



COFFS ORCHID NEWS NOVEMBER 2024 PUBLICATION OF THE COFFS HARBOUR ORCHID SOCIETY

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AGM President's Report November 2024

It's that time of year again and - well done everyone. Our Society continues to travel really well with lots of positive outcomes, and for this a BIG thank you to all our Members for continuing to support our values and activities. Never forget that you are absolutely integral to our success.

Our Shows are over for 2024 but I want to thank and congratulate everyone who took part, in whatever capacity. Any plant benched is a potential winner and always a crowd pleaser, and we certainly seem to do just that. The *Popular Vote* is really interesting and confirms that individual preferences are all over the place - colour/size/fragrance, even though some may be more obvious than others. Thank you once again to the MNC Judging Panel for their expertise, and having to make some really hard decisions, although everyone was delighted to see that the winner of the *Popular Vote* was also on the Champions Table - so the Judges' do know what they are doing!. Our Sales Table ran out of supplies quite early on both occasions which was a little embarrassing given the huge array of plants set up early in the day, but word is out that we have a good product and you need to get in early. It's a lot of fun and we do offer a wide range of well-grown plants, together with some great knowledgeable customer support.

The *Annual Growing Competition*, *Monthly Popular Vote*, *Table Talk*, in-house *Workshops* and *Presentations*, plus our *Auction* continue to offer a sense of *connection* - together we learn and enjoy at our leisure.

We have continued to attract new members, again many of whom **have** orchids but had not necessarily considered themselves to be growers. To assist them our *Mentor/Advisor* program is available to answer questions and offer feedback/support as required, which is part of our commitment to providing an educational element to our meetings, sharing knowledge and also giving the opportunity to show the diverse varieties which are grown within our Society. We are now listed as a *Not-For-Profit* organisation, and the educational aspects of our Society were crucial in obtaining this classification. It also means that the government cannot just help itself to our funds as proposed in new legislation.

Our *Return to Basics* program ran new episodes this year looking at the HOW TO variations of successful growing - incredibly informative. *Bunnings BBQ* - well what can I say - a great fund-raiser, and because *Bunnings* set the price of sales, any increase is to our advantage. Their ban on organisational advertising seems strange when we all know how attractive some of their Phallies are and which, on occasions, have become prize winners. Should we let that cat out of the bag - not necessarily as they make want to claim the kudos for themselves?

The *Facebook* following continues to grow, and I think the Newsletter speaks for itself - full of photos and information - so, once again, a **very** special thank you and well-done to our Editor who devotes so much time to its compilation, and to all those who have contributed many valuable articles.

We had a really interesting activity down to Port Macquarie recently - via Ricardoes, a lunch-time cruise through the canals (not Gold Coast but pretty impressive) and then Cassegrain Winery - didn't really need to buy wine but - why not? (Continued on page 3)

CHOS COMMITTEE 2023-2024**CONTACT DETAILS**

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SPONSORS**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.

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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 .

DARK STAR ORCHIDS

Dark Star Orchids. 0416 195832 or (02) 65644088.

Hans and Sue run a small nursery west of Bowraville. They specialise in rare, unusual and hard to find species of many orchids particularly Bulbophyllums, Stanhopeas, Coelogynes and lots of other genera. Check out the website.

www.darkstarorchids.com.au

email darkstarorchids@skymesh.com.au

BRUCE HALL

Bruce provides raffle prizes for Autumn and Spring Shows.

OFFICEWORKS

Officeworks carries an excellent range covering all stationery needs, computers/monitors/printers, and associated technology. They sell a wide range of smart phones and watches, plus furniture and workspace solutions. If you are looking for low prices on everyday essentials, it's all there at Home Base, Coffs Harbour. Phone 66 919100 or check out the full range at officeworks.com.au.

ROSELLA ORCHIDS

Spring and Autumn Show Sponsor: Located in South Grafton and can supply a wide range of orchids but specialises in Cattleya and Vanda genera. They also stock a large range of hardware and accessories for orchid growers. Nursery is closed to the general public except by appointment.

www.rosellaorchids.com.au

CALENDAR, 2024/25

7 Nov—AGM/Display Judging

7 Dec— Annual Awards Presentation,
Pacific Palace Chinese Restaurant

6 Feb'25—Endemic Orchids in Our Backyard—Neville Anderson
Member Plant Sales

6 March—My Orchid Journey—Ray Clement, Tinonee Orchids

3 April—Preparing Orchids for Show Benching—Bob Southwell

1 May— Terete Oncidiinae
- Bruce Hall

5 June— Orchid Culture
Member Plant Sales

3 July—Bulbophyllums
—Hans Schaible

7 August—Deflasking
- Paige Sinclair and Peter Gough

4 Sept—Tricks and Tips
True or False

1-5 Oct AOC Conference
Woolgoolga

16 Oct—Plant Auction

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

**CHOS BANK DETAILS**

BSB No: 533-000

ACCOUNT No: 32817199

The visits to some Members' collections were enlightening and offered a chance to investigate variations in growing areas, orientations, particularly the use of limited space, time and funds, plus other strategies utilising whatever the natural environment has to offer. Thank you to everyone for your welcome and hospitality. It was very much appreciated.

Sponsors are really important to the Society – please do support them whenever you are able to do so. Unfortunately, the lease on the Shearwater Restaurant was not extended and we had a few farewell lunches there to say goodbye to Adam, our Sponsor for many years at that magnificent location.

Financially we are doing well, and able to continue offering support to our close associate - the Woolgoolga District Orchid Society, in their fund-raising to cover the costs for the 2025 Australian Orchid Society International Conference. They have been working extraordinarily hard, and I think the recent two-day Show and Workshop was a very successful dress rehearsal indicative of the progress they are making, particularly with the *WOW* factor of the innovative and diverse individual and Society displays. Additionally it was another chance to refine and simplify our new Show technology for recording the entries of benching plants, their subsequent placement, and printing of the Winners' cards. Unfortunately, scribing the ribbons remains a manual task – not for the weak hearted!

So, as an endnote, I honestly thank the Committee members whose commitment has under-pinned our endeavours over the last twelve months – things don't just happen without input from a diverse combination of viewpoints and experience. However, as I said at the beginning, it is the Members who are the heart of our Society and keep it beating. Thank you to everyone and let's keep that pulse going during 2025.

Carole Davis

President

15/10/24

JOKE TIME:

- * The midget fortune teller who escaped from prison, was reported as a small medium at large.
- * A hole has been found in the wall at the nudist camp. Police are looking into it.
- * I thought I saw an eye doctor on an Alaskan island but it just turned out to be an optical Aleutian.

My wife got stung by a bee on the forehead, she's at the ER now, her face all swollen and bruised, she almost died.
Luckily I was close enough to hit the bee with my shovel!

Husband: "Why do you keep buying plants when you just end up killing them?"

Wife: "Just to remind you what I'm capable of."

**Behind every husband who thinks he wears the pants...
Is a wife who told him which pants to wear.**

Most expensive vehicle to operate in 2023-2024



CHOS COMMITTEE REPORT

The following is a summary from the CHOS Committee Meeting conducted on 22nd October 2024 at “The Workshop”.

- ◆ Apology from Frank Pappalardo.
- ◆ A successful plant auction was held at the October General Meeting with \$550 raised for CHOS.
- ◆ WDOS Show/Conference—CHOS took out second place in the Display Section (1st went to NVOS) of the Spring Show. Congratulations to those members involved in the design, etc.
- ◆ Bunnings Fund Raising BBQ (12th Oct) raised \$1754 profit. Excellent result. Well done to all involved.
- ◆ Rosella Nursery Visit (17th Oct) - the Society held a successful visit to this South Grafton Nursery.
- ◆ Orchid Display at “Vitality Blooms” (at Secret Garden) - a large display of members orchids was presented. Popular with the public. Thanks to all involved.
- ◆ The Annual Presentation Luncheon will be held on 7th Dec 2024 at the Pacific Palace Chinese Restaurant. Members interested in attending should contact Kerrie or Paige. So far 25 members have indicated they wish to attend.
- ◆ Nominations for 2025 Committee close with the Secretary on 31st October at 7pm. If there are any contested positions then the result will be determined by a secret ballot.
- ◆ CHOS financial accounts to be audited by Dick Cooper.
- ◆ New Members: Welcome to Walter Kranick and Bob Cameron.
- ◆ Coffs Harbour Agricultural Show (CHOS Orchid Display) is set down for 16-18th May 2025.
- ◆ To obtain new quotes for Show Ribbons.
- ◆ Further Committee discussion required on how to improve the CHOS website and make it more user friendly.
- ◆ Growing Plant Competition for 2025—considering various plant options for starting in early 2025.
- ◆ Next Committee Meeting will be held at ‘The Workshop’ on Tuesday 12th November 2024.



Life is the most difficult exam.
Many people fail because they try to copy others, not realizing that everyone has a different question paper.



DO THE BEST
YOU CAN UNTIL
YOU KNOW BETTER.
THEN, WHEN
YOU KNOW BETTER,
DO BETTER.

MAYA ANGELOU



Very Nice Definition of TIME

Time is slow when you wait !
Time is fast when you are late !
Time is deadly when you are sad !
Time is short when you are happy !
Time is endless when you are in pain !
Time is long when you feel bored !
Every time, time is determined by your feelings and your psychological conditions and not by clocks. So have a nice time Always.



Carol's *Dendrobium densiflorum*

Popular Vote at the CHOS October Meeting was shared between Carole Davis and Rhonda Smith. Congratulations!

Photography by Paige Sinclair



Rhonda's *Dendrobium Adastra*

BENCHING FROM THE OCTOBER MEETING



Phal. No ID benched by Rhonda Smith



Den. Red Dragon x (Dal's Pennies x Burbank Classic) benched by Dick Cooper



Cattleya Earl 'Imperialis' owned by Peter Gough



Phal. Sesame benched by Peter Gough



Vanda miniatum benched by Rhonda Smith



Rhonda Smith's Den. Chao Praya 'Garnet' x Den. Chao Praya 'Fragrant'



Phal. Chia E Yenlin 'Variegated' benched by Silesa King



Peter Gough's Den. chrysotoxum



Vanda Boonyarit Red 'Thai Ruby' benched by Rhonda Smith

EDITORIAL:

IS THIS THE END?

For many years the Coffs Orchid News has been a publication designed to inform and education members of this Society. Recent editions have incorporated a variety of articles, news, jokes and tips and tricks to satisfy the interests of all members. As the Editor of this newsletter, I receive very little feedback on who reads it and what members want to be included. Comments from some members suggest they never read the newsletter (or the Society Emails) and so have little idea of what is happening within the CHOS. I, or the Committee, have no idea if others read or enjoy the publication.

Members of the Committee have suggested that as we are not aware of how many read or have an interest in the newsletter, and in an effort to reduce the work load, the monthly newsletter be reduced to two or three pages dealing with "What's On, etc," and not include a Feature Article, Jokes or Tips and Tricks, etc. Another alternative is to do away with the newsletter all together and send out members emails when information needs to be disseminated.

As the Editor, I am happy to continue this publications current format but if members find it is not useful and very few read it then it may be better to cease its publication and concentrate on other activities in the Society.

If you enjoy reading the newsletter, in part or in its entirety, and wish to see it continue, then it would be useful if you could let the Committee know your thoughts (Email at chorchidsociety@gmail.com or ring/text Paige or Kerrie) . If you never read or find it is not a useful publication then the Committee would also appreciate your feedback. Perhaps you have some suggestions on improvements or alternatives to the newsletter.

If the Committee does not receive further feedback then the December 2024 Edition may be the last newsletter using the current format.

Bob Southwell, Editor.

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SUPPORT THEM AS THEY SUPPORT US

CHOS NOVEMBER MONTHLY MEETING—Thursday 7th November starting at 7.00pm.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

DISPLAY DESIGN AND DISPLAY JUDGING

With Paige Sinclair and Dick Cooper

It would be greatly appreciated if you would bring a contribution for members supper.

Don't forget to bring your Competition Plant, *Cattleya* Beautiful Sunset for it's next judging.

Duty Persons for this meeting:

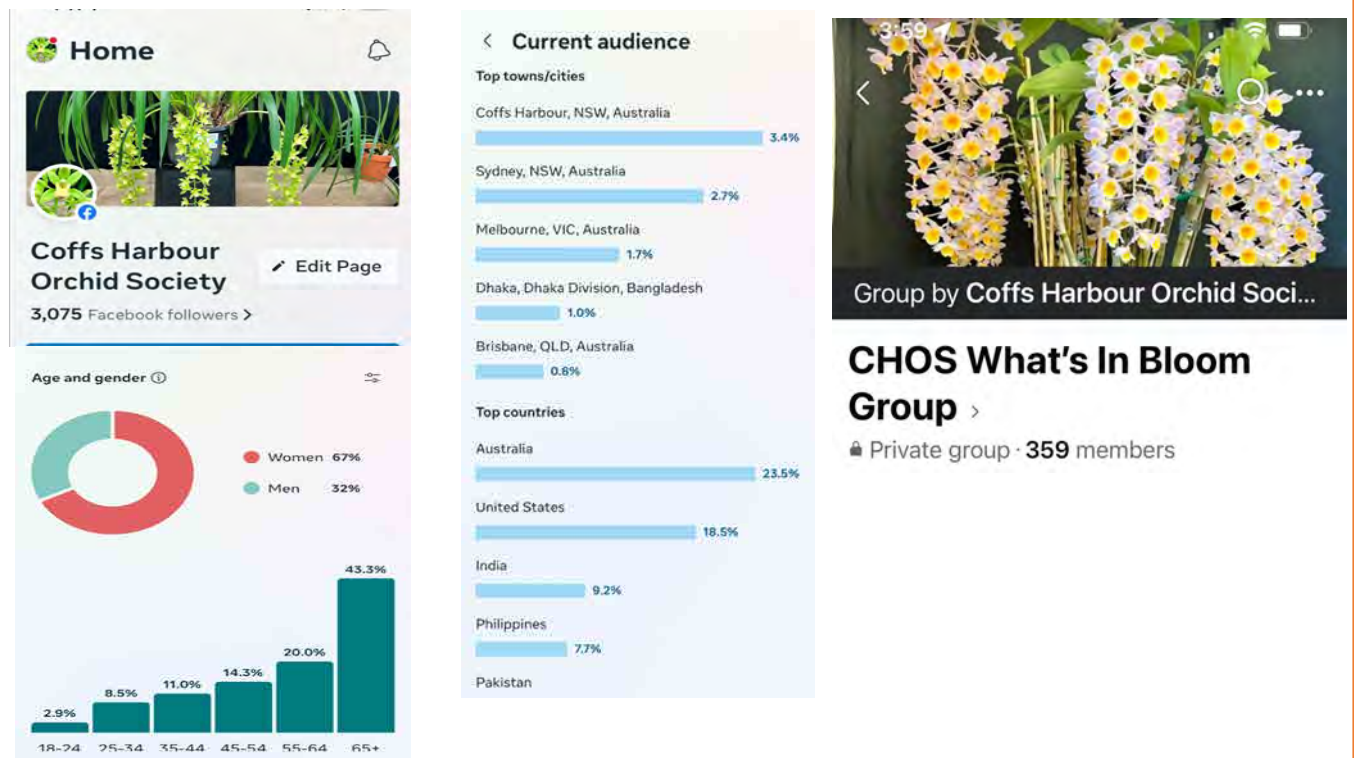
Judges: HELEN SEIVER AND PHIL PAYNE

Packing Up: Volunteers on the night Cleaning Up: Volunteers on the night

REMINDER : THE NOVEMBER MEETING COMMENCES AT 7PM

Coffs Harbour Orchid Society Facebook

October 2024 – Currently, the Coffs Harbour Orchid Society has 3,075 likes. This is up by 82 people since September 2024. Our 'What's on Bloom' page, is up by 9 people to 359 members, for the same period.



CHOS SUPPLIES OF ORCHID BARK: **NEW SUPPLIES—FRESH BARK JUST ARRIVED**

The CHOS now has a NEW supply of Kiwi Bark and Charcoal. Kiwi Orchid Bark is a hard, clean, uniformly graded *Pinus radiata* bark suitable for growing orchids. Due to price rises The Society has had to increase to price of 50 litre bags and these now sell for **\$50 each**.

Kiwi bark comes in four sizes— No.2: **3 to 8mm**; No.3: **8 to 20mm**; No.4: **20 to 25mm**; No. 5: **25 to 50mm**. Supplies of **15mm charcoal (Orchid Char)** are also available.

These are in 19kg bags and sell at \$45 per bag.

Supplies are available from Paige Sinclair— Mobile: 0427 591 901

You can pick up the bark from 4 Jean Street, Coffs Harbour or make suitable arrangements with Paige regarding delivery. Payment can be via cash or Direct Deposit (Bank details Page 2).



SOCIETY NEWS

- ◆ The CHOS Annual Awards Presentation will be conducted this year at a luncheon at the Pacific Palace Chinese Restaurant, corner of Pacific Highway and Elbow Street, on Saturday 7th December 2024 . Tickets are set at \$25 per person (subsidised) and includes a Chinese Banquet plus a drink. See Poster in this newsletter. Register with Kerrie Gosling or at the November monthly meeting.
- ◆ Recently, the Society conducted a highly successful Bunnings fund raising BBQ. Thank you to all those members who gave up their time to help during the day and a special thanks to Paige and Frank for their organisational efforts. A record \$1,754 profit for the day. Very well done!

PRESENTATION OF WINNERS FROM CHOS SPRING SHOW SEPTEMBER 2024



President Carole Davis presents Malcolm Ide with a Grand Champion ribbon for his Cymbidium



Carole presents Rhonda Smith with the Reserve Champion ribbon for her Den. Mousmee



Bill & Jenny Lennon were winners of the Champion Laeliineae



Carole presents Helen Seiver with the Champion ribbon for her Sarco.



Paige Sinclair receives her ribbon from Carole for her Champ AOV Hybrid



Peter Gough benched the Champion Vandaceous orchid



Annette Hogan receives the Champion Phalaenopsis ribbon from President Carole.



Rhonda Smith receives the Pittaway Shield for the Champion Species for Spring 2024



Annette receives the annual BCU Trophy for the best Phalaenopsis of the Spring Show

GROWING GUIDE FOR DENDROBIUM SOFT CANES

Care for a mature plant

Soft cane Dendrobium orchids originate from the monsoonal region of the lower Himalayas in India and extend down to the western side of the Malay Peninsula. They naturally grow under conditions of heat, cold and heavy rainfall – so don't pamper them. In general terms they need wet, humid, warm summers and dry, sunny winter periods.



Light and Air:

Soft Cane Dendrobiums need good light. They can be grown closer together during summer but should be separated more during winter so they receive sunlight along the lengths of their canes. From the end of April the plants can be placed in bright light to full sun until the buds appear.

They need lots of air movement around the canes.

A shade house of 30 to 50% shade would be ideal for summer growth.

They naturally live attached to deciduous trees so they experience full sun during the dry period. Some growers provide the plants with full sun until the buds form (such as hanging them on the clothes line).

Watering:

During summer periods these plants should be watered often and provided with as high a humidity as possible. Water for one or two short period during the day so there is an increase in humidity. Watering the greenhouse floor will help increase humidity around the plants.

Water less from early Autumn and in July you only need to water every few weeks if weather is dry and the canes start to shrivel. Increase watering as the flowers start to develop.

Fertilizing:

Fertilize from November to March and then stop fertilizing until the following November. Do not fertilize during the winter dry period.

There are many suitable fertilizers Eg: Campbell's A (Yellow) – N:P:K 11:13:16 at 3 grams per litre of water. Fertilizer once per week and increase to twice per week by Christmas.

Potting and Potting Mix:

Repotting is done as soon after flowering as possible. Repotting every two years would be ideal.

A mixture of pine bark (60-70%), perlite (20-30%) and charcoal (10%) is ideal for these plants grown on the North Coast.

Flowering:

Soft Canes need a cooling period at night to initiate bud development. A four week period where the night temperatures drops to between 10 to 13 degrees C is ideal.

Summary:

Fertilize and water freely all summer (from November).

Stop fertilizing by mid-March.

Water all year if conditions are dry (though less in Winter).

Grow with plenty of light and air movement.

High light levels in Winter.



WHY DON'T YOU JOIN THE CHOS COMMITTEE? POSITIONS VACANT!

(Editor: I was recently reading a Sydney Orchid Society newsletter and came across some comments from well known orchid grower and long time committee member of KVO, Jim Brydie. Jim's observations and comments rang true to me and I thought members may benefit from reading some of them).

oooOOOooo

"Here are some observations based on my continuous experience on orchid society committees for 40+ years.

Orchid society committees serve several simultaneous purposes. Some roles such as President require at least some level of experience in public speaking and also in some kind of management. The president, as the team leader, chairs meetings, runs an agenda, AND must work with the other committee individuals to coordinate their assigned tasks to achieve an overall outcome and direction for the club.

However, the committee is also a place of development for participants. For myself it was a place of learning about orchids, about people, and about life. Yes I had to carry out various tasks assigned to me so I did some work, but it was not onerous and I enjoyed being part of a team of more experienced people and growers. People with much more life experience than I, and with skills in a very wide range of work experiences. I learned and I grew.

Participation in a social club committee builds a team who get to know one another and who help one another grow as individuals. Every person you meet in life is smarter or better at something than you are but you can't gain from that unless you are open to it and unless you make the effort to get to know the people around you.

When members first come into the committee, some are but most aren't, yet ready to take on a senior role like President, Secretary or Treasurer. Occasionally we get lucky and find someone with work experiences that have readied them to do those things but many more new committee members take the path I followed and grow a little before taking on such tasks.

Nothing is forever. Peoples lives change around them and circumstances may arise such that they may not continue on committee. That is understood but please make the effort and volunteer when you can. The make up of the committee continually changes but there is usually a core that stays longer. Such is life. There will always be a constant rotation, and so, to ensure maintenance of a solid team we need the maximum numbers on the committee."

"STEP ONE IS TO GET ON THE TEAM. YOU ARE NEEDED OR WE WILL FALL"

Jim Brydie.

oooOOOooo

Nominations for the 2024-2025 CHOS Committee are now being called. Nomination forms can be obtained from Kerrie Gosling or from the Society website. Nominations close with the Secretary, Kerrie Gosling by 7pm on Thursday 31st October. It appears that there may be some Committee vacancies this year so please consider volunteering to be on next years Committee

Growing Orchids 5 – The Orchid Potting Detective

by Jim Brydie

(Printed with permission from the KOS Bulletin, September 2024)

Your Orchid needs repotting. Where do you start?

Well before you try to physically assess what is in front of you, you need to know what it is. If it has a label make sure you read it and then do some research on the kind of orchid you are about to work on. If it doesn't have a label, ask someone who knows. - Is it a Cattleya, a Cymbidium? a Coelogyne? or whatever? AND, not just that, but what kind within that kind. If it is a Cymbidium, is it a standard modern hybrid to which all general Cymbidium growing instructions would apply, or is it a special kind that needs a tailored approach?

If, for example, it is a Coelogyne, the situation is even more complex. There are about 205 species of Coelogyne from a VERY wide range of habitats and climates. There are quite a few hybrids as well but curiously, this is a genus grown mostly for characteristics of some of its species and this includes some really lovely, easily grown orchids.

The point is that unless you already know all about the kind of orchid in front of you, you had better find out before you start playing with it.

Part A - Research

There is no way I can practically talk about how to research EVERY kind of orchid so I am going to explore a process using just 3 examples and I hope you can extrapolate from there.

Example 1 – the label says 'Coelogyne cristata'

There are books and many online information sources. One such internet resource is the **online Orchid Species Photo Encyclopedia (IOSPE)**. For the genus Coelogyne it tells us : (abbreviated)

“Coelogyne - A most interesting genus of 205 species that is found in all four climes, hot, warm, cool and cold, and in most of Asia east of India and on into Indonesia and Fiji.

Great care must be given in knowing what climate a species comes from as they may not tolerate your conditions. Warm growing species like *pandurata* and *speciosa* require no rest while colder growing species need a dry rest in the winter. They can have close or far spaced pseudobulbs along the rhizome with 1 or 2 plicate (folded) leaves, and inflorescences that arise from the apex of the pseudobulb or from the apex of a new growth. I find that wire baskets accommodate these potentially large plants best. My mature *pandurata* is in a 40 cm basket and grew out of it in 1 year! The trilobed lip has a spreading midlobe and longitudinal keels either toothed or papillose (hairy). The long, winged column has a large rostellum (beak, or nose) curving over the hollow stigma. There are 4 pollinia (JB: waxy masses of pollen) cohering in pairs to a single, two lobed, granular appendage.”

There are quite a few botanical terms in all of that but don't be put off. Such is the life of an orchid fancier. Many of those terms will eventually become part of your vocabulary and each term used can easily be googled for an explanation, but despite the technicalities, you have to admit that even in a first reading of that little introduction you certainly learned something about Coelogyne.



However, just having a little overview of the genus doesn't tell you enough. The overview itself already warns that you need to know which Coelogyne you are dealing with, and the same website goes much further. Following the genus overview, the website goes on to list nearly each species in the genus, to describe it and provides a picture. It doesn't go so far as to tell you how to grow it (not usually anyway) but it gives you the information to figure it out.

For *Coelogyne cristata* it offers :

“Flower Size up to 10 cm. - Found in the western Himalayas, eastern Himalayas, Assam, Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim and Java in lower to upper montane forests at altitudes of 1500 to 2600 meters and is a small to medium sized, cool to cold growing epiphyte and occasional lithophyte with oblong, smooth, clustered to well spaced pseudobulbs carrying 2, apical, plicate, 3 to 10 nerved, narrowly lanceolate, sessile, acute, slightly undulate leaves that blooms from

mid-winter till spring on a terminal, pendulous to semi-erect, 6 to 12" [15 to 30 cm] long, racemose, 3 to 10 flowered inflorescence with persistent bracts arising basally on a mature growth and carrying fragrant banana to candy scented flowers.

They have ovoid pseudobulbs well-spaced on a visible rhizome with two narrowly lanceolate, flexible leaves. In the wild they have year round fog and mist and a very bright winter and grow on mossy trees or on exposed rock outcrops."

So what can we learn from all that?



First I would like to talk about the altitude (sometimes referred to as elevation) at which your orchid occurs in nature. There is obviously a relationship between how high an altitude an orchid is found in nature, and that orchid's tolerance to cooler temperatures. But it is not a direct mathematical relationship and other factors come into play.

Now bear in mind that not all, but at least the vast majority of epiphytic orchids come only from the tropic zones on planet earth. That is, between the tropics of Capricorn and Cancer, and from the rough map above you can see that *Coel cristata* does come from that zone. Many years ago I began to try to tabulate the relationship between altitude/ elevation above sea level at which a species can be found in nature, and it's tolerance to temperature in our backyard orchid habitats. I found that there was clearly a usefully deployable relationship but that it wasn't equal for all orchids and all types. I developed the following table as something that I could apply in 90% of cases so long as I played it on the safe side with any new, unknown to me, or especially valuable orchid.

Altitude interpretation table for TROPICAL orchids (ie from between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn)

Plants from more Temperate Zones (ie further south or north) are non tropical and will obviously grow cooler.

Max elev. species found naturally	hot, warm or cool?	Suggested Minimum Growing Temperature
Sea level to 800m	usually hot	suggested minimum temperature at least 10°C, (15+°C is better)
900m to 1400m	warm to intermediate	suggested minimum temperature 6 to 8°C
1500m to 2300m	intermediate to cold	safe minimum temperature 5°C - but will often take lower
2400m or above **	cold	usually easily tolerates 0°C

** Please note that while orchids from higher altitudes tolerate cold well, they may resent very high summer temperatures.

Using the table above and the IOSPE data for *Coelogyne cristata*, I infer that *Coel. cristata* will easily tolerate Sydney's winter temperature unless temperatures are extreme in your particular area. For example, I can't infer tolerance to frost conditions.

The habitat information for *cristata* also tells us that they get year round fog and mist and frequently grow with their roots in moss. This suggests it prefers a moist root environment. One that never completely dries out.

These are good clues for choosing the nature of the potting medium and container required.

One last thing however. The minimum temperature that your orchid will tolerate during winter isn't your only consideration as to whether you might be able to grow an orchid.

The orchid you wish to grow may survive 5°C without physical damage but it may also be an orchid whose growing seasons really require much higher temperatures. You may find that as temperatures reduce and day length shortens, the orchid begins to slow down its growth much earlier than it would naturally. When it stops growing it goes into a kind of suspended animation long before you get down to the minimum temperature you want it to endure. It isn't being physically damaged by the cold but nor is it getting the stored energy it needs from one season to flower and grow strongly the next season. A *Vanda* looking for a minimum 12°C or higher will make smaller or less leaves. A warm growing sympodial orchid makes smaller or less robust pseudobulbs. Neither will flower strongly if at all.

Secondly, I want to talk about seasonality.

For *Coelogyne cristata*, in addition to IOSPE descriptions info above, another tool - Orchidwiz provides some seasonal statistics from the Charles and Margaret Baker's cultivation sheets. For *cristata* these are based on a weather station in India in part of *cristata*'s natural habitat and shows the typical monsoonal season pattern for that part of the world. That is, they predict a very distinct seasonal variation in monthly rainfall.

They show heavy rain November through March (300mm Nov, 560mm Dec, 880mm Jan, 650 Feb, 540 Mar,) followed by a sharp dry pattern April through October (142mm, 13mm, 5mm, 8mm, 18mm, 33mm, 54mm).

The months mentioned are the southern hemisphere equivalents, and this is virtually the same pattern we see for softcane *Dendrobiums* such as *Dendrobium nobile*. These are late spring onward monsoonal rain areas.

I have not grown *Coelogyne cristata* to any great extent but I have grown softcane *Dendrobiums* and closely observed their growth, flowering, and rest periods. For softcanes, the flowering process begins by the production of flower buds at the start of spring, well before the annual rains would arrive in their natural habitat. The flowers open in October in Australia and make a glorious display for several weeks. While flowers are in bloom or shortly after, we see new stem shoots begin at the base of last year's canes (pseudobulbs) but new root growth does not begin until that shoot gets to 8 or 10 cm tall in perhaps mid Nov.

We always suggest repotting those softcanes that need repotting just before the new roots start. The rationale being that if they are repotted then, the new roots will invade and fill the fresh pot quickly during December and January in conjunction with the rapid development of new leafy canes. Growth rates will be maximised.

We aren't telling the orchid to grow by repotting just then. It is just doing what it has evolved to do, to take advantage of annual monsoonal rain periods. We growers are just trying to do what we do in tune with the orchids genetically programmed cycle.

As *Coelogyne cristata* seems to follow almost the same seasonal cycle – flowering in late winter early spring, BEFORE its expected annual rain season, I suspect that we should follow almost the same repotting advice that is applied to softcanes. I expect that new growths should start after the flowering and that repotting should be tuned to take place just before that process gets really underway.

NOTE : I am sure you will understand that available internet descriptions for each species vary substantially in content and extent, and you won't get the depth of info above for every species. But there are other places to look and if you have one of that type of orchid already, you have the incentive and the responsibility to find out about it.

Where does it come from? What kind of habitat does it occupy in nature. What seasonal information is available? Why not go to the trouble of finding out. The information is all there 'somewhere'.

**Part two will feature in the
December Edition of this
newsletter**

ORCHID DISPLAY AT SECRET GARDEN, BOAMBEE WITH ANNIE (Left), BRUCE AND CAROLE (Photos by Annie)

