



MOS NEWSLETTER

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Next Event: Rarangi Ramble – November Saturday 14th; Native Orchid enthusiasts will meet in the car park at Rarangi at 9:30 am. Each year we find different orchids in flower depending on the season. We are still hopeful to see some of the Thelymitra in flower – will it be this year? If you want a ride call Rosemary who will organise car pooling. Bring; Field Guide and magnifying glass. Postponement day – Sunday; call Phil if wet (as if!). It is usually sheltered from wind in the bush but rain is a bit off putting.

Next Meeting: November, Saturday 21st, 1:30 pm; to follow on from the Rarangi Ramble. For the benefit of those who couldn't make it, as well as those who could, we will have a look at relevant pages from the field guides and other photo's on the projector. Learn more about what grows wild in your own back yard. Watch for a bonus presentation that you will be impressed by.

[Previous Meeting](#)

The odd spot of rain didn't put most people off the Orchid House visits, especially with a new house to visit. As always October is a good time to see lots of plants in flower. An excellent afternoon tea was thoroughly enjoyed by all at Anne and Errol Ede's. Anne had very thoughtfully put off harvesting her Cymbidiums for bouquets just for our visit.

[OCNZ Raffle](#)

The OCNZ Grocery Raffle results are on the Council web site but for those without access here are the results:

First; Ticket 5398 – Patricia Hayes of Palmerston North

Second; Ticket 7052 – Ana Rose of Auckland

Third; Ticket 7523 – Lorraine Nuttal of Oamaru

[Up-Coming Meetings & Events](#)

Christmas: 6th December (Sunday): 12:00 am. Our Social Committee has been busy researching venues. This year we are going to 'Fairweather on Scott' restaurant; in Scott St of course. The menu includes a choice of two very tasty mains for \$15 plus a choice of two desserts for \$5; tea or coffee \$2.50. Names to Rosie please (578-3490).

2009: February 20th: We will have a BBQ at Anne & Phil's. Look for the February newsletter for details.

Members under the weather: Both Allister and Ian have been battling health problems lately. Spare a thought for them – we look forward to seeing them both on deck and fighting fit!



Sarc hartmannii

A Modern *Sarcochilus* Hybrid



Sarc fitzgeraldii

This year a number of seedlings from a flask of Sarc's flowered for the first time for me. As is usually the case the resulting flowers are quite variable. It is worth looking at the cross to see why and to see what the hybridiser was trying to achieve.

The cross is a complex one being Sarc [Fitzhart 'Spots' x self] x [*hartmannii* X Rachel 'Wine'] from the Isador Klein stable; arguably one of Australia's top 3-4 Sarc breeders. Flowers were expected have real character - some with spotting, some with lots of intense spotting and some almost deep burgundy all over. 'Shape, size and show habit are almost guaranteed.' (Breeders comment) Sarc Rachel is Heidi x *hartmannii*. The cross is therefore mostly '*hartmannii*' with 25% '*fitzgeraldii*' injected in the last cross.

Sarcochilus Fitzhart (*hartmannii* X *fitzgeraldii*) was one of the first Sarc hybrids, produced in 1963. Its flowers are usually

white to pink with solid or spotted centres. Over recent years, as better 'line-bred' cultivars of *S. hartmannii* and *S. fitzgeraldii* have become available, *S. Fitzhart* has been re-made many times, with consequent improvement in flower shape, colour and size. Pro's and con's of this hybrid are as follows:

Virtues:

- * A primary hybrid so it has great growth vigour
- * Prolific flower production
- * Second generation (such as a sibling cross) have a high percentage of highly coloured clones. Some have improved flower shape.
- * A reasonably fertile parent which has produced some great crosses – Heidi, Jeanne, Fizzy Dove, Sweetheart, Burgundy On Ice
- * A very bright future as a grandparent with credits such as Orange Glow, Hot Ice and Kirra Lea

Vices:

- * Older crosses, although made with the best parents available at the time would now be considered to be inferior. Clones from these early crosses are mostly lacking in flower quality.
- * Generally the more intensely coloured clones from the newer sibling crosses tend to be smaller than expected.



A Champion Fitzhart

A predominant target for Sarc Fitzhart breeders is one of crimson red flowers shaped like an award quality *S. hartmannii* on robust, easy growing plants. *S. fitzgeraldii* is not renowned for its flower shape or robust growth. What most breeders have been chasing are offspring that display their red genes. Most *S. Fitzharts* however tend to be whites with varying degrees of red in the centre of the flowers which rarely, if ever, extends to the tips of the flower segments. Even these don't advertise their colour inheritance but instead proudly declare their improved "fuller shape" so treasured by orchid judges.

S. Fitzhart from a sibling crosses are often seen with more than the usual degree of red colouring, some even being fully red. The colour is retained in the first cross, just hidden by some more dominant white genes and they only express themselves in the next generation when both parents contribute a similar set of red genes.

Both parent species (*S. hartmannii* and *S. fitzgeraldii*) carry some red colouration in their flowers. Admittedly this may be very a small amount in some forms of *S. hartmannii* but it does evidence the ability of both parents to display red colouration and also the potential to contribute red genes to *S. Fitzhart*. These genes may be hidden to some extent in a straight *S. Fitzhart* but become more visible in the sibling cross. This would appear to be the reasoning in Klein's use of the sibling cross of Fitzhart in the first half of the cross.

The flower on the right is very pleasing but there is some room for improvement in terms of solidity of colour and of substance and shape. Over half of my seedlings have yet to flower so there is still hope.



A nice result?

Many thanks to Neville Roper of Sutherland Shire OS for his informative articles at: <http://www.ssos.org.au/FiveBestSarcCrosses.htm> and <http://www.ssos.org.au/Wheredidcolourogo.htm>