

CANTERBURY ORCHID SOCIETY

P.O.Box 7131, Sydenham, Christchurch 8240

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Next Meeting: 2nd August - 7pm.
Orchid of the month by popular vote

We are very lucky to have two great speakers for September. They will be here in the latter part of the month so the committee have decided since the National Orchid Extravaganza is on in the first week of September, as well.

THERE WILL BE NO REGULAR MEETING

Harold Koopowitz will be in Christchurch on holiday and has agreed to speak to us.

He is a world renowned orchid grower
This will be his only talk in NZ.

Subject: Miniature Paphiopedilums

Date: Sunday 19th September at 7pm.

Venue: Canterbury Horticultural Hall.

Kevin Western of Australia will be talking to us

Subject: Miniature Cymbidiums

Date: Monday 20th September at 7pm

Venue: Room 4, Shirley Community Centre
Cnr of Slater St and Shirley Rd.

There is off street parking

Plants on Display:

Ellen Manson

LC Shellie Compton 'Touch of Class'

Dendrochilum cobbianum

Dendrochilum javeri

Lycaste virginalis x Auburn 'Ditchling'



Melanie Brigden

LC Puppy Love 'True Beauty' CCC/OCNZ

SLC Anzac 'Orchidhurst' FCC/RHS

Potinara Little Toshie 'H&R' AM/AOS

Potinara Graceful Moon



Tony Connelly talked to us about growing orchids in general but specifically about Cymbidiums.

They can be divided into 3 groups

Standard Cymbidium which has a flower > 100mm

Miniature Cymbidium which has a flower < 60mm

Intermediate Cymbidium which must have one miniature parent and a flower size between the other two.

Flower stems can be upright, arching or pendulous. The flowering characteristic is influenced by the parents.

Cultured orchids need assistance to flower at their best. Pendulous flowering plants may need assistance to direct their spikes over the side of the pots, arching plants will need their spikes supported by staking just below the first bud and upright spikes may need staking to prevent them snapping off with the weight of the flowers.

With the aid of modern technology, there is a wealth of information on the internet or by using orchid databases, such as Orchidwiz, Wildcatt, or AQ. Looking at the family trees of your plants can determine their growth habit. This information can also help with the type of conditions your plant will grow at its best.

Some standard cymbidiums have species that come from areas where temperatures get close to zero. Plants with parents such as hookerianum and tracyanum will be cold tolerant.

White cymbidiums have insigne and erythrostylum in them and so like warmer temperatures.

The same applies to miniature cymbidiums. Many of the species such as devonianum, pumilum, like warmer conditions, therefore their offspring will as well.

Tony also talked about how he grows his plants

He raises his young seedlings on bottom heat. A soil warming cable or hot pad can be used. On top of this he places a tray which he fills with water. Above the water there is a rack. The plants are placed on the rack. A Styrofoam box with the bottom cut out is placed around the plants and tray to keep the humidity and heat in.

The Styrofoam boxes can be obtained from supermarkets, if you ask. This keeps the plants nice and warm and humid and growing very well.

Tony's plants are grown in bark. He is currently growing his back bulbs in coconut fibre. But after 12 months the fibre must be replaced, because of a build up of salts. Growth up till then is excellent. He is also trialling the addition of coconut fibre into his bark to aid water retention.

Here in Christchurch we are very lucky to have an excellent source of bark for orchid growing.

Gropacific at 519 Wairakei Rd,

Manager Garry Clark

The bark comes in a variety of sizes and has been cleaned and pH adjusted for orchids. Their product is used world wide, by commercial and hobby growers. The bark comes in 40litre bags in sizes from 3-6mm to 18-25mm.

The cost is around \$18 per bag. Discounted prices are available for orchid society members.

They do not have Eftpos so it is cash or cheque.

They also sell coconut fibre and chips. I am currently trialling the coconut chips on my garden as a mulch and to break down the clay.

Fertilizers: Use a high nitrogen fertilizer on the young plants to get them growing. A balance

fertilizer is used on the flowering sized plants until March. Increase the potassium from the first signs of flower spikes till the flowers open.

Magnesium sulphate (Epsom Salts/MgSO₄) is a very important element in all plants. Many growers give their orchids a dose of this in the spring and summer. Some give it all through the growing season. It doesn't seem to matter.

Pest control: Tony advocates the use of Neem oil. It seems to control most pests and some diseases. Use at the strength recommended on the bottle. Add a sticking agent such as Rainguard..

Use every 2 weeks until control of insects has been achieved. After that once every 4 months. Spray for total coverage above and below the leaves.

Do not spray in hot weather as the leaves may burn. In summer spray in the evening. In the winter the Neem oil will have to be heated up in a bath of hot water as it solidifies in cold temperatures.

It appears to work by affecting an insect's ability to feed. It appears harmless to spiders and bees.

Other Important Information.

Oamaru Orchid Show is 25th - 26th September
At St Pat's Hall, Usk St, Oamaru. All are welcome

A reminder to all our members. We have an extensive library of both books and magazines. They belong to you and you should use it. To our new members: the library is always at the back of meeting. To take a book out, just fill in the card in the book and give to our librarian.

On the Saturday night of our orchid show we are hoping to have a Pizza and salad meal. This will be held directly after the show closes in the hall. The cost is \$10. Please let our Treasurer know if you are interested. It is a great time to talk and relax after a busy day.

The Treasurer has society badges for sale. They are \$8

