

Next Meeting: Saturday 20th March; 1:30pm. The downside of going on holiday to interesting places is that people expect you too tell them about it when you get back. (Actually the downside is coming back!). Last year Anne & I went to France and did a canal boat trip in Bourgogne and rented a house in a medieval village in Provence. It will be my pleasure to recap the highlights of this trip to you (really!). We were blown away with our trip and hopefully you will be too.

Previous Meetings

Last month's barbeque was an outstanding success. The weather was perfect, the company grand and the food magnificent. If you weren't there – what a pity!

A quick Raffle was held (bottle of Marlborough's best) and one by ... me! (Phil)

As is often the case at our barbeque the plant display wasn't huge. It was February after all. Nevertheless the following stunning plants were on display:

Plant Display:

- Cymbidium
- Cym Golden Elf 'Sunburst' - Rosemary
- Cym Phyllis Friedlander 'Pride of Kapiti' - Barbara

Phalaenopsis

- Phal un-named white - Rosemary
- (*Doritis pulcherrima* x *Doritis Pink*) x (*Phal purpurea* x *Phal Malibu*) - Rosie
- Phal Lollie Pop (see picture on the right) - Rosie

Others

- Onc Charlesworthii - Rosie
- Enc adenocaula* - Phil



Future Meetings

April Saturday 17th: Buy Sell and Swap. It is time to start preparing plants for this event. Anything goes at this event, not just orchids.

Here and There:

Phil has a stack of polystyrene mushroom trays and a stack of 10 litre black plastic buckets that are surplus – if you want any please give him a call. The buckets are ideal for large cymbidiums or for growing lilies. Some have holes some don't.

Both of the phallies on display at the barbeque were bought from local stores where they were being sold as 'pot plants'. These are usually un-named but are often very nice quality and well worth looking out for if the price is right.

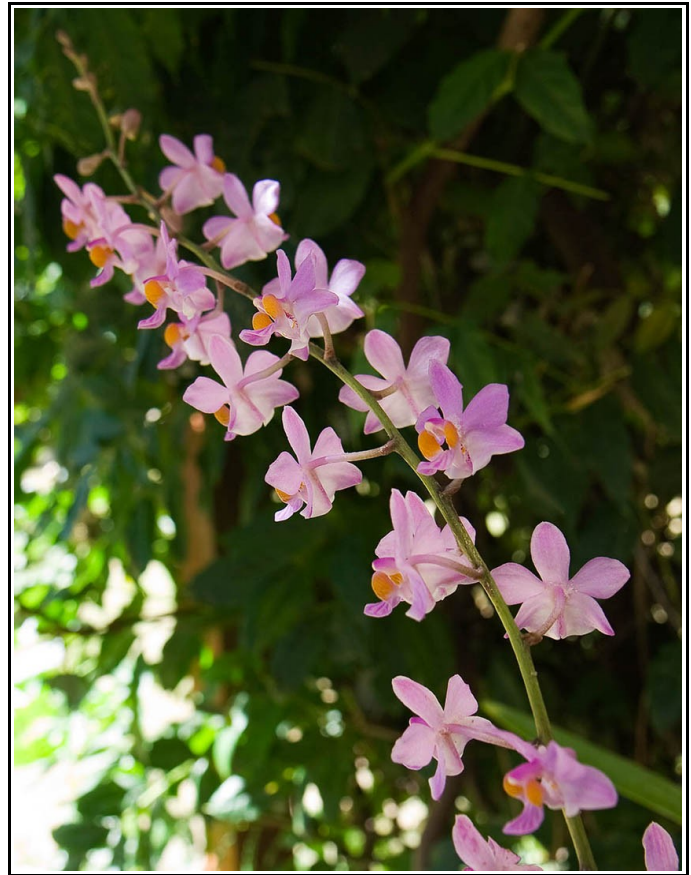
Doritis pulcherrima:

Last month I featured a picture of the OCNZ Species of the year, *Doritis pulcherrima*. At the February barbeque Rosie brought along her and Brians *pulcherrima* cross (picture over the page). Although this plant is a hybrid it bears a strong resemblance to *pulcherrima* such is the species dominance in any primary cross it features in.

It is worth looking more closely at this delightful species that some people seem to be able to grow so well.

Jay Pfahl says this about the genus *Doritis*: "A single extremely variable epiphytic or lithophytic species makes up this genus found from Burma to Sumatra. It has been used extensively to hybridize with *Phalaenopsis* and these are known as *Doritaenopsis*. Culture for this genus is the same as that for *Phalaenopsis*."

Doritis pulcherrima is recorded as a hot to warm growing found in in all of SE Asia at elevations of 100 to 1300 meters. They are found in evergreen, lowland forests along canyons of montane streams in bright humid environments. The inflorescence is erect and up to 90 cm tall, carrying many flowers. The inflorescence lengthens as the bloom season goes on. The plants require even watering and fertilizer throughout the year. It is the same as *Phalaenopsis* in it's cultural necessities yet requires more light to flower well.¹



Two colour varieties are often seen – the 'normal' dark pink form (*pulcherrima* var *pulcherrima*) and a violet one (f. *coerulea*) as below.



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The December 2009 AOS Bulletin 'Orchids' contains a description by Leonid V. Averyanov of a new variety found in Vietnam, var *apiculata*. This paper also contains a useful key to the various varieties and forms of *pulcherrima*. The species 'type' on which the genus is based is called *Doritis pulcherrima* var. *pulcherrima* f. *pulcherrima*. It is described as "flowers pink of different intensity, more or less deep saturated with cerise; the lip usually darker; lip lobes pink, pink-purple, to yellow-brown or orange; the disk of midlobe white, the column white to pink." It is clear that even within this one form of one variety there is a fair bit of variation! Jay was not kidding when he said it was extremely variable.

Averyanov lists three forms of *Doritis pulcherrima*: var. *pulcherrima*; var. *buyssonia*; and var. *apiculata*. Among those he describes ten forms. If you have a plant of *Doritis pulcherrima* you wish to classify it is worth looking this up. If you don't have one perhaps you should consider trying one. A hybrid with the species as a recent parent is likely to look a lot like *pulcherrima* and will probably be more vigorous than the species so unless you are a species nut they would be a good choice.

1 Source: <http://www.orchidspecies.com/doritispulcherma.htm> – Jay Pfahl

2 Source: <http://www.orchidphotos.org> - Eric Hunt