed with coarse rocky material. There would be some finer more composted down soil like material but the whole layer would be very airy.

To imitate that kind of terrestrial potting material, I have tried all sorts of combinations but the detail of specific components hasn't proven to be vital. It just needs to be a mix of open epiphytic materials and more composted soil-like materials so long as the end result drains perfectly and doesn't break down into a finer and finer mix too quickly. I suggest something like :

20% 15 – 20 mm pine bark, 20% 9 – 15mm pine bark, 20% - crumbled styrene foam, 20% - coarse river sand, and 20% - hi grade bagged potting mix.

Neither *Sobralia* or *Elleanthus* like being repotted. The root mass is usually densely compressed and tangled and it is impossible to repot or divide without causing significant root damage. After a repot a plant can sit and sulk for a while and you are always left wondering whether you really had to do it. However, both genera also hate sitting in overly composted sour potting medium and if they get in that condition, can go backward faster than imaginable.

So, you need to repot but make a mix that can be left alone a fair while by using some inert materials like styrene foam, and a free draining combination. Aim to keep the mix moist.

Don't let it dry right out if you can help it but don't let it sit 'wet' for long either - no saucers of water for these. That should be easy shouldn't it?

And, when you do repot, DO IT AT THE RIGHT TIME. An article on the American Orchid Society website gives good advice. "Sobralias should only be repotted or divided when new growth AND new roots are present. They do not like being disturbed. When potting up, if the root ball is intact and healthy, there is no need to disrupt the root system. If dividing wait until new growth and roots are breaking and keep at least three canes per division. If a plant has any evidence of rot, repot immediately trimming all affected roots down to the rhizome. Any discoloured rhizomes should be removed."

If you follow these principles you will find that these types of orchids grow well and without trouble. I have grown both genera in plastic pots and terracotta but I prefer the latter if for no other reason than to help with drainage and correct pot moisture. The *Elleanthus* species at the right (mine) is potted in a 30 cm terracotta pot and sits in the larger pot for decoration and to stop it blowing over in the wind.

Light – Apart from potting, the one other vital component to culture of these orchids is light. I am sure there are probably species that come from shadier habitats but all the ones I have grown here in Sydney need **HIGH light**. I grew them in my shade house with no flowers. I grew them on a more open bench in front of my glasshouse where they get good light for a few hours in the morning. In that location I got a few flowers but I wasn't happy. I moved the *Elleanthus* to the brick wall at the back of my house facing east. Here it gets direct sun from about 8 or 9 am depending on the season, until about 12.30pm when the sun casts a shadow from the house itself. This is the light these orchids need. On my back wall, it stands alongside a big *Arpophyllum* species that has also thrived in the brighter conditions and flowers wonderfully there.

You **can't grow** these kinds of orchids in Sydney without **at least** a little direct morning sun or without that, a very bright amount of light most of the day.

As for the rest of their culture, just follow general orchid rules. Water only when needed, supply fertiliser regularly but not too much, and keep your eye out for bugs.

In general, these genera are more oriented to the tropics than Sydney so we are limited to those that will do well in our temperatures but there are some outstandingly decorative orchids among them and with correct care they are easy to look after. They are not so much for the monthly club benching, but rather the back or front porch depending on the light.

We currently don't see *Elleanthus* traded so much, but tastes are widening and we are seeing more and more of the exotic types coming in. Keep your eye out. They are worth a try.