

THE SPECIES ORCHID SOCIETY OF WA (INC.)

[http://members.iinet.net.au/~emntee/species Newsletter.htm](http://members.iinet.net.au/~emntee/species%20Newsletter.htm)



Vol 33 No 1 June 2021



Anne O'Callaghan Award May 2021
Bulbophyllum phalaenopsis
Charly & Gerda

NEWSLETTER

NEXT MEETING Tuesday 8 June

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MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING

11 May 2021 8.05pm

A minutes silence in memory of our late Life Member, Gordon Doherty was observed by members.

Present: 26 members as per register.

Apologies: 6 as per register.

Visitors: Nil

New members: Nil

Minutes: Acceptance of minutes from April meeting moved Arnold, seconded Chris. Carried

Business Arising: Nil

Financial Report: Treasurer's report was presented by Treasurer Adrian. The account balance is \$7,881.28. Acceptance moved Ian, seconded Lynn. Carried.

Business Arising: Nil

Correspondence: Treasurer Adrian advised that the committee had approved an increase from \$100 to \$200 for the cash float to enable him to provide change when members pay with large notes.

Inwards:

- Adrian- display materials and construction of display props.
- E-mail – Orchids WA draft meeting minutes.
- E-mail – Gary Yong Gee advising on correct identification of orchids displayed in April 21.
- E-mails – City of Canning re change in COVID-19 requirements, invoice for 2021-22 venue hire.
- E-mail – invoice from GCA insurance, copy of policy, promotional materials.

Outwards:

- E-mail - City of Canning re COVID-19 contact register sheet April GM.
- E-mail – Committee draft GM minutes, Committee and GM agenda, AGM agenda, draft vale Gordon Doherty.
- E-mail – Pat re annual financial statements.
- E-mail – Helen – GCA Insurance Certificate of Currency.

Acceptance of correspondence report moved Richard, seconded John. Carried.

Business Arising: Graham advised that the City of Canning will require a copy of insurance certificate.

General Business:

- SOSWA delegate Mavis reported on the Orchids Western Australia general meeting. The Spring Orchid Fair has been renamed the Perth Orchid Fair and will be at Aranmore on 21-22 August. Advice from COCWA is the earlier date will enable a more spectacular display of cymbidium orchids.
- The 2021 ISODW will be hosted by SEOS on the 7-8 August at the Kelmscott Hall, 60 River Road Kelmscott. Orchids WA delegates approved the payment of \$250 to member clubs staging displays, and \$1,000 to assist Eastern States speakers/vendors to attend. Mavis advised that Dr M Davey, AOC President has accepted an invitation to attend as a speaker.
- Following the WOC Trust withdrawal of the approval to host the 2023 WOC,

delegates unanimously committed funding and resources to stage an international orchid fair in Perth at PCEC in August 2023. The World Orchid Conservation Congress will be staged alongside this event, and tour program previously developed will continue.

- Members were reminded that we have agreed to stage a display at the Northern Orchid and Garden Fair on 3-4 July. We will need flowering plants for this display - please e-mail details to the secretary/ newsletter editor so that name tags can be prepared. We will also require assistance to set up and dismantle the display, and assist with the event.
- Peter asked members to be respectful and refrain from talking while others are speaking, giving plant descriptions etc.
- Graham & Margaret, Chris, and Ken & Chris attended Gordon Doherty's funeral in Bunbury on Tuesday 4 May.
- Peter advised members about his success in locating a supply of natural cork, although it has to be physically removed from cork oak trees that have been felled. This is a physically difficult process and he asked for members to assist on a weekday when he is able to get access. Several members indicated that they would be willing to help.
- Peter advised members that in past years the silent auction has often been held in June. General discussion about this and a show of member hands to support the silent auction showed a preference to hold it in July rather than June.

Anne O'Callaghan Cultural Award:

Awarded to Charly & Gerda for *Bulbophyllum phalaenopsis*.

Raffle: Bruce, Peter, Jacqui, Tara , Tony, Lynn.

Badge Prize: Siva

Life Members

Graham & Margaret
Chris
Barry (dec'd)
Gordon (dec'd)
Maxine
Ken & Chris
Adrian & Deanna
Joan (dec'd) & Ted (dec'd)
Trevor (dec'd)
Neville (dec'd)
Noel & Eva
Tony & Mavis
Barry (dec'd)

Quiet Achievers

2013 Ian
2014 Chris
2015 Margaret
2016 Tom & Pat
2017 Charly & Gerda
2018 Paul
2020 Adrian & Deanna
2021 John

NOTICEBOARD

FORTH-COMING EVENTS

Home visits:

At 10 am on the Sunday after the fourth Thursday of each month. Please bring chairs and food to share.

- * 27 Jun 2021 Helen & Stuart, Kewdale
- * 25 Jul 2021 Ken & Chris, The Vines

MARKETPLACE - FOR SALE/WANTED

Harry would like to purchase the following.

Brassavola cucullata

Dendrobium torresae

If you have spare plants/divisions for sale, please contact Harry on 0412 403 696 or by e-mail to harry.ashton@live.com.au

President: Peter

Vice President: Adrian

Secretary: Ken Jones
210 Hermitage Drive, The Vines
6069. Phone: 9296 1765
e-mail: kcjones@tpg.com.au

Treasurer: Adrian

Editor: Ken Jones

Committee: Charly
Graham Paul
Chris Tony
Maxine Mavis

- Adrian and Paul have now completed construction of our display props that will be used at the Northern Orchid and Garden Fair, Mirrabooka on 3-4 July. If you might have plants for the display, please provide details to Ken so that he can print out plant name tags.
- At the June General Meeting, members will be asked for their view on home visits. We have noted that in 2021, the number of members attending has reduced. Mavis advised that she is finding it more difficult to find hosts. Please give this some thought and participate in the discussion.
- As arranged by Peter, several members successfully collected natural cork from the UWA, Shenton Park on Friday.

NOTES FROM YOUR COMMITTEE

MONTHLY PLANT

Bulbophyllum lasiochilum

.....
Country of origin: India, Myanmar, Thailand and Malaysia
.....

Description: small sized epiphyte
.....

Difficulty: relatively simple species to grow and flower.
.....

Cost: \$5.00

Bulbophyllum lasiochilum Parish & Rchb.f 1874 *Section Brachyantha* Rchb.f 1861 is another of the many Asian *Bulbophyllum* species. These plants have been grown on by Charly.

The species comes from moist montane forests as well as seasonally dry forests, as a warm-cool growing epiphyte that flowers in autumn. The solitary to few flowers are borne on a short, slender inflorescence arising from mature pseudobulbs. The pleasantly fragrant strawberry scented flowers are held just below or above the leaves.

As Charly has shown us, *Bulbophyllum* species are best grown in sphagnum moss in free draining container such as a wooden or plastic basket, or a length of stormwater pipe with plenty of drain holes. Good air movement, regular watering and covering during winter to avoid plants remaining cold and wet is recommended. If you are able to provide warmth in winter, your orchid will appreciate this.



Photo source: <https://redfoxorchids.com.au/shop/bulbophyllum/bulbophyllum-lasiochilum-dark/>

Provided you are able to maintain high humidity during summer months, this species will also do well on a slab mount



Photo source: <http://www.orchidspecies.com/bulblasiochilum.htm>

Our 2021 Life Members and Quiet Achiever

At our AGM, we recognised long time members, Cristiano (Chris), Adrian & Deanna and John . In 2021, we lost a life and foundation member, Gordon Doherty

These awards are the highest recognition that the society can give our members, and in each case, recognise the long-term and substantial contribution made to the life of the Species Orchid Society of WA by them.

Life Member - Chris

Chris joined the Species Orchid Society in November 1992 and immediately became involved joining the management committee in the mid 90's. Chris is one of the 'capable' members who is able to turn his hand to almost any job that needs to be done. At the same time as he joined the Species Orchid Society, Chris is an active member of other general orchid societies, often taking on committee responsibilities and in the case of



Wanneroo/Joondalup Orchid Society, of the role of Registrar.

Chris has also been a member of the WA Orchid Judging Panel since 2010/11 and regularly attends orchid shows and society meetings to judge displayed orchids.

Another of Chris's attributes is his ability to communicate with anyone. Chris will often be the person that others seek out when experiencing problems of difficulties with their orchid collection. For example, Chris was recently contacted by another member who sought his advice on what to do with his orchid collection given health issues and his diminishing ability to care

for his plants in the way that he had done for many years . Chris promptly arranged to visit him along with another member, and between them, arranged for the Species Society to purchase his species orchids and for Wanneroo/Joondalup to hold an auction at his home. He has been involved with several similar events over the past 10-15 years. Chris is also a key member involved in running the Society's highly successful and enjoyable fundraising silent auction each year

At a personal level, like he does for many others Chris has personally helped me. With Graham, he has checked on our orchids while we travelled overseas, he assisted by welding up frames and trusses for a large shed at our previous home, and with other members, has helped us refurbish a glasshouse at Ezi-Gro Orchids to be registered and operated as a biosecurity containment facility to support our WOC bid.

Life Members - Adrian & Deanna

Adrian joined the Species Orchid Society in 2004 and in due course Deanna became a family member. Between them, they have made a major contribution to the life of the society over the past 16 years. Dee regularly helps out with our meeting and home visit raffles, and together, they have hosted many home visits for our members, and members of other orchid societies to which they belong.



Within a few years of joining us, Adrian was soon elected to the management committee and in 2008, as Vice President before becoming our President in 2010. In 2014, he again stood as Vice President and was elected President in 2016, before again standing as Vice President in 2020.

To the society, Adrian brought valuable practical and interpersonal skills, both from his employment as an estimator for Artek Furniture, and his passion for growing orchids, expressed through membership of both general and specialist orchid groups like the Species Society. When we accepted the invitation to stage displays at the WA Orchid Spectacular events in 2005 and 2007, Adrian's ability to acquire materials free of charge for displays was particularly beneficial to us as it allowed construction of visually pleasing displays at minimal cost. When WA hosted the Australian Orchid Conference at Burswood in 2012, Adrian co-ordinated the construction of a large Species Orchid Society display in conjunction with Graham & Margaret and Michelle. It included large display boards of Ron Heberle's superb photos of Western Australian terrestrial orchids.

Harry

Brassavola cordata
Cattleya cernua
Cymbidium erythrostylum

Graham & Margaret

Ceratostylis rubra
Cymbidium dayanum 'Red'
Eriochilus dilatata
Spathoglottis plicata

Charly & Gerda

Bulbophyllum phalaenopsis

Ken & Chris

Catasetum fimbriatum
Cattleya maxima
Miltonia specatabilis var. *moreliana*

Adrian & Dee

Brassavola cucullata
Laelia rubescens
Prosthechea boothiana

Peter

Cattleya labiate 'Rubra'
Dendrobium convolutum
Paphiopedilum gratixianum
Stenoglottis longifolia.

Siva

Bothrochilus bellus

Tony & Mavis

Phalaenopsis deliciosa

MEMBER PLANTS DISPLAYED MAY 2021



Laelia rubescens
Adrian & Dee



Prosthechea boothiana
Adrian & Dee



Brassavola cucullata
Adrian & Dee



Cymbidium dayanum 'Red'
Graham & Margaret

MEMBER PLANTS DISPLAYED MAY 2021



Dendrobium convolutum
Peter



Bothrochilus bellus
Siva

The innovative display that included a meeting space was enthusiastically received and utilised by show visitors.

Adrian and Deanna continue to strongly support the society. Recently, Adrian has designed and constructed display props to be used at events later in the year. Adrian and Paul have worked together to plan, construct and assemble all our major displays for the past few years, bring the materials to the venue, and with help from members, set up the displays. Given the wide range of orchids that Species Society members grow, these displays always attract attention.

2021 Quiet Achiever - John

The Species Society decided in 2013 to make an award to a member or members who are 'quiet achievers' that quietly go about doing whatever helps the society to provide members with the best possible membership experience. John is the recipient of this award for 2020/21, a period that given the impact of COVID-19 could best be described as unprecedented. This award to John principally recognises the support that he provides to Ian, one of our most beloved members. Ian is not able to drive and following the illness and death of our life member, Trevor Pratt, John has provided transport for Ian to our meetings, home visits and in some cases shows where the Species Society has staged displays. For our meetings, this means that John collects Ian from his home, and brings him to the meeting arriving before most of the members, and then after the hall and kitchen is cleaned up, takes him home.



John performs this vital support role quietly, and with care and consideration for Ian that allows him to be an active and contributing member of the society. It is no co-incidence that Ian was the first recipient of this award. John was very active in the UK orchid world before migrating to Australia and joining the Society in 2003. John has maintained his links with the Thames Valley Orchid Society in the UK, and recently told us that while they have had to hold on-line zoom meetings during COVID-19, to enable John to participate, occasionally a meeting is held at a time that allows John to take part at a reasonable time rather than in the middle of the night. John's passion for growing orchids and his interest in continuing to learn more means that he

regularly attends international and local orchid conferences and is an active member of local general and specialist orchid societies. John always makes us welcome when we visit his home and marvel at his "weed free" orchid collection.

A Brief Look at Polyploidy - Paul Gripp (reprinted from the AOS Journal)

One of the main features of orchids as a hobby is the wide range of interest that makes it a challenging, intriguing, and ever-searching endeavour. The study of plant genetics in reference to orchids is one of these fascinating sidelines.

Now, orchid genetics can be a very involved, technical subject, but for those of us interested in merely a working knowledge to help us in our estimate of expectations, there are a few basic facts which we should understand in order to be intelligent cultivators of this particular plant family. Perhaps the most basic-study that we, as orchid growers, should understand is that area dealing with chromosome numbers (or, levels of ploidy). Plants carry, in their anatomical make-up, a certain number of genetic carriers (chromosomes) which determine the characteristics of the plants and their future progeny.

An interesting fact about chromosomes is that, besides carrying the individual genes that determine specific characteristics, the degree of influence of an individual set of chromosomes is greatly modified by the number of sets (or level of ploidy) of the particular individual. Hence, the terms diploid ($2n$), triploid ($3n$), tetraploid ($4n$), pentaploid ($5n$), etc., refer to the number of sets or level of ploidy. Those in which the multiple is greater than the normal or diploid level are referred to collectively as polyploids. In trying to understand this, we should keep in mind that although plants of these various genetic groups do have certain specific characteristics, their main significance in breeding and heredity is their degree of influence in determining the characteristics of progeny. It is also true that the nature and significance of ploidy varies greatly among the various genera. In certain genera the rules of ploidy are fairly simple, with not too many exceptions. In other genera, however, the rules are very much complicated by uneven chromosome numbers and ability to breed among even very irregular chromosome patterns.

Generally speaking, the rules for the genus *Cymbidium* are fairly simple and well worked out, and they serve as a good example on which to learn. Breeding in cymbidiums turns out to be a blending process influenced by the various traits of both parents and weighed in quantity by their particular level of ploidy.

Diploids ($2n$): - Most typical, normal, naturally occurring wild types are of a diploid level of ploidy. The diploid level is the standard in nature, even though mutations and resultant abnormal strains commonly occur. Diploids are characterized by typically good, natural vigour. Diploids have many good features that are important in the most modern hybrids, and often it is their agreeable complimentary compatibility that makes a good match when used with other levels of polyploids, particularly the tetraploids.

Good *Cymbidium* diploids are certainly of great importance. Because of the fact that many of the most famous polyploids in cymbidiums have been brought about by much inbreeding, there are some poor growth characteristics that have carried along, and it is often the free-growing habit of the diploid that influences the progeny into being good, free performers. *Cymbidium* diploids are also characterized by often having more

flowers per spike than many of the more popular tetraploids. Together with this, popularity in the tetraploid line has centred around the full-shaped white tetraploid. In order to get other colours, we must draw from the diploid colour genes.

Cymbidium Fanfare 'Sierra Spring', AM/AOS (1965) An example of a diploid (2n) flower. Cymbidium Fanfare 'St. Francis', AM/AOS An example of a tetraploid (4n) flower



Tetraploids (4n): - Tetraploids originally occurred by freak happenings, the plants' cellular structure changing in such a way as to possess twice the normal number of chromosomes in their make-up. Though tetraploids are often characterised by slower growth and heavier texture, the significance to the naked eye may or may not be apparent. It is also questionable to say that tetraploids are always necessarily associated with desirable features, such as good form and other characteristics we look for. Their main significance lies in their breeding influence. Because of their doubled chromosome number, they assert double the influence that a normal diploid would. Thus, the tetraploid has led to the finest advances in orchid breeding. This is because certain plants of good quality have been discovered to be tetraploids and they have been used in breeding to exert the advantage of their added breeding influence.

Triploids (3n): - Triploids normally are the resultant progeny from the mating of a tetraploid with a diploid. These comprise the great bulk of present-day cymbidiums. They are distinguished by uniform good growing characteristics and freeness of performance. Their visual traits, of course, vary from the extremes of one parent to the other and combinations of both, with their typical average lying about one-third from the tetraploid parent and two-thirds from the diploid. The ideal is to find those few plants from a particular cross which exhibit the good features of both parents, and in these exceptional cases we find our improvements. We usually find that triploid cymbidiums are sterile and will not produce seed. There are, however, some exceptions which give rise to other categories of polyploidy.

Pentaploids (5n): - A still higher realm of polyploidy is sometimes found in orchid plants and this is the pentaploid. a type having five sets of chromosomes in the vegetative cell. Pentaploids have proven to be fairly useful breeders, although because of the

mechanics of chromosomes, uniform growth and quality usually are not obtained and some of the resultant seedlings may be more difficult to grow and bloom. Many of our most famous plants, however, have pentaploid parents in their backgrounds.

Aneuploids: - Hybridizers are continually trying to do the unusual: therefore, there is an emphasis on abnormal types which has led to the development of a goodly number of orchid plants with uneven chromosome numbers. These are termed aneuploids. Aneuploids are usually derived from uneven and rather unstable crossings, when parents of semi-incompatible chromosome numbers are used. The seedlings of such aneuploid crosses are usually most irregular and will vary greatly as individuals from their brothers in almost every aspect - from exact chromosome number to flower and growth patterns. This irregularity is brought about because their individual chromosome numbers are not exact multiples of the typical base number of the parent plants. Because some of these may be close to that of tetraploids, sometimes these aneuploids will act as breeders, but their performance can only be proven by giving them a try to see the results. There are many fine plants among the aneuploids, and although their implications in breeding are definitely hit and miss, it assuredly makes for interest and speculation.

With these various levels of ploidy available for hybridizing, there are a variety of possible combinations and it is possible to anticipate some generalities about the resulting progeny. It is with these thoughts in mind that hybridizers propose hopeful crossings.

Diploid X Diploid: - In the early days when all or most cultivated plants were diploids, a knowledge of other types was lacking. Flowers were mated with little regard to genotype, and most of these happened to be diploids. Even though more advanced types of combinations have come about, certain hybridizers have worked hard in the diploid line and fantastic progress has been obtained. The results, although different from those obtained with polyploids, have shown characteristics that, while not necessarily comparable, have been equally spectacular. The use of diploid crosses in cymbidiums at present are :

- 1) to gain more desirable forms of coloured types, which are more intense in diploids than other classes;
- 2) to provide a new assortment of genes for use as potential breeding with tetraploids;
- 3) to create early bloomers; and
- 4) to make miniature cymbidiums.

Diploid X Tetraploid: - The breeding method which has proven most satisfactory, with the largest and most prominent mass producers of seedlings for uniform high-quality progeny, has been the mating of the tetraploid of good form with the free and prolific diploid. The result is the triploid strain. There seems to be no doubt that for uniform high quality of shape, habit, and pleasing colour, this seems to be one of the most satisfactory of genetic combinations. Because of the fact that the tetraploid parent influences twice as

much as the diploid parent, its characteristics of form and colour are more nearly approached. As new tetraploids of different types are brought into use, we will be able to greatly broaden our spectrum of hopefulness.

Tetraploid X Tetraploid: - An even more recent trend in breeding is the tetraploid-with-tetraploid mating. These have produced outstanding blooms. In addition, the resulting progeny are tetraploids, so this type of breeding has given rise to entire strains of tetraploid plants. Because there were only a few tetraploids in the beginning, there was much tetraploid inbreeding, with consequent undesirable characteristics perpetuated in the progeny. Some of the more inbred tetraploid types, even though characterized by excellent flower quality, have poor growing and blooming habits and are difficult plants to handle. Care must be used in selecting and mating tetraploids to guard against such bad features.

Triploid, Pentaploid and Aneuploid Matings: - When triploids, pentaploids and aneuploids are used in mating with their like or the more normal diploid or tetraploid, a wide number of combinations can occur. Because these "offbeat" types produce gametes (pollen and egg) that are often incomplete or uneven, crosses with them are characterised by irregularity and unevenness, if they take at all. Because they are lacking certain genes, many plants do not perform normally. Over the years, however, certain plants in the aneuploid or uneven polyploid levels (triploids, pentaploids, etc.) have become known as good parents as a result of the success of their progeny. Sometimes outstanding plants are obtained from these matings, but usually the resulting aneuploid plants are irregular growers and often the seeds are few. For commercial establishments who grow large blocks of seedlings, this type of breeding is not practical. "Off-beat" breeding offers tremendous interest for the hobbyist, however. The hobbyist can't use many plants, and if he drops all his pods for the year, he has lost nothing. This opens up an infinite vista for attempts where the high percentage of failures will keep the hobby in line. The value to this type of breeding is that occasionally very fine varieties arise, and secondly, often the progeny that do arise are strange aneuploids themselves and sometimes breedable.

The subject of ploidy has many interesting facets, each of which can be magnified into a particular situation in a specific genus or group of plants. Cymbidiums have been used as a passing example because they are not only well worked out but simple in example. In some other genera things can be far more complicated. Although there are many variations and exceptions in the behaviour of living things, most of these differences can be explained by subsequent modifications and rearrangements which do not change the underlying principles. The ways of Mother Nature sometimes appear confused and complicated, but in reality they are orderly and pleasant, and these phenomena are brought forth most finely in our study of the orchids.

Thanks to Tony for bringing this article to my attention.

ABOUT US

Monthly Meetings

Monthly meetings held on the second Tuesday of each month at Wilson Community Hall, Braibrise St, Wilson commencing 7.45 pm. Usually, the short formal meeting is followed by plant descriptions given by members. Supper follows to allow member's time to socialise and discuss orchids. All visitors are very welcome

Membership Fees

Family \$30 pa. For first year only, new family members will need to purchase two name badges. Badges come in two versions - pin fastening \$11.50 or magnet fastening \$13.50 [*Please indicate preference*]

Single \$20.00 pa. For first year only, new members will need to purchase a name badge. Badges come in two versions - pin fastening \$11.50 or magnet fastening \$13.50. [*Please indicate preference*]

New members who don't live in Perth will not require name badges, therefore membership cost will be at the renewal fee only

Monthly Home Visit

On the weekend following the fourth Thursday of each month (generally on the Sunday morning), a home visit is held at a member's home. This gives members an opportunity to enjoy the fellowship that our mutual interest provides, and to see how others go about growing their orchids.

Monthly Plant Display

Given that the prime objective of the Society is to promote the cultivation of species orchids, only species or natural hybrids are acceptable for display. Since we all may be uncertain about the identification of a plant from time to time, we encourage

members to bring plants along about which they are unsure since someone may be able to identify them. There is no competition nor restriction on flower count, quality or length of ownership. We want members to be able to see species plants in flower. So even if your flowers are a bit past their best, bring them in as others may not have seen that species in flower.

Plant Sales

The Society provides an opportunity table for members to sell surplus plants and equipment, and for the Society to sell product from time to time.

Plant Purchases

The Society endeavours to obtain a different species seedling for sale at each meeting, usually costing between \$6.00 and \$15.00. The Society makes a small profit on these sales which is invested in benefits to members. As it is always difficult to get new or different species, should members have 20 or more plants of one species which they feel might be suitable as a monthly plant, please contact a Committee member.

Raffle

The Society conducts a raffle each meeting and at home visits as a means of generating funds. If you have spare species orchids that you wish to sell to the Society for raffles, please advise a committee member.

Management

In accordance with the Rules, the Annual General meeting is held in May each year at which time the office-bearers and committee are elected. The majority of Committee members serve two year terms.

If unclaimed, return to
The Editor
210 Hermitage Drive, The Vines WA 6069

Next meeting Tuesday 8 June