



THE MONTHLY BULLETIN OF THE KU-RING-GAI ORCHID SOCIETY INC.

(Established in 1947)

A.B.N. 92 531 295 125

June 2021

Volume 62 No. 6

Annual Membership : **\$15 single, \$18 family**

President : Dennys Angove 043 88 77 689	Committee Jessie Koh (Membership Secretary / Social Events)
Secretary : Jenny Richardson (Culture Classes)	Committee Herb Schoch (Community outreach and liaison)
Treasurer : Lina Huang	Committee : Chris Wilson (Library and Reference Sources)
Vice President : tba	Committee : Lee Payne (Sales Table, Sponsorship)
Editor (Hon volunteer) Jim Brydie	Committee : Fred Gorginian (Sales Table)
Society mail to - PO box 1501 Lane Cove, NSW, 1595	Email – kuringgaiorchidsociety@gmail.com
web site (active link) : http://kuringgaiorchidsociety.org.au	

Next Meeting : Our next meeting will be on Monday 21st June, commencing at 8pm.

Venue : *The West Lindfield Community Hall, corner of Bradfield Rd and Moore Avenue, West Lindfield.*

The *hall is open from 6.30pm, the meeting commences at 8pm. Please try and get there early to help set up*, and even if you can't, if you are benching orchids make sure you give yourself time to get plants in place in correct classes.

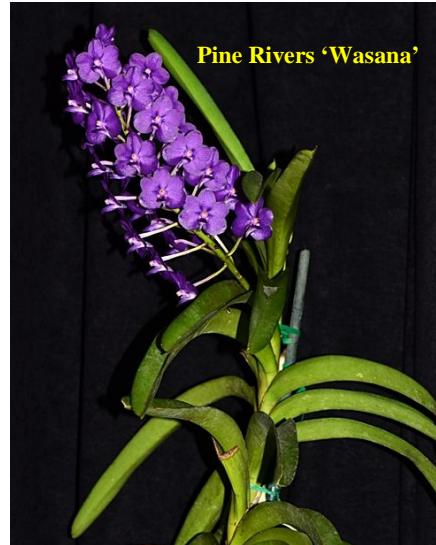
**Unfortunately, we are still unable to hold culture classes while hall meeting space needs to be managed.

This month **the guest Speaker will be Garrie Bromley** on recent **Australian Orchid Society awarded orchids**

Special Covid 19 Meeting Conditions *There is more detail on this on page 2 but please note these key issues :*

- (a) Numbers attending are limited. If you wish to attend you must register your request in advance. Details on page 2.
- (b) There will be hot water urns for tea and coffee at the mid meeting break but you must bring your own mug, milk, stirrers, and any makings for tea or coffee or whatever you wish to make. You may also bring a nibble for yourself.
- (c) Please bring your own pen or pencil to write benching cards. No sharing please.
- (d) Please don't handle any plant other than your own. There will be assisting marshals wearing gloves to assist when things need to be moved. **ASK FOR HELP.**
- (e) **Numbers of plants that may be benched** are still limited **but the number per membership** has now been **increased to 5**. Please don't bring more. **The limit is not per person**. It is still **5 even for a family**.

Best of the Evening Open Hybrid – Vandachostylis Pine Rivers 'Wasana' benched by Garrie and Lesley Bromley



Now how is that for colour! It looks dead set purple here but it is one of those colours affected strongly by the available light. Perhaps I will call it blue/purple. The hybrid was registered in 1989 by an Australian grower but the cross was made by Udom Orchids in Thailand. It was first called a Vascostylis, being a hybrid between orchids representing three genera – Vanda, Ascocentrum, & Rhynchostylis, but since then the Ascocentrum was re-examined and it was decided it wasn't sufficiently different to Vanda and most of its species were renamed 'Vanda'. Thus making Pine Rivers a Vandachostylis (Rhynchostylis x Vanda).

The blue in Pine Rivers comes from both Vanda coerulea & Rhynchostylis coelestis but the cross has been remade many times and not all Pine Rivers are this deep blue/purple. In fact, it comes in a huge range of colours from white, nearly red, to pink to blue and all variations between. It is a warm growing

medium size plant with a great display of generally about 4 cm diameter flowers.

Check out these other lovely colours below.

Congratulations Garrie and Lesley, magnificent as usual.



The opinions and recommendations published in this bulletin are those of the authors of the various items. The Ku-Ring-Gai Orchid Society Inc disclaims responsibility for any losses or damages that may be attributed to the use or misuse of any material or any opinion published in this bulletin. The bulletin and its content are protected by copyright and no part of them may be reproduced or re-used without the permission of the author.

Society News (if anyone has a news item, please phone Jim on 9476 3383, or email at jimbrydie@aussiebroadband.com.au)

President Dennys' Desk – Our delayed AGM went well. We had 44 people attend and the member's auction that followed was a lot of fun. I had a turn at being the auctioneer which was made easier by having Jim Brydie standing behind me whispering in my ear. I thank Garrie Bromley for being the transition chairperson and welcome our committee back to the fold with a new member, Fred Gorginian taking his place on our committee. What was also very nice to see was Bronwyn Yager benching her first plant as a novice. Always a great moment in a member's journey into the world of orchids, congratulations Bronwyn.

Garden City Plastic's – The order has been finalised and delivery should take place the week starting the 7th June. The items will be delivered to the Onslow household. If you have missed out this time please let us know of your bark and other bulk needs just in case we can help.

St Ives Orchid Show 2021 – Sadly, the show has been cancelled due to difficulties imposed by the COVID situation and the emergence of new cases and subsequent lockdowns. Hopefully we will be back to normal next year.

Mohr orchids – You may remember at the April meeting Graeme Mohr referred to terrestrial *Pterostylis* orchids growing near his home in Turramurra. This image was supplied by Beverley Mohr of some of those orchids. If you are interested in terrestrials, Graeme will gladly advise.



Chilly consternations – During the May meeting we kept some doors open to satisfy restriction conditions. In the June meeting we will not open the veranda door and will rely on the aircon system to bring in fresh air, hopefully warmed. That said, it is still a good idea to dress warmly.

May bulletin – I apologise to members who still need to have their bulletins delivered by mail. Life got in the way and I was simply unable to get them ready. I will send them to you just to make sure your collections are complete.

Thank You Trevor and Pauline

It was a sad, and a proud day for me last meeting because my friends Trevor and Pauline were officially standing down from the committee after many years.

They joined the society in 1988 and right from the start they looked for ways to help. Trevor joined the committee in 1990 and Pauline a little later on. I don't have all the details of the official roles they carried out but I know that Trevor was President for 9 years, definitely Secretary for another bunch and almost certainly Vice President. He was also booker of guest speakers, buyer and grower of prize plants, and also our representative on the St Ives Fair committee for just about as long as it has been running. And that doesn't include all the less official tasks like running our own shows.

And then there is Pauline. What will we do without her. She ran our show display teams for ages. Managing the teams that coordinated themes, set up infrastructures and backdrops, and then built the display itself deploying whatever flowers we happened to have supplied to us on the day. Pauline also ran our sales table at the hall for years, coordinated stock of sales table supplies like pots, stakes and the rest. But as well as the official stuff, she was always the one keeping an eye out for the society for our sick or injured, to make sure no one felt left behind.



Trevor and Pauline at a society dinner
also ran our sales table at the hall for years, coordinated stock of sales table supplies like pots, stakes and the rest. But as well as the official stuff, she was always the one keeping an eye out for the society for our sick or injured, to make sure no one felt left behind.

But the time eventually comes for all I guess. Thank you Trevor and Pauline. Not just from me representing all members of the society, but personally from someone who served on the committee with you both for most of those years and who has appreciated all the support you both provided for every activity there was. I hope you now enjoy a long and slightly less frenetic life of orchid growing, gardening, family and friends.

Jim

More news

1. Last month's auction - The members auction went off very well last month. Lina and Jannine on the front desk were on top of the organisation all the way, even if they did have to prompt our auctioneers to pass over the info card more often than should have been necessary (sorry girls). The quality of plants was high and the prices were a bit up on what I was expecting but we managed to sell nearly all and I could see a few happy faces packing new exciting buys at the end of the meeting. All the desperates who missed out will no doubt be looking forward to the Mingara fair later this month to get their fix. That's always a great day out and well worth the short drive. Take the Wyong exit off the M1, go back across the freeway and follow that road (Wyong Road) past the Tuggerah Westfield, all the way to the Mingara Recreation Club at Tumbi Umbi.

2. Sales Table sales plants – From this month we are recommencing the acceptance of members plants for sale on the sales table. Please make sure they are clean and free of pests and diseases. We reserve the right to reject any plants

we feel are not up to standard. Sales will be subject to a 10% commission to the society from the sales price.

Would all members please note that **the sales table will close immediately after the supper break** to allow time for admin processes.

3. Welcome Aboard - It was very pleasing to see a few new faces at our meeting last month, and even more pleasing that two have signed up and become members. We welcome Annie Tao, and Ming Chin to our group. I hope you find friends among us and enjoy learning about orchids with all the rest of us. I have found it a long and very entertaining journey and never without some delight and something new. I hope you both find the same.

Would all members take the time to find Annie and Ming over the next few months and introduce yourselves. Don't leave it all to 'someone else'. Remember your own experiences when you first joined.

4. Covid sign in and QR codes - Some folk did not sign the attendance log last meeting. Please - regardless of whether or not you use the QR code on your mobile, WE STILL ASK that everyone **must** record their details on the attendance log.

5. Growing Comp plants - We are approaching your last chance. Trevor still has some Sarcochilus seedlings available and will bring them to the next meeting. They are \$8 each which is a bargain considering \$8 is what we were asking over a year ago and Trevor has grown them since. They should flower this October.

6. Bushwalk - Experienced bushwalker Chris Wilson is proposing a new society bushwalk to the Fishponds trail near Hornsby and would like to know if members are interested. He will canvas interest at the June meeting but if those who can't be at the meeting are also interested, they could contact any committee member to let them know.

I was surprised to find that the last time we did this walk was in 2004 but that day, once we found our 'Where's Wally' eyes as Chris puts it, we found many native orchids. You don't see them at first but once you see one you see lots. It was a very pleasant time and well worth the effort. Make sure the society knows you are interested.



Future Events

26-27 June - Mingara Orchid Club 2021 Fair & Show, Mingara Recreation Club Tumbi Umbi

15-17 July NSOS St Ives Shopping Village, Mona Vale Rd St Ives – shopping centre hours

6-8 August - Combined Cymbidium Club of Australia and Paphiopedilum Society of NSW Annual Show, Greyhound Arena Sports club, 140 Rookwood Rd Yagoona

024-26 September - Southern Orchid Spectacular, Sutherland Basketball Stadium, Waratah Park, Old Princes Highway, Sutherland



Fertilised Eggs - Sarah was in the fertilized egg business. She had hundreds of hens and 10 roosters to fertilize the eggs. Keeping records of each roosters performance was time consuming so she bought some tiny bells and attached them to her roosters. Each bell had a different tone, so she could tell from a distance which rooster was performing.

Her favorite rooster, old Butch, was a fine specimen but, this morning, she noticed old Butch's bell hadn't rung at all! On investigating, she saw the other roosters chasing pullets, bells-a-ringing, but the pullets hearing the roosters coming, would run for cover. To Sarah's amazement, old Butch had his bell in his beak, so it couldn't ring. He'd sneak up on a pullet, do his job, and walk on to the next one. She was so proud of old Butch, she entered him in a show and he became an overnight sensation among the judges. He was awarded both the "No Bell Piece Prize", and the "Pulletsurprise" as well.

Best of the Evening Novice – *Dendrobium Pacific Pride* benched by Fred Gorginian (good work Fred two in a row ✓)



I can't make up my mind whether this flower is amazingly beautiful or just grotesque? It is certainly different.

The parents of Pacific Pride are *D. alexandrae* and *D. forbesii*. Both are species within the Latourea group of *Dendrobium*, a section of about 53 related species, mostly in PNG.

Latoureas have 'cane' like pseudobulbs, much like other dendrobiums, but typically with only a few internodes and often quite 'club like' in shape. That is, very narrow at the base, tapering out to be broadest at about 3/4 of the way up, then tapering in again. The flowers usually have a white/cream or green underlying colour but often have purple spots, blotches and lines, although some species have none.

There has been a lot of experimental breeding work done with

Latoureas but although there are a handful that look rather beautiful to me, I couldn't say that there have been any outstanding breakthroughs. The best Latourea hybrids I have seen so far involve Latoureas with other groups like Australia's *Den. bigibbum* so perhaps it will just need time for someone to find the right mix to hit the jackpot.

The picture at the far right is *forbesii*, and probably the more attractive of the two. It is plainer in colour but the green/white combination looks rather nice. The shape is a little odd though and some have likened it to a green goblin with a white listening horn stuck in each ear. *Alexandrae* is taller and is the one that has given Pacific Pride its flower shape and purple colours. I wonder what evolution was trying to do when it created *alexandrae*? I think it was either trying to attract some very strange pollinator or perhaps scare something off.



Most of the Latoureas are relatively easy to grow but they are a rather mixed bunch. Some are virtually alpine in their growth habitat and so are quite tolerant of Sydney's winter, but others come from lowlands down to sea level (in the tropics) and would require warmth in winter. *Forbesii* occurs in moist mountain rainforests between 900 – 1500 m, but occasionally even higher. However, *alexandrae* is from more intermediate habitats, up to 1100 m, but once again, the habitat is cool, shady, moist rainforest. My guess would be that Pacific Pride would tolerate shade house conditions here provided you live in a milder part of Sydney.

One drawback of the Latoureas that has always seemed curious to me is that the flowers on the majority of species face downward, presumably to protect the sexual parts of the flower from rain and drippage from the above tree canopy. Breeders are working to improve the display but it is still a significant factor.

Congratulations Fred, an amazing looking orchid and it sure is an eye catcher.

Best of the Evening Open Species – *Miltonia moreliana* benched by Trevor and Pauline Onslow



I am rather amazed at the improvement in modern, line bred *Miltonia morelianas*. As I have mentioned previously, this species has always been highly desirable because of the better shape and colour of its flowers compared to other Miltonias, but it did also have drawbacks. For example, it had an exaggeratedly long rhizome between each pseudobulb.

In addition, the flowers of yesteryear were nowhere near the quality of what we are fast coming to accept as the average. I don't know whether the current crosses are tetraploid, but they are certainly of great texture, wider and fuller, and very deep in colour.

I noticed that Trevor was growing this one in one of those quasi rectangular tubs so perhaps he is seeing a longer rhizome than he would like. I guess time will tell but most of the seedlings we see for sale these days seem to make nice clustered specimens if given enough time.

Congratulations Trevor. Its lovely to see all the wonderfully grown and presented orchids that you and our other experienced growers bench. Especially those Cattleyas you show us every month. Thank you.

Wisdom comes with age - The auto correct in my mobile is really annoying, but it helps if I imagine him as a little elf who is trying really, really hard to be helpful but is in fact quite drunk.

Being a little older, I am in the very fortunate position of having someone who call me every day to check on things. He seems to be from India and is very concerned about my car insurance.

Orchids from the Meeting -- Jim Brydie

My favourite this month – *Habenaria Regnieri* - *benched by John Chang*



Hab. regnieri



Hab. carnea



Hab. Rhodocheila 'Jim'

What a beauty. I don't want to misrepresent the size so I have to tell you that each flower is only a bit under 3cm top to bottom, but that is a head of about 5 flowers on a plant about 12cm tall. It was beautiful and still has some growing to do next year.

Oh all right. I admit it. I have a thing for weird little terrestrial orchids. I can't help it. It's just my thing. Recently, I have been trying very hard to conquer Habenarias. With only limited success I must say, not as successful as John, but ... with every failure you learn something and I think I might have actually turned a corner. This last growing season I rescued my last surviving plant of *Habenaria xanthocheila* and it grew much better. I even hoped it might flower but alas not so.

Anyway, getting back to John's beauty, *Habenaria Regnieri*. This one was first found in the wild and thought to be a species but it has since been

confirmed to be a naturally occurring hybrid between the pink *Habenaria carnea* and the orange *Habenaria rhodocheila*. When you look at it in relation to the flowers of those species (in the pictures at the left), you can see the relationship. But apart from the flowers there are other visual differences between the species. *Carnea* has mostly speckled leaves, and much broader. *Rhodocheila* has longer narrower leaves, often with a wrinkly wave along the edge.

I am very attracted to these colourful little "terrestrial" gems but they aren't the easiest so and so's to grow, and before I start talking about their culture, I think I should first explore what is meant by the term "terrestrial".

In the context of sci-fi stories, terrestrial means anything 'of the planet earth', but in regard to orchids we use the term rather loosely to mean an orchid that grows in the ground rather than those that live in or on a tree (which would be an epiphyte), or those which grow on rocks (a lithophyte).

However, the deeper you look into each of these terms the more you find that they blend into one another at the edges. There are very few sharp lines and making assumptions about cultural requirements from simplistic terms like terrestrial/epiphyte/lithophyte is fraught with danger.

The soil in which various plants grow might be 'soil' but its composition and climate can be very different. At the broadest definition I would describe soil as a variable blend of clay, minerals, sand, and decaying organic matter. There are many different kinds.

For example, some soils are found in constantly wet circumstances and we know that particular orchids love that specific environment.

South American Phragmipediums, *Calanthe triplicata* and *Phaius tankervillea* from Australia and Asia, and also many *Corybas* species are some examples.

Other terrestrials, like some of Australia's Caladenias grow in near 100% sand, and quite dry conditions. Like this *Caladenia verrucosa* in sand based mallee country in South Australia. But none of these examples (or others) is the whole point. The issue is that "terrestrials" are not just a category that tells you all you need to know in order to grow them.

Obviously the kind of soil it has naturalised in, is serious knowledge, and part of what is needed to understand how to grow any particular type, but even more important is the temperature range of its climate zone, and the annual water cycle of the orchid which has evolved in concert with the seasonal weather patterns of its growing area. For example, does it experience regular rain all year round or perhaps seasonal wet and dry swings like monsoon pattern areas. In Asian areas, many orchids, like softcane *Dendrobium*, grow in the warmer, wetter, spring and summer and rest in a dry cool winter. In Australia, some of our orchids - like *Pterostylis*, rest in the hot dry summer and grow in the cool, wetter, autumn and winter seasons.

If you want to grow a particular type of orchid, not just terrestrials. ANY ORCHID. Take the trouble to find out what patterns it or its forebears have evolved to expect, and adapt your growing practices to at least respect and accommodate those patterns.

Which brings me back to pretty Habenarias like John's. I am not yet confident enough in my ability to grow them to offer a 'my way' of growing them, but here is a wonderfully clear description written by Joe Palermo and published on "The American Orchid Society" website. However, as Joe mentions calendar months in his article, from the



Cal. verrucosa

context of the northern hemisphere, I have added southern hemisphere season months in brackets in blue.
From the American Orchid Society :

“Habenarias have been promoted as being among the most difficult orchids to grow. Yet if one pays particular attention to their general needs, they are actually one of the easiest. The most important key to their culture is watering. Asian species of Habenaria go through a definite monsoon-type growing season. They are developed from corms that go totally dormant in the parched soil of their native habitat, so parched that the soil is rock-hard and cracked. In the early spring, the rains soften the soil and spark the Habenaria into new growth. The plants are now kept in a constant state of wetness, growing at amazing rates until midsummer. At the point when the rosettes of leaves seem to be slowing down, this is the time to watch for emerging flower spikes from the center of the rosette. The plant should still be kept continuously moist until the last flower has fallen off. At this point, the plant must still be watered, but allowed to dry slightly between waterings. This is done because the plant is now producing new corms for next year's growth under the soil.

Now comes the hard part. When the foliage starts to become spotted and looks as if it is dying, stop watering the plant. Give no water at all. We put our awarded plants on top of an electrical service panel where it is guaranteed they will not receive any water, even accidentally. Repot in dry mix at this time. Then around February to March (=southern season Aug to Sept), take a look every week and see if anything is poking up through the top of the soil. If it is, water it. If not, put it back. An occasional misting by the middle of April (=southern season Oct) (can spark the plant if no signs of growth are present. Habenarias purchased as bare-root corms should not be planted until April (Oct), as the damp soil mixes will start growth and alter their growth cycle unfavorably. The preferred mixes are any of the soilless blends, such as ProMix HP.

— Joe Palermo

During the last meeting, John Chang told me that even through the winter he keeps his Habenaria pots just moistened enough to stop the bulbs totally desiccating. John is more experienced with these than I so I might err slightly on that side (with caution) this coming winter.

It is the 1st of June today, and while I am writing this, the leaves on the 2 of my plants that still have leaves, are seriously beginning to die back from the tips. I am now beginning the process of drying them off while they finish making next year's bulbs.

And just in case you were thinking these are tiny pots with just a handful of flowers, once you finally conquer growing them, this picture of a nice pot full of Hab. carnea will give you a better vision.

This year I used David Vaughn's potting mix recipe and was very pleased with the result. The formula was published in our August 2020 bulletin but to save you looking for it, here it is again.



- 3 parts Osmocote Rose, Gardenia and Azalea premium potting mix
- 1 part Brunnings peat moss
- 1 part Brunnings medium sized perlite
- 1.5 parts Brunnings propagating sand
- 1.5 parts Brunnings charcoal

I have to admit that I did substitute brands on a few items for equivalent hi quality products I already had on hand, but I was satisfied that I met David's advice.

If you want to try these gorgeous gems, some of the specialist orchid nurseries do get them from time to time but they may not be around until Oct/Nov and they aren't cheap. If you buy one, make sure you put the effort into it.

*** and now, I promise, no more Habenaria articles for at least two years ***

Philosophical observations

- * Sometimes someone unexpected comes into your life out of nowhere, makes your hearty race, and changes you forever. We call these people 'the police'.
- * Sign in Carpark : Please remember what the valet who parked your car looks like. (we do not have valet parking).
- * When one door closes and another opens, you are probably in prison.
- * You know that indestructible black box that is used on airplanes?
Why don't they make the whole plane out of that stuff?

Bulbophyllum Elizabeth Ann 'Buckleberry' benched by Norm and Ann Byron

Well how about that. I mention this one as a 'desirable' in the May bulletin and it gets benched in person in June.

Elizabeth Ann is a primary hybrid between *Bulb. longissimum* and *Bulb. rothschildianum*. As with all primary hybrids, seedlings of the cross can vary considerably with the occasional cultivar potentially strongly favouring one parent or the other but with the majority usually sitting more or less between them. The original cross of Elizabeth Ann was made in 1969 but I would be surprised if it hasn't been made a few more times since.

There have been 5 different cultivars of Elizabeth Ann awarded but "Buckleberry" outdoes the others by a mile. It has been awarded 35 times by various orchid organisations all over the world. The next most awarded has only been awarded twice.

B. longissimum has fewer flowers than *rothschildianum*. Its thin inflorescence starts upward but quickly becomes pendent. It usually has from 2 to 5 flowers but can have more. The flowers are really long with wispy tailed tepals, as you can see from the picture above. *Rothschildianum* has more flowers, and shorter. Flower-wise, Elizabeth Ann is a lovely blend of the two. But perhaps the greatest asset that *rothschildianum* confers on its hybrid is its tolerance of winter temperatures.

Temperature tolerance is almost invariably related to the elevation (altitude) to which a species has evolved. *Longisimum* is found at lower elevations, mostly in the Thailand peninsular, and has evolved to grow in a constantly warm environment. *Rothschildianum* comes from further north. The Internet Orchid Species Photo Encyclopedia (which is much more than just a photo encyclopedia) tells us that it is found in NE India, Assam, Southern Yunan, and Myanmar. The Baker's highly professional section in *Orchidwiz* says : "*Very little is known about the original habitat. The type specimen was reportedly found in the Sikkim region of northeast India, 'in the hills beyond Darjeeling.' No particulars are given. However, Darjeeling is located at about 7000 ft. (2130 m.)*"

From all this, it seems that the natural habitat of *rothschildianum* is in the foothills of the Himalayas and while it may occur at some slightly lower elevations, it does also occur above 2000 m. From my past experience, a species that tolerates climates above 2000 m is certainly what we would call a cool grower and should tolerate temperatures at least down to 5°C (or perhaps lower) in winter with just a little protection. It seems to me that Elizabeth Ann has inherited this tolerance.

Congratulation Ann. You have been growing this lovely orchid for a long time and it always seems to be thriving.

Rossioglossum grande – benched by Dora Law

I have always loved this beautiful orchid but haven't been very successful growing it or any of its sister species. I am still trying. Many of our members do grow it well though, and this one of Dora's is one of the best I have seen benched.

The flowers of *R. grande* are huge for the Oncidiinae family. They are 15 cm across and it has from 4 to 8 flowers on a 30 cm inflorescence. The flowers have a lovely waxy texture and can last well for a month or so.

In looking up the support data on this one I noticed that it comes from a habitat I hadn't previously understood and which may explain why I have had less success than I would like. In *Orchidwiz*, the Bakers tell us it is found in Mexico and in Guatemala near Guatemala city at elevations up to 2600 m. He quotes this extract from Mr. Veitch of Veitch's nursery in England in the 1800's : *"It was discovered by Mr. G. Ure Skinner, in 1839, in dark ravines near the city of Guatemala, and afterwards in other localities, but invariably in a climate of which the ordinary range of temperature is between 60-70F (15-20C), and in situations where it is secure of moisture and constant shade."* Mr Baker goes on to say that the climate data on which he has based his culture information, indicates cooler night temperatures than those reported, but it is assumed that the remainder of the report is an accurate description of the habitat.

Hmmm. Shady, steady moisture, not too hot not too cold. I think I could do that. I must go looking in the shadehouse for what is left of the various *Rossioglossums* I know I once had. Time to rescue and recuperate.

Fantastically grown Dora and I am sure there is more to come. Thank you for sharing it with us.

More Wisdom of Age - So, ... let's get this straight. You have been eating hot dogs and hamburgers all your life but you don't want to get the vaccine because you don't know what's in it?





Phalaenopsis Chian Xen Piano - *benched by Geoff and Jean Fulcher*
 How's that for colour? What a fantastic mix of dots, lines and splashes. I didn't know anything about this one but I was attracted by the bright colour and spectacular patterning. So I looked it up in Orchidwiz to see what I could find.

First, it is a hybrid registered by a Taiwanese nursery in 2009. It is a mix of 16 different Phalaenopsis species although the % of some is so low they must have been a long way back in the breeding chain and probably have little influence (if you can ever say that). But what it probably means is that its make up is so highly selected for special variations that its genetics mean rather little.



Cultivar CX 367



no name



CX 360 'Black Butterfly'



cultivar CX 339



cultivar CX 212



There have been 9 different cultivars of this cross awarded since its registration and Orchidwiz had 17 pictures of a whole range of different cultivars of it that show amazing variation. (see samples above). I am sure that many other different looking ones will also eventually surface and all of these have likely been used as parents since they came to light. Things move quickly when commercial developers look for that something new to pique the interest of buyers.

While checking all the pictures I also noticed that this cross carries a goodly number of flowers to the raceme. Some of the best pictures were barred from copying but this one of CX 339 gives you an idea of the crosses flower count potential.

Thanks for helping us keep up with the latest crosses Geoff and Jean.

Holcoglossum wangii – *benched by Peter and Jane D'Olier*

I don't know this species myself but isn't it a cutie. Holcoglossum is just another of the 130 genera in the Vandeae Tribe which includes many popular horticultural orchids such as Vanda, Aerides, Sarcochilus, Phalaenopsis, Angraecum, Aerangis, and many smaller but still popular genera.

There are only 15 species in Holcoglossum. They have longish terete leaves but aren't huge plants. Wangii is pendent, and tends to grow as a close basal clump with leaves up to 60cm long. The smaller picture gives you an idea of the display of plant and flowers together.

Wangii grows in humid, mixed forests on mossy branches of old, dwarf, gnarled trees in a small area of southern China and northern Vietnam, at elevations around 250 to 1200 meters. The flowers are about 3 to 5 cm diameter.



There are a few other Holcoglossum species we see at meetings from time to time. Probably the most popular is Holc. kimballianum (right) which also has white flowers of similar size but with a startling purple or mauve lip. It is a slightly more upright grower in the right circumstances.

It is pleasing to see more and more growers showing interest in the smaller volume, curiosity species. There are some delightful little gems among the less commercially exploited of the orchid family. Also, such a wonderful illustration of the variety of the orchids.



Humour - Two engineers were standing at the base of a flagpole, looking at its top.

A woman walked by and asked what they were doing "We're supposed to find the height of this flagpole," said Sven, "but we don't have a ladder."

The woman took a spanner from her purse, loosened a couple of bolts, and laid the pole down on the ground. Then she took a short tape measure from her purse, took measurements and announced, "6.5 metres," and walked away.

One engineer shook his head and laughed, "A lot of good that does. We ask for the height and she gives us length!"

Both engineers have since quit their engineering jobs and have been elected to Parliament.