

THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ORCHID BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE ORCHID SOCIETY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA
FOUNDED 1946. A MEMBER OF THE AUSTRALIAN ORCHID COUNCIL.

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OCTOBER 2022

The next meeting of the Orchid Society of Western Australia (Inc.) will be held at the Manning Senior Citizens Activity Centre, Manning, on **Friday 28 October, 2022.**

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THIS MONTH'S MEETING

SHAUN HOFFMANN
FERTIGATION

NOVEMBER MEETING DATES

OSWA Committee: 7:30 pm Friday 4th
General Meeting: 7:30 pm Friday 25th

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OSWA disclaims all liability for losses that may be attributed to the use of any material mentioned in this Bulletin. Opinions expressed in the Bulletin are not necessarily those of OSWA.

Vale Lorna Dodd

Lorna, a long-serving life member of our Society, passed away 19th September 2022 peacefully at her home. Lorna was 97 years of age. A very hard working member of our Society, Lorna was on the Committee from November 1976 until 2021. She served as President of our Society for 4 years, and as Secretary for 5 years. She became Chairperson of the Ladies Auxiliary back in 1975 to raise funds for the AOC Conference held in Perth in 1977 and 1991. Lorna organised the NEW Conference Flag that was to be presented at each AOC Conference to the Host Club/State holding it. She first became the Secretary back in January 1978. Life Membership was bestowed on Lorna in 1986, for all the work that she did for our Society. Up until the Covid-19 pandemic, members would have regularly seen Lorna in the kitchen, cheerfully and enthusiastically serving our supper at General Meetings and at many other functions we held. At our fiftieth anniversary Lorna decorated a cake, to be cut by the Patron and President at the time. Lorna has always been a very active member of our Society and will be missed by all. Now looking after all the orchids that we all send to orchid heaven. Rest Peacefully Lorna.

Kaye Baylis

General News

This month's Bulletin is earlier than usual to remind you of the many activities that are coming up...

Visit to Floraplant Nursery: Saturday 15 October, from 9 am sharp

Where: 822 Rowley Rd, Oakford

Trevor arranged for our postponed visit to Floraplant Nursery to be rescheduled to Saturday 15 October, starting at 9 am sharp. The Floraplant people have very few times when they are able to host visitors, so we are lucky that they were able to reschedule our visit. This event has been very popular in the past.

Floraplant has expanded from orchid production towards other interesting plants—indoor plants, bromeliads, aroids, succulents, and even carnivorous plants—but they still grow orchids as well! Plants will be available for sale, but Floraplant does not accept Eftpos so bring cash to make purchases. Floraplant has done us a big favour by letting us visit and gives us very good prices. Please do not haggle or attempt to negotiate further discounts. This visit cannot accommodate a large group, so it is only open to financial members of OSWA. Non-members and non-financial members cannot attend without express permission from the OSWA committee prior to the event.

Potting Workshop: Sunday 16 October, 10 am - 3 pm (setup from 8:30 am)

The Potting Workshop is a highlight of the OSWA calendar and is an excellent event for anyone wishing to learn more about potting and other aspects of orchid culture. And members get in for free! And members might get free scones!

Setup will be from around 8:30 am. *Speakers, potters & helpers needed, as well as plants for the display and for the sales table and donations for the kitchen.*

The workshop will be at the Manning Senior Citizens Activity Centre, 3 Downey Drive, Manning (where we hold our General Meetings). Plants will be potted, there will be sales of orchids and orchid-related paraphernalia, there will be talks, there will be a display, and there will be coffee, tea, soft drinks and snacks.

We will need:

- Members to help with repotting. Don't worry if you don't know how, the best way to learn is to practice, and you'll get plenty of practice and on-the-job training at this event.
- Helpers willing to give a short talk about some aspect of orchid culture on the day.
- Helpers for the kitchen, entrance table, etc.
- Donations for the kitchen (scones, cake, sandwiches...)
- Plants for the display.
- Plants for the sales table. Plant sales tags etc will be available at the workshop or can be downloaded from www.orchidsocietywa.net.au.

Silent Auction: *Angraecum sesquipedale* 'Ian Duncan' - Bids closing 17 October

Ian Duncan's family is offering Ian's famous *Angraecum sesquipedale* for sale by silent auction. This plant is an exceptional specimen — see the September bulletin for photos. The plant bears large, fragrant flowers in August/September, and so has made regular appearances at the OSWA Spring Show, with much success. It has been Grand Champion at least five times (OSWA Spring Show 2016, 2017, 2019, 2020; SEOS Spring Show 2022) and at the SEOS Spring Show it was awarded a Highly Commended Certificate (HCC award) by the local Australian Orchid Council judging panel. For the last few years, this orchid has been grown in an unheated glasshouse and has received minimal attention, so there is every reason to expect that if given some additional care it will continue to be a star at orchid shows and receive additional awards in the future.

If you are interested in this orchid, email your bid to Jenny at ianellisduncan@gmail.com by 17 October 2022. This silent auction is open to everyone — it is not restricted to particular clubs.

Orchidup Open Weekend: Saturday 22 - Sunday 23 October, 10 am - 4 pm

Where: Orchidup Nursery, 82 Bridge Road, Walpole

Orchidup is one of the orchid vendors that regularly supports orchid events in Perth and the south west. Based in Walpole, Orchidup Nursery is a family owned business set up on a working beef cattle farm. As such, it is not usually open to the public, except by appointment or during the annual Open Weekend. Orchid enthusiasts who have made the trek from Perth to Walpole for previous Open Weekends say it's definitely worth the trip.

For more info: <https://www.orchidup.com.au/>
jacksplace@westnet.com.au
or find Orchidup on Facebook.

**Perth Garden and Outdoor Living Festival - Thursday 27 October - Sunday 30 October
(Setup: 1 pm Wednesday 26 October)**

OSWA is planning to have a small stall at the Festival again this year. We will be setting up our gazebo and tables on Wednesday 26 October at 1 pm. Our stall will include a small display, so members with plants in flower should bring them to the venue on Wednesday 26 October, at about 1 pm. Our gazebo has a roof and walls, so plants will be safe and protected from the elements for the duration of the Festival. The venue is Langley Park, off Terrace Road, Perth. There will be ample parking adjacent to the venue, and the venue is also within walking distance of Elizabeth Quay station, should you prefer to use public transportation.

We should receive entry passes for members to gain free access to the event on days that they volunteer at the OSWA stall. If you would like to visit the Festival for free, contact Lina (0419 917 487 or linaep@gmail.com) to sign up for some shifts in our stall, and you'll be able to wander around the Festival grounds before your shift starts or after it is over. At the moment, our roster is a bit thin for afternoons of Friday 28 October and Saturday 29 October, so help at one of those times will be especially appreciated, but help at other times will also be welcome. Note that the Festival starts before our next General Meeting. If you are not on the roster already, you will need to contact Lina to get on it.

Members who have been involved in the past have found the experience very rewarding, not only because of the many interesting things to do, but the many interesting orchid enthusiasts they meet. Invariably, volunteers end up making many purchases...

It is time to bring the Trophies back!

Could members who are holding the trophies please return them by the October General Meeting, as they need to be engraved during November, before our Christmas Meeting and presentation night. If you wish to polish them, please use Silvo.

Membership Subscriptions are due on 1 November!

\$26 double, \$21 single. Even though inflation is picking up and our expenses are increasing, the cost of membership has remained unchanged again this year — excellent value! For your convenience OSWA accepts payment by direct deposit (preferred method), cheque, or cash (paid at a general meeting). Direct deposit can be made via electronic banking or at any Westpac branch using the account information below. *If possible, please use direct deposit or cheque, to lessen stress and chaos at the general meetings.*

For direct deposit into OSWA's account:

Account name - Orchid Society of Western Australia Inc.

Bank - Westpac Bank, Booragoon, WA

BSB - 036069 Account Number - 457265

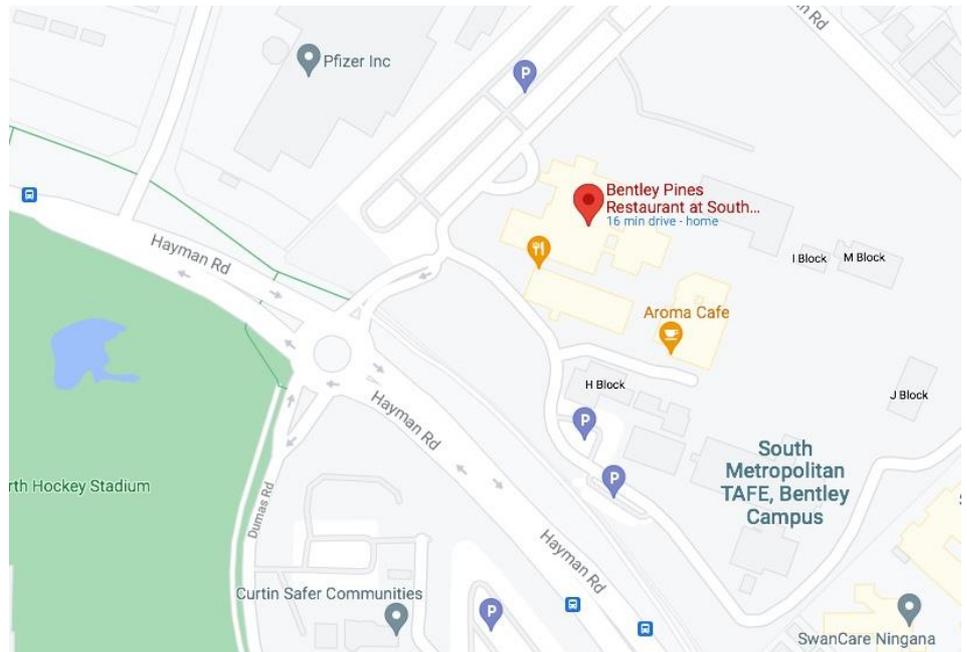
Reference - please use your name or phone number, to help us identify your payment.

For payment by cheque:

Make cheques payable to The Orchid Society of WA Inc. and bring them to a general meeting or post them to OSWA, 58 Gladstone Rd, Leeming 6149.

OSWA Christmas Dinner - Wednesday 9 November from 6:30 pm

Our Christmas Dinner this year will be at Bentley Pines Training Restaurant, Hayman Road, Bentley. See the September bulletin for info about the venue, including the three-course menu. For a three-course meal with coffee and tea afterwards, the cost is only \$30 per person. **Payment in advance is essential** and due by the October general meeting. You can pay at the meeting, or by direct deposit into OSWA's account. If paying by direct deposit, use the bank account details provided above for Membership Subscriptions,



make sure you use your name or phone number as reference to help us identify your payment, and make sure you add your name to the list of attendees that is circulated at the General Meeting.

Late Flowering Orchid Display — Manning Senior Citizens Activity Centre

Setup: Friday 11 November from 5 pm, *followed by social night with home made soups and bread!*

Open: Saturday 12 November, 9 am - 4 pm, and Sunday 13 November, 9 am - 3 pm

The Late Flowering Orchid Display, run jointly with the Cymbidium Orchid Club of WA (COCWA) and the Australian Native Orchid Society (ANOS WA), is our chance to show off Australian native cymbidiums, sarcochilus, and other orchids that flower too late for the usual shows. This will be a Display only, so no plant competition or judging, but there will be plant sales, snacks, and the chance to meet members of other clubs.

We'll need plants for the display and for the sales table. We'll need volunteers to help set up and pack up, manage the entry/raffle table, help in the kitchen and at the sales table, and do walk-around tours of

the display for small groups of members of the public. A sign-up roster will be available at the October GM. Please sign up to indicate whether you are coming and where you would like to help.

In view of feedback from last year's event, we are planning to have short talks for members of the public every hour. Speaking duties will be shared by the three participating clubs, so we need a few volunteers to speak on any orchid-related topic. Please have a think about a topic you could talk about. Novice growers especially have much to offer here, since they will be more recently familiar with the trials and tribulations experienced by folks new to orchids.

For those kind enough to prepare something for the kitchen, please let us know what you're bringing on the roster too. **Entry is free if your name is on the roster.**

Setup is on Friday 11 November from 5 pm, and will be **followed by a social night with homemade soups and bread provided, so please join in!**

Birthdays

September: 4th Nelia Farquhaison; 14th Bob Longmore; 15th, Nantha Lingam; 30th Wanda Frantom

October: 4th Kristene Northover; 4th Katherine Cooper; 9th Tara Peeters; 10th Claudia Rowe; 11th Enid Chelva; 14th Eric Bateman; 16th Barbara Burnett; 21st Ann Walker

November: 2nd Aishya Ghose; 13th Rosalie McCallum; 18th Trevor Burnett

Best wishes to anyone else celebrating Birthdays or Anniversaries. To any member on the sick list we wish you a speedy recovery & may you soon be well.

New Members

Welcome to Jacqueline Hunt (Brentwood). We hope you have many rewarding years ahead with our Society.

Orchid Talk at Bunnings

Thank you to Jacqui B and Maggie R, who represented OSWA at Bunnings Innaloo to present a talk and demonstration about orchids. Their presentation was well-received by about 40 members of the public and Bunnings Management, and the Society received some Bunnings vouchers for their efforts. Word got around, and Bunnings Melville and Bunnings Claremont have now requested presentations too. Thank you in advance to Lina, Lynn, Maggie, and Jacqui for volunteering to do these presentations.

Orchid Doctor Sessions at General Meetings

Do you have a favourite orchid that is looking a bit sad? Not thriving? Not flowering? Has some strange malady that you can't identify? Bring your orchid along to a general meeting for discussion. Chances are, another member will have a solution to your orchid's woes.

Upcoming Events for your Calendar

- **Bunnings Presentation at Claremont:** 1 November, 10 -11 am
- **Floraplant Nursery Visit:** Saturday 15 October, starting 9 am sharp.
- **Potting Workshop:** Sunday 16 October
- **Perth Garden Festival:** 27-30 October (setup 26 October)
- **Late Flowering Orchid Display:** 12 and 13 November (Saturday and Sunday, setup on Friday)
- **Bunnings Presentation at Melville:** 24 November, 10 - 11 am
- **Home visits?** Let Harry or Lina know if you would be happy to host a home visit.
- **Christmas Dinner:** Bentley Pines (same as last year), 9 November 2022, 6:30 pm for 7 pm.

ORCHID CULTURE NOTES FOR KAMBARANG (APPROX. OCTOBER/NOVEMBER)

The Orchid Society of Western Australia would like to acknowledge that our meetings are held on the traditional lands of the Noongar people. Unlike the European calendar, the Noongar people describe the climate of West Australia's South West as having six seasons, guided by what is happening and changing around us rather than specific 'dates' on a calendar. This approach to describing Perth's climate is helpful for guiding our orchid related jobs for the year. Kambarang (approx. October/November) is the season of birth. The worst of the cold weather has passed, and the country is bursting into life with wildflowers. This includes many of our native orchid species, which are easy to spot on most wildflower bush walks. Take care when appreciating them though—many of our native reptiles (danger noodles) are also very active this time of year!

- ✓ With rising temperatures and longer days, many orchids will be showing signs of new growth. Actively growing orchids are in the perfect stage of their growth cycle to take up fertilizer, so application of slow release pellets and liquid feeds is highly beneficial. Be excited by the new growths—they are the 'solar panels' that will fuel the sprays of spectacular flowers next year!
- ✓ Some fertilizer pellets release their contents in a temperature-dependent manner. For this reason, it's best not to just apply the pellets to the surface of the mix where they receive full sun—tap the pot so the pellets settle into the mix a little.
- ✓ Remember that fertilizer application needs to go hand in hand with increased watering, especially for newly repotted orchids that have a fresh, free draining mix that doesn't hold as much moisture as older mix. If you have an irrigation system, it may be time to start using it in the next few weeks. Remember to water orchids heavily—water should run through the bottom of the pot to flush out any excess salts. Try to grow plants like bromeliads and groundcovers (but not ferns!) under the orchids, as these will absorb any excess fertilizer runoff, help create a frog friendly environment (insect patrol) and improve humidity in the growing space.
- ✓ If overhead watering, remember that new orchid growths can be soft and delicate, and if water is accumulating in developing leaf axils there is a risk of rot. Try to angle and position plants to face directions where this risk is reduced.
- ✓ Growers that having solarweave/plastic covers for their shade house can remove them at this time of year—it can get very hot under a solarweave roof! Consider applying an additional layer of shade cloth as temperatures rise, especially into November.
- ✓ Repotting should be well underway, and some general tips were included in previous months' culture notes. Repotting can be stressful for orchids, especially in warmer weather, so it's a good idea to keep the plants in a cooler, shadier location for a week or two after repotting to help them cope with any stress.
- ✓ Insects such as scale, aphids and mealy bugs become more active as it warms up (and are enticed by the irresistibly lush new growth on our plants!) so vigilance is required. Managing ants is critical to prevent them from 'farming' and spreading scale. Large caterpillars can also be a problem. Try to identify signs of infestation early to minimize damage.

See the September bulletin for cultural notes for Kambarang specific to Cymbidiums, Paphiopedilums, and Cattleyas.

Minutes of the General Meeting of The Orchid Society of WA (Inc.) held in the Manning Senior Citizens Activity Centre, Manning, on Friday September 23rd 2022

Welcome: 7:30 pm

Apologies and attendance: as per register

Minutes: Moved Lynn B, seconded Ray T that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted. Carried.

Presentation: Kaye Baylis on floristry. Kaye is a life member of the Orchid Society of Western Australia, and our longest serving committee member. Kaye is an excellent florist and provided a well received demonstration on how to wire a corsage, and various bouquets. Thank you Kaye!

Bonus presentation: Courtney demonstrated removal of keikis from a soft can dendrobium. The process involves gently twisting off the keiki, sterilising the break with some Mercurachrome (some people use cinnamon powder) and potting it up as a new plant. Do not 'bury' the base of the plant in the new media. It's quite important that the

green actively growing root tips are not broken during the process. Courtney used stakes, elastic bands and clips to ensure the plants are upright and secure in the new pot. Courtney describes how he gives these dendrobiums a dry winter rest and basically does not water between Mothers day and Fathers day. Courtney has achieved better growth and flowering this way, and grows them high up under Laserlite sheeting on his patio.

New member introductions: Pamela Lanigan, Sean and Thilini, Ruchi Pototanon

Correspondence:

27/8 from GCA notice of AGM; 24/8 from Eric Konigsdorfer re graphic design; 25/8 from Bunnings, request for presentation on orchids; 26/8 to WA Horticultural Council correcting error in our advertising; 29/8 from Glenn, reminder to turn lights off + cleanup kitchen; 30/8 from Gateway printing, promotional material for banners; 31/8 from GCA, meeting agenda; 1/9 from GCA (bulletin); 1/9 from Sharon Jones asking if we are selling books she saw in Busselton; 7/9 from Trevor re sponsorship of the 2023 ISODW dinner hall hire – we will need to put up a banner acknowledging sponsorship; 7/9 from ImageSource re banners/signage; 10/9 from Michelle asking if we will do shows and displays in shopping centres (closest ones High Wycombe and Dog Swamp); 13/9 from Murray re passing of Don Phillips and Tony Watkinson; 13/9 from Crazy Domains re au domain; 13/9 to/from The Hanging Garden confirming availability of plants for a club order; 15/9 to/from signage companys re OSWA banners/aframe quotes; 19/9 from Duncan family re auction of *Angraecum sesquipedale*; 19/9 from Urban Bushland Council reflecting on conservation efforts; 19/9 to/from SEOS confirming numbers for the previous ISDW; 20/9 to/from Gateway Printing re signage quotes; 19/9 to/from Kardinya shops thanking them for hosting our Spring Show; 20/9 to/from Perth Garden Festival clarifying setup details; 22/9 from Meg D re a beautiful dendrobium she has in flower.

Business arising from correspondence

- **Happy birthday Nantha!** We forgot to mention Nantha's birthday in the bulletin.
- **Reminder from Glenn:** lights need to be turned off and kitchen needs to be left clean and tidy.
- **Bunnings Innaloo:** Jacqui and Maggie (and maybe Lynn) will be talking to the Bunnings Innaloo gardening group about orchids on September 28th 10:30-11:30am. If you're in the area, please stop by and support them!
- **Bunnings Melville:** have invited us to present to their gardening group on November 24th, 10-11am. Lynn Brooks indicated will be able to attend, some more helpers tbc closer to the date.

Moved Harry A, seconded Ray T that the business arising from correspondence be accepted. Carried.

Report: Spring Show – was well received, thank you to everyone who participated. Big thank you to Kardinya Shopping Centre for continuing to support the event.

Financial report: To be presented at the October GM (Treasurer is away.)

General Business:

- Vale Lorna Dodd, Tony Watkinson, Don Phillips. A minute's silence to remember the time we spent together.
- Ray Taylor kindly conducted three auctions. A large specimen of *Dendrobium delicatum* (kindly donated by Kaye B) was won for \$42 by Arnold. Two large yellow cymbidiums (kindly donated to OSWA by a gentleman in Alfred Cove last summer and cared for by Murray since then) were won for \$35 by Lina and \$42 by Maggie R.
- **Lina: OSWA Potting Workshop and Perth Garden Festival**
Rosters circulated. There will be a few committee apologies for these events. If we are unable to fill these rosters, we may need to look at cancelling them so please help out if available
- **ISODW 2023** – any theme suggestions?
- **Ian Duncan's *Angraecum sesquipedale*** – Ian's prize orchid, which has won grand championships at multiple shows, is being sold in a silent auction. See details in the bulletin.
- **OSWA Autumn Show 2023** – OSWA has been approach by shopping centre near North Perth to stage an autumn show in 2023. The committee has discussed and thought providing there is adequate membership support, we were thinking of running a 3 day show (setup + judging Wednesday night, show Thursday to Saturday prior to Mothers Day). Is there support from membership to run this? ~10 members indicated they would help support the event. To be discussed at committee meeting.
- **New Grower Incentive Scene Participation** – new OSWA members are encouraged to bench plants at our monthly meetings. Members in the second, third and fourth year as OSWA members collect points from benching plants, and at the end of the year the grower in each year with the most 'points' will be awarded a quality, flowering sized plant from the OSWA stockpile.
- **Potting workshop** - Tara, Ray, Courtney agreed to do presentations, topics to be confirmed.
- **Events calendar 2022:** Bunnings Innaloo Talk September 28th 10:30-11:30am; Flora Plant Visit **rescheduled** to October 15, 9am SHARP; Potting Workshop – October 16th; Perth Garden Festival – October 27-30; Christmas Dinner at Bentley Pines- November 9th 7pm; Late Flowering Orchid Display –November 11-13; Bunnings Melville Talk- November 24th 10am-11am.

Raffle: Helen S, Karina W, Patricia L, Chris S, Courtney R, Enid C, Derek S, Margaret R, Keng L, Karina W, Maggie R, Betty S, Derek S

Open popular vote: Courtney Rogasch with *Angraecum (sesquipedale x superbum)*.

Novice popular vote: Marian M with *Cattleya* unknown. Mariam fertilizes with a soluble fertilizer in rainwater. This is an orchid that came from Bunnings.

Door Prize: Daphne S. **Meeting Closed** at 9:56 pm

MONTHLY PLANT COMPETITION (SEPTEMBER 2022)

OPEN

1A	(1)	1	Harry Ashton	<i>Cattleya intermedia</i>
1C	(2)	1	Valerie Cooper	<i>Brassolaeliocattleya</i> Haadyai Delight x
		2	Harry Ashton	<i>Brassolaeliocattleya</i> Unknown Gold Digger (?)
				<i>Cattleya</i> Unknown
1E	(2)	1	Harry Ashton	<i>Cattleya</i> Siam Jade
		2	Harry Ashton	<i>Cattleya amethystoglossa</i> x <i>Epicattleya</i> Rene Marques 'Flame Thrower'
2D	(1)	1	Helen Stretch	<i>Cymbidium</i> O'Beaston
2E	(1)	1	Malcolm Davis	<i>Cymbidium</i> Heartbreak Doctor 'Bleeding Heart'
6D	(1)	1	Helen Stretch	<i>Oncidium</i> Space Mine 'Red Rendezvous'
7B	(1)	1	Courtney Rogasch	<i>Angraecum sesquipedale</i> x <i>Angraecum superbum</i>
8A	(2)	1	Harry Ashton	<i>Dendrobium jonesii</i>
		1	Harry Ashton	<i>Sarcochilus hartmannii</i>
8B	(3)	1	Tara Peeters	<i>Dendrobium</i> Jayden 'Elegant Heart' x <i>Dendrobium speciosum</i>
		2	Malcolm Davis	<i>Dendrobium gracillimum</i> x <i>Dendrobium</i> Star of Gold 'Bathurst'
		3	Courtney Rogasch	<i>Dendrobium</i> Star One 'Syds Boy' x <i>Dendrobium</i> x <i>delicatum</i> 'Michael'
10A	(2)	1	Courtney Rogasch	<i>Dendrochilum cobbianum</i>
		2	Courtney Rogasch	<i>Zygopetalum crinitum</i>

NOVICE

15B	(1)	1	Enid Chelva	<i>Cattleya</i> Golf Green 'Hairy Pig'
15D	(1)	1	Marian Mac	<i>Cattleya</i> Unknown
15F	(2)	1	Lynn Brooks	<i>Cattleya</i> Unknown
		2	Lynn Brooks	<i>Laeliocattleya</i> 'Trick or Treat'
16D	(1)	1	Dawn Fathers	<i>Cymbidium</i> Unknown
16E	(1)	1	Marian Mac	<i>Cymbidium</i> Paradisean Bullseye 'Stunner'
19D	(1)	1	Nelia Farquharson	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> Unknown
21B	(1)	1	Enid Chelva	<i>Angraecum Veitchii</i>
22A	(1)	1	Enid Chelva	<i>Dendrobium kingianum</i>
22B	(3)	1	Alan Rowe	<i>Dendrobium</i> (((Elly Wong x Zip) x Renee) x
		2	Marion Mac	(Victorian Regency x Hilda Poxon))
		3	Alan Rowe	<i>Dendrobium</i> Unknown
				<i>Dendrobium</i> x <i>delicatum</i>
25B	(1)	1	Enid Chelva	<i>Anoectochilus</i> Unknown

Open popular vote: *Angraecum sesquipedale* x *Angraecum superbum* grown by Courtney Rogasch.

Novice popular vote: *Cattleya* unknown, grown by Marian McFetridge



Angraecum sesquipedale x *Angraecum superbum*
(Grown and photographed by Courtney Rogasch)



Cattleya unknown
(Grown by Marian McFetidge; photo by Kirsty)



Cymbidium Heartbreak Doctor 'Bleeding Heart'
(Grown by Mal Davis; photo by Kirsty)

Dendrobium Jayden 'Elegant Heart'
x *Dendrobium speciosum*
(Grown by Tara Peeters; photo by Kirsty)





Phalaenopsis unknown
(Grown by Nelia Farquharson; photo by Kirsty)

Fertigation

Our Guest Speaker for this month is Shaun Hoffmann, who will be speaking about fertigation.

In case you were wondering, "fertigation" is the process in which fertiliser is added to a watering (irrigation) system, so that the fertiliser can be applied automatically to plants when the watering system is in operation.

Harry and I are already experimenting with an Ez-Flo fertigation system. The system connects easily to a hose, or sprinkler or misting system running off a tap. The main component of the model we are using is a 3.2 litre tank (picture below). Simple components that are supplied in the kit are used to connect the tank to the watering system. Once connected, the vessel can be filled and re-filled with fertiliser within a few minutes. Then, the fertiliser is automatically applied to the plants when the watering system is run.

In my case, I have a timer that operates a bunch of solenoid valves that control water flow to misters in three different shadehouses. I have installed additional plastic taps (the type that work with 13 mm black poly pipe) to shut off misters to parts of shadehouses as required. I set up that system about 10 years ago. It saved me a lot of time watering my plants, and it made life easier for Arni to water my plants when I was away. Fertilising was always a bummer though, because to use my preferred liquid fertiliser (Strike Back for Orchids Liquid, of course), I had to spend about an hour lugging an 8 L hand pump sprayer around my orchids every time I wanted to fertilise them, and had to refill the sprayer a couple of times to complete the job. I was never brave enough to ask Arni to do that, so if I was away, the orchids went hungry.

About a year ago, my son-in-law showed me an Ez-Flo system he had installed to fertilise his lawn via his lawn reticulation system. He has a *very* nice lawn. I was impressed, and purchased my own Ez-Flo for my orchids. It took less than an hour to connect the Ez-Flo to my misting system. It takes about 5 minutes to re-fill the tank with fertiliser, so it takes me a lot less time to fertilise my orchids now. The rate at which the fertiliser is applied can be adjusted using a knob on the top of the tank, so I have the option of applying the whole contents of the tank at a single watering, or having the contents of the tank being applied more slowly, over several waterings.

I am still a bit of a novice with fertigation and am still experimenting and refining the way I use if the Ez-Flo system, but so far I'm pretty pleased, especially with the amount of time I've saved.

If you'd like to know more about Fertigation, come to see Shaun speak at our next General Meeting. I'm sure he will be happy to answer questions. If you'd like to bone-up a little in advance, so you can ask really difficult questions, there is some info available online at <https://www.ezflo.com.au>.

