



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

(Established in 1947)

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9th December 2024

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

Patrons - Pauline and Trevor Onslow

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Editor : Jim Brydie	Committee :
Society mail to - PO box 1501 Lane Cove, NSW, 1595	Society email : kuringgaiorchidsociety@gmail.com
Web site (active link) : http://kuringgaiorchidsociety.org.au	facebook : www.facebook.com/p/Ku-Ring-Gai-Orchid-Society

Next Meeting : **Mon 9th December 2024 - Christmas Party Night, a week earlier than usual meetings**

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

COVID remains a problem, as is even common old influenza. **Please, if you are feeling unwell - do not attend.**

YOU MUST SIGN IN – Our insurance requires that you **SIGN** the **ATTENDANCE SHEETS** at the front door on arrival.
Please do it.

Benching – Due to limited available space we have decided to suspend pointscore benching for this month.

BUT - We are still an orchid society so we would like to see some lovely orchids to admire at our party. We ask that members limit what they bring in to just those that they think are really special. Preferably, one per member. Displayed orchids must be in place by 7.30 – use a benching card just to let viewers know the name of the orchid.

NOTE : *no judging, no lucky exhibitor, no best of evening – we just want orchids to admire*

Don't forget, this is Christmas party night, special arrangements apply : (more detail on pages 2, 3)

The hall is open from 6pm As it is party night, there will also be **no sales table, no speaker, and no culture class.** Please try and get there early to help set up tables and chairs. We have a layout plan so managers will direct where the tables are to go and we are planning on 7 chairs per table. Extras may be added if needed.

There is much to do for our Christmas party night. A few members regularly help in this way but more helpers will make the job much easier and quicker. Can you get there early and help the set up?

1. The actual meeting commences early at 7.30pm. We please want you all sitting down by then.

2. The FOOD – The Party starts around 8pm. The **Society will be providing all the food and drinks, including dessert.** ONLY appointed helpers will be allowed in the kitchen. We ask members to NOT bring any food extras to share. If you have dietary requirements by all means bring what you need. Vegetarian options will be provided.

Drinks – the society will supply drinks, but members may bring their own tippie if they wish. Please note it is a condition of our hall hire that **no glass bottles or drinking glasses** may be used on the Premises.

Cutlery and Plates - The society will have disposable cutlery and plates available but members are invited to bring their own for personal use if they wish, but please, NO GLASS or breakables like crockery & bring your own mugs.

3. The main entertainment for the night is our traditional Monster Christmas Raffle.

The Society has prepared two big Christmas hampers, and a few other prizes, but **members are all asked to also donate one or two presents as raffle prizes.** Raffle tickets will be **\$5 for 1 strip, no other options.**

There are no rules about what you donate but please, no tricks prizes or previously unwanted gifts. Make it something nice, a prize you would be really pleased to win yourself. Perhaps a value of around \$15 – \$20. Examples might be an orchid, chocolates or other sweets, etc. Bottles of wine are acceptable but must remain closed & kept in protective bags/wrapping, & again, please don't bring in duds (out of date, badly stored, or 'gone off' wine).

If you are donating orchids but they are smaller or of lesser value, perhaps box a few items together. Please wrap gifts other than the orchids, it adds to the anticipation and spirit of Santa. For the orchids, even Santa needs names.

4. The Final Instruction - This is a party night where we all get the chance to share our interest in orchids or anything else, in a friendly environment with partners and guests. Please come ready to enjoy the evening and maybe take the opportunity to get to know a few people you don't normally get the chance to chat to. Be bold, say hello.

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

Dennys' Desk – I was honoured to chair the November meeting and our short term arrangement is that I will also chair the December Christmas function meeting on the 9th December. **Jim** and I will share the chair for the January meeting. Our committee meetings will be chaired by **Jim** in the short term until he advises otherwise. We are still actively working on the appointment of a President.

We had 50 people at our last meeting which included 4 visitors and 124 plants that were benched. One of our visitors was **Cary Polis** who gave us a delightful after supper master class, on using water well pots. It was very enjoyable and highly interactive, so much so I will now be buying some clay balls to try some water well pots for myself. **Cary** left one of his newly potted plants for our end of night raffle – thank you **Cary**. It is a good thing **Jenny** suggested we increase our water well pot range on our sales table. There were many member's plants for sale, some of which were at a good price. I had some plants for sale and they all went. Supper was enjoyable and well managed by **Di** with some help from **Julie, Celeste** and **Ethan**. **Mary** sold the raffle tickets as member's trickled in. The quality of the raffle plants acquired by **Trevor** were amazing and we had a lovely donation to the raffle by **Adrian** of a 'phallie' cross flask. Pull down was smooth and fast, so thank you everyone for helping out.

We are preparing for our Christmas function on the **second Monday** of December, **which is the 9th**. We will start setting up at 6.00 pm. It will be catered, so members only need to bring a Christmas raffle prize offering if able. If you can help out it would make life easier for all and, I have to say, it can be fun since the party munchies and drinks really start after all the tables and chairs have been setup. It will be necessary to set the tables up first before we work on the chairs.

Our committee has decided that in order to make operations run more smoothly as well as giving us more space to work with since we no longer have access to the annex, there will be no judging needed since the 2025 benching competition will run from January 2025 to November 2025. However, we invite members who have that one special plant that they would like to display to bring it along since we will have some tables available for that purpose. I remember a similar situation at MWOS last year when an amazing *laelia purpurata* appeared for folk to gaze upon in wonder. So, in review, there will be no formal benching at the KOS Christmas party.

Just to be sure, let's, recap on Arrangements for the 2024 Christmas meeting night :

(a) Mon Dec 9th is a week earlier than our normal meeting night to avoid family Christmas arrangements.

* **The hall opens early at 6 pm, please consider helping set up the tables and chairs if you are able**

* **The meeting also commences early at 7.30 pm. Display orchids to be set up between 7 pm and 7.30 pm**

Please don't be late.

(b) Table space is reduced due to the party arrangements – SO I REPEAT, WE HAVE DECIDED TO SUSPEND THE POINTSCORE COMPETITION BENCHING FOR THE MONTH.

However, if you think you have **JUST ONE, OR AT A STRETCH 2, REALLY SPECIAL ORCHIDS** that you think we would enjoy, bring them along but you must get them benched between 7 and 7.30, with a benching name card (just orchid name), and put them where directed. It is not a contest, just a display for pleasure.

(c) Prepare Early - We want everyone to have a relaxed and happy evening. Please plan your arrival early and leave yourself enough time. **And Please wear your name badge**, it makes it so much easier to approach people you don't know all that well. Names help people avoid the stress of introductions, And remember, non-member partners are of course welcome. If you anyone doesn't have a name tag we can provide a stick on tag for you to write a name on.

Put your society name tag in the car right now so you don't forget, and wear it when you get there.

(d) Meeting Formalities - There will be a brief "formal" part of the meeting from 7.30pm covering standard business as well as announcing the winners of this year's benching point score competition and the handing out of associated prizes. We all know party fare is beckoning and we will get through this part of our meeting as quickly as possible.

(e) The Monster Christmas Raffle is the main event of the night. **The Society supplies two big Christmas hampers**, expertly prepared as always, by Ann Byron, plus a few other prizes. **However, we depend on you to make up the majority of the donated raffle prizes. The more the merrier.**

Be generous, everyone likes to go home with an early Christmas present and it's the season to be kind to others and spread some joy. Make it a true Monster raffle, it's always fun to share the party spirit and watch as the gifts are distributed amongst those present. **We suggest something worth around \$15 - \$20 but its not mandatory.**

Orchids are an obvious choice but don't forget we also have partners and guests so prizes don't have to be orchids. It could be books, chocolates, exotic plants. If you want to donate plants or orchids but they are smaller or of lesser value, perhaps box a few together. **Please though - no tricks, no plastic plants, no booby prizes. Make it something you would be pleased to win yourself.**

**To reduce the "selling" and "folding" tasks, there is to be only one option for buying tickets
– That is 1 strip of tickets for \$5. You can buy as many \$5 strips as you like.**

(f) The Party food - The Society provides all the foods, including dessert, and a limited range of soft-drinks, beer and wine. **To minimise cross handling of foods, we ask that YOU DO NOT bring food contributions.**

However if you have special dietary requirements and need to bring food or drink specific to meet your own needs, then by all means go ahead but please remember that the kitchen is off limits. There will be no facility for cooking or warming anything you bring. And please, NO REAL GLASS. Hall hire insists we use no actual glass.

(g) Plates, cups, and 'cutlery' - the society will supply disposable plates and cutlery. However, members may bring their own for their own use if they wish. As normal we ask that you do bring your own mugs/cups for coffee or tea. Whatever such items you bring with you, must also take home with you at the end of the night.

Have fun, donate lots of raffle prizes, buy lots of raffle tickets, meet someone new, talk to friends, and go home happy

Other Society News

1. Pointscore results and Novices transitioning to Open class - As we announce the past years results at the party, I obviously CAN NOT publish them in this Dec newsletter.

But, what I want to explain is how the process for novice classification to open classification functions.

When new growers start with orchids, they learn at different rates, whatever suits their personal circumstances. We are all different. One thing that they do have in common is a lack in self-confidence as to their growing skills.

There are 33 separate orchid benching classes in the Open Section, and we only have 8, more broadly specified, orchid classes in Novice. This is because Novice growers (or new growers), usually have just a few orchids and don't initially understand the segregations of the many orchid families and types.

Having a separate novice benching section protects new growers from having to compete against far more experienced growers in the open section. It has been our experience over a very long time that this DOES HELP them gain confidence and begin to bench their orchids.

But then, how do we gradually wean new growers off thinking of themselves as not up to scratch? If we just allowed every grower to bench in either Open or Novice, wherever they felt most comfortable, I am convinced that you would be shocked at the thunderous increase in Novice class benching. Humans are human.

So instead, we have a system that says you can begin as a novice (unless you decide you want be open).

1. Winning a Novice Best of Evening doesn't count as anything in upgrading from Novice to Open.
2. Winning a novice class section on one night's meeting does not qualify you for elevation to Open. It just gives you a few points in the Novice annual points score system.
3. Each of the 8 novice class categories has its own separate point score. If you are a novice and have a plant you wish to bench one night, You MUST bench it in the correctly defined Novice class. – For example if your orchid is a Cattleya hybrid, it must go in class 35 - NOVICE LAELIINAE (CATTLEYA) ALLIANCE – SPECIES AND HYBRIDS. If your orchid is judged first in that class on that night, you get 6 points for it. The rest of the allocation of points in the points system is fully explained in the Benching Guidelines you are given when you join the society.
4. At the end of the year, Each Novice grower's points in each novice class are tallied and the member with the most points in that class is the winner of that class for the year, AND is then declared elevated to OPEN class for just for that type of orchid. That grower can still bench as a Novice in other Novice classes but must bench that kind of orchid in the correct OPEN class.
5. When a Novice grower has finally won 3 different annual Novice classes, they are finally declared fully OPEN class and can no longer bench in Novice at all.
6. Some novice growers leap to Open class quickly, some take many, many years to finally achieve full open class, some never do. BUT our aim is to press growers forward and to eventually have them bench in Open. Regardless of our system, ANY NOVICE GROWER can choose to switch to open by choice any time they want. They don't need to achieve system elevation by our processes.
7. Your committee watches the novice results every year and when anomalies arise such as there was only one novice grower participating in the whole of a novice class one year, or any other anomaly, the committee can override the system and rule no status change. We do watch. Please trust us, but also please try to play by the rules.

2. Annual membership fees – Jessie will be at the party and can take your payment if you want to do it that way, but you can also pay by bank transfer. That is:

Westpac Bank, BSB No 032 188, account name - Ku-ring-gai Orchid Society Inc. and account number 103568.

If you use this method, please use **your full name as the payment description** or your **phone number** if your financial institution does not allow you to enter a name. If you wish, you can email to the address below :

kuringgaiorchidsociety@gmail.com to confirm your payment.

Best of The Evening – Species – Cattleya lobata (alba) ‘William’ - grown by Jane and Peter D’Olier



Boy, aren't these Cattleyas and their hybrids just so sexy.

Cattleya lobata comes from Brazil. It is an unusual grower. Jay Pfahl's Internet orchid photo encyclopedia describes it perfectly : Found in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo states, mostly on rocks high up and exposed to full sun, wind and spray from the ocean, on the coast near Rio south to Sao Paulo. This species does best when allowed to grow out of it's pot, often being the signal that it will bloom soon.

Orchidwiz offers a little detail. .. on east-facing rock cliffs at 200–800 m. While the plants are exposed to sun, wind and rain the roots are buried in cracks in the rock face which protects them from bright light and excessive drying. The cracks contain rock chips but very little vegetable matter. Now thank goodness we don't have to try and replicate that environment too closely.

Cattleya lobata are large plants. The pseudobulbs are about 20 cm tall, topped by a 30 cm single leaf and the 30 cm inflorescence carries up to 5 large (12cm flowers). The more usual colour is a nice pink with a darker pink/purple flare lip but in addition to the pure white alba form there is a blue form, some nearly white with a pink tinge, some white with a purple lip.

I can't help myself at meetings from going over to admire all the beauty and variety among the Cattleyas (including the complex hybrids). The group were never on my main growing list and I don't grow them nearly as well as the really good Laeliinae growers, but that never stopped me from acquiring a few here and there. I was even occasionally given pieces of ones I particularly admired.

We have some top class Laeliinae growers at Ku-Ring-Gai so make sure you check out the Laeliinae benches every month.

As I am not a great grower I won't even try to tell you how to grow them but I promise I will try and get a guru to talk about Cattleya culture sometime in 2025.

Congratulations Peter and Jane, I don't know if it's one or the other of you who goes for the Catts but whoever it is doing I you are doing it pretty well. This lobata is a stone cold beauty.



Best of the Evening Novice – Oncidium Sharry Baby - grown by Di Flinders

Sharry Baby is a very popular orchid. A hybrid registered in 1983, it's a cross involving 4 different species. The pinky red comes from Oncidium sotoanum which has smaller flowers and wiry, archy to pendent spikes with lots of smaller pink flowers.

The other 3 parents have slightly increased flower size, intensified the pink into red and given Sharry baby a tall upright flower spike.

The 3 other species are altissimum 12.5%, anthocrene 25%, and leucochilum 37%. These three all have much longer flower spikes than



the pink parent sotoanum but I couldn't find decent pictures to show you typical display examples. As I understand it each of the 3 has a long spike that begins erect but which usually arches over (probably from developing weight) to become horizontal and even slightly pendent. All 3 have spikes that have many shorter side branches and carry a lot of flowers. I assume that in nature the spike grows upward and outward to lay its flowers over the top of nearby branches or shrubs or other plants. This picture at the left of a flowering Onc altissimum from the Lesser Antilles in the Caribbean just

above Venezuela seems in line with that theory.

Although the weight of spike and flowers limits its ability to stand completely upright in nature they are quite easily made upright with the help of cane stakes and a diligent grower.

The flower colours of all these three species vary considerably. Some can tend toward yellow with brown or red/brown markings and others favour the darker red/brown with yellow highlights. I have included sample pictures of the 3 to illustrate what I mean.



Onc anthrocrene

Onc. altissimum

Onc leucochilum



They are all quite attractive orchids in their own way. But each has hundreds of slight variations in colour and flower shape based around the examples above so its very hard to try to figure out what influence any of them has on Sharry Baby beyond the broadest guesses. Especially when you look at the delightful and very different Onc. sotoanum (left).

I know an awful lot of today's growers don't give two hoots about the parent species and what they may have contributed so I hope I haven't bored you all to death with these background insights. I guess at the very least though, you have been getting a chance to have a glimpse into some the world's very different naturally occurring species.

Congratulations on your Best of the Evening Di. Very well grown. Is it the first of more to come?

Best of the Evening Hybrid – *Dendrobium Bohemian Rhapsody* - grown by **Helen Wong**



This is a lovely orchid but I have been dreading having to one day write up a discussion on a bit of a controversy it can expose.

Den Bohemian Rhapsody is a hybrid made by David Banks, from here in Sydney and was registered in 1995. It is a primary hybrid between Den. aphyllum and Den. loddigesii.

For many years I used to grow two large plants of what my labels said was Den pierardii. These days that species name is regarded as a synonym for Den aphyllum.

I have benched it at Ku-Ring-Gai meeting many times over the years and the plant itself and the flowers looked virtually identical to the orchid pictured here as Bohemian Rhapsody.

My plants of "pierardii" were each much the same although I think one was slightly more pink in its pink parts than the other. I acquired the two at different times and from different sources but both were mature large plants when I got them and I just continued them as I got them. It may have been a result of the way I grew them, but as well as flowering beautifully, both plants were continually covered in keikis all over the flowering stems, and on the nights I brought one in to a meeting to show off its flowers I gave away dozens and dozens of keikis to any grower who wanted one. There must be an awful lot of "Den pierardii" growing in backyards around Sydney these days.

The species name Den pierardii was always a question mark and at various times it was proposed that the correct name was aphyllum, at other times it was to be Den cucullatum, but as experts seemed to still be umming and ahing I just left my labels alone until such time as I was satisfied one way or the other. And, as often happens in life, a job put off never gets done. I am afraid both have now gone to god so at least I don't need to worry about those labels any more. Today, both cucullatum and pierardii are regarded as synonyms for Den aphyllum.



Now before I tell you a story, I want give you proper background on the two species parents.

First, *Dendrobium aphyllum*. Orchidwiz gives an excellent description and habitat range for *Den aphyllum*, based on information in the Charles and Margaret Baker cultivation sheets.

ORIGIN/HABITAT: Widespread in Southeast Asia. Plants grow in southern and eastern India and the tropical valleys of Sikkim and Nepal where they are found at about 1000 m. Distribution extends into Burma, southwest China, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Malaya, and South Andaman Island. In Burma, plants grow near Moulmein in the Tenasserim Range at 150-1300 m. In China, they are found at 1000-1800 m. Plants known as *D. pierardii* are usually found in mangrove swamps. They are normally epiphytic, but in deforested areas, they may grow lithophytically.

PLANT SIZE AND TYPE: a 60-90 cm sympodial epiphyte. Plants known as *D. pierardii* may reach a length of 183 cm. (JB note : despite this latter comment, *Den pierardii* is no longer recognised as a species and is really *aphyllum*, thus implying that *aphyllum* canes can actually be up to 180cm, or 6 foot, long.)

PSEUDOBULB: 60-183 cm long. The slender, graceful stems are pendent to semierect and only slightly swollen at the nodes. New growths appear about flowering time.

LEAVES: Many. The leaves, which are usually 10-13 cm long, are often smaller near the apex of the cane. They may be linear to ovate, and they are often wavy along the margin. The foliage has a soft texture and is typically deciduous after a single season, although under some conditions leaves may last more than a single year.

INFLORESCENCE: Short. The inflorescences emerge from nodes along the apical 60% (the end section) of the prior year's leafless stems. The inflorescences are so numerous that the canes appear covered with blossoms.

FLOWERS: 1-3 per infl. Blossoms are 3-5 cm across and last about 3 weeks. They have a strong violet fragrance. Sepals and petals may be nearly white or have a pale, rosy-mauve tint with magenta at the tips. The narrowly oblong sepals and broadly oblong petals are fragile and nearly transparent. The lip is cream to bright primrose yellow with purple veins or markings at the base and a greenish yellow disk. The lip is densely hairy on both surfaces. It appears funnel-shaped, but it is nearly round when spread. The lip is highly variable in color, size, and shape.

Jims Summary – The extent of variation from plant to plant is unusually large. Although very long caned plants exist, the average seems much shorter. I would guess more like 60-70 cm. Orchidwiz only has info about cane length on about a dozen awarded cultivars. Those cane lengths ranged from 70 cm to 2.6 metres but as these were about awarded cultivars, perhaps these measures favoured the long caned types with more flowers.

In addition, the habitat range is also unusual. Some of the longer caned types are only found in hot humid lowland mangrove swamps. Others are found at higher elevations. Mostly at relatively moderate elevations from 1000 to 1300 m, but less frequently up to 1800 m in China. As there is usually a direct relationship between habitat elevation and cold tolerance, I am left in limbo as to ascertaining the winter cold tolerance of the species from that information. However, as these plants appear to follow the winter deciduous growth pattern common to most of *Dendrobium*, Section *Dendrobium*, (ie the *Den nobile* group), the plants are mostly in a dormancy state during winter so will likely tolerate cooler temperatures than usually implied by habitat elevation.

The Second Parent is Dendrobium loddigesii. – While also being a member of the *nobile* group, this species could not be more different to *aphyllum*. It is an untidy, sprawling, surface covering, scrambler. It's 10-15 cm length pseudobulbs grow in all directions and sprout from side nodes on previous pseudobulbs such that sometimes they appear to be growing at right angles to one another. Aerial roots sprout in all directions but despite all that its flowers are quite charming and if well grown can cover the plant.

The Bakers info from Orchidwiz tells us :

ORIGIN/HABITAT: Laos, Vietnam, southwestern China, and Hong Kong. In Laos, the plants are found in the Xieng Khouang region. Plants are usually found at 1000-1500 m but have been found as low as 400 m. In Vietnam, plants have been found in the northeast near the Chinese border in Cao Bang Province. They were growing in shady places in primary and secondary forests of evergreen, semideciduous, broad-leaved, mixed, and coniferous trees at 300-900 m. The habitat in China includes Yunnan Province where plants grow in the eastern mountains at about 1370 m, Hainan Island, and Kwangtung Province where plants grow on rocks 240 km southwest of Canton. Near Hong Kong, plants grow at about 1000 m.

PLANT SIZE AND TYPE: overall 10-18 cm high, sympodial lithophyte.

PSEUDOBULB: 8-15 cm long. The slender stems, which resemble a goose quill, are prostrate or pendent. They branch freely with new roots forming on each branch as it develops. New growths arise from a creeping rhizome.

LEAVES: Many. The deciduous leaves are 4-6 cm long. They are fleshy, glossy, oblong-lanceolate, and alternate along the stem (JB – ie one left, one right, next left again).

INFLORESCENCE: 3.8-5.0 cm long. Inflorescences arise from leaf nodes after the leaves have dropped.



FLOWERS: 1 per inflorescence. The flowers are about 5 cm across, which is very large for the plant size. Blossoms have pale rose-purple sepals and lilac petals. The downy lip is round and fringed along the edge. The rose-purple lip has a yellow-orange disk and a white edge. They are delicately fragrant and long-lived if kept cool.

So what do you get from crossing two impossibly different looking parents. Well you can never be 100% with these things but every Bohemian Rhapsody I have seen or heard about looks like a shortish form of *Den. aphyllum*. The flowers also tend to much more favour the appearance of *aphyllum*, rather than *loddigesii*. If you look at the photos for Bohemian Rhapsody in Orchidwiz there are 13 pictures of at least 8 cultivars. Most look like *aphyllum* but a couple are different enough to say “I can see some *loddigesii* there”. And that’s about as far as I could go. Just the same, it is possible that there are Bohemian Rhapsody cultivars somewhere that look even more like *loddigesii*.

So, having set the background, let me tell you a story about some uncertainty concerning my old ‘*pierardii*’s’ and all those keikis I have farmed out all over Sydney.

The Story – As I recall it, Dave Banks once told me he was convinced that my plant was really Bohemian Rhapsody.



It was all a long time ago and I apologise in advance to David if I am remembering it all a bit wrongly.

David is one of the most knowledgeable and insightful orchid specialists in Australia. He knows much more about orchids than I do and always has. However, we can all be stubborn at times and my recollection is that when we talked about it and he explained his reasoning I was stubborn and resisted his assessment. I couldn’t be convinced.

The flowers of my plant seemed to be identical to *pierardii* /*aphyllum* and I thought the whole argument came down to the fact that the hybrid had somewhat shorter growing stems. Even though Dave has travelled the world giving lectures and would have seen other examples of more typical *aphyllum*, and better grown plants, worldwide. I didn’t think the shorter stem thing was a satisfactory basis for a delineation of the two.

The example at the left from Cape Oasis orchids is more like the style for a more typical *Dendrobium aphyllum*.

On reflection, both my plants would have had pendent stems no longer than 50 cm or so and mostly shorter. I grew dozens of *Dendrobium* species satisfactorily over the years but I was never trying to be ‘the best grower’. I didn’t fertilise regularly and was more interested in learning about everything. I always thought my *pierardii*’s only average growth could perhaps be explained by my ordinary culture practices but perhaps it really was the hybrid?

Maybe I was wrong and Dave was right? When these kinds of suspicions arise I guess no one will ever really know until we get to the stage of being able to routinely send-off samples for a \$5 DNA test but that is a long way off.

I am sure that any grower eventually benching a grown up “Brydie keiki” will be copping pressure from our newer and often better trained judging panels, as to whether it is the species or the hybrid. But just to illustrate the similarity – below left is a Bohemian Rhapsody, to its right is *Den aphyllum*. Can you pick the differences by the flower?



Congratulations on your lovely orchid Helen. I hope all that stuff above doesn’t put you off. Whatever it is called this is one really pretty orchid and it gets better and better over the years as it reaches real specimen class. I look forward to seeing it again and again.

Human Christmas Advice

The more you weigh, the harder you are to kidnap.
Eat cake, be safe

Some other lovelies from the Nov 2024 Meeting



(a) **Cattleya coccinea** – (Trevor Onslow) wow doesn't that gorgeous red take your breath away. But for most growers this is one for the experienced specialists. Flowers are usually 5 to 7 cm wide and the pseudobulbs smaller. Amazing little plants with stunning, relatively large flowers. They are growable but not without special attention.

(b) **Den Mini Snowflake** – (GL Bromley) This is a real little oddball. It looks a bit like one of those mini softcanes but in fact it is primary hybrid between two PNG section Latourea species. That is, the tiny Den abberans, and the bigger, white Den johnsoniae. We have Steve Dunstan coming down next year to talk to us about Sect. Latourea. It should be interesting.

(c) **Cattleya purpurata** – (Stuart Ruthven) Purpurata can just about be a collection definition of its own these days. The basic flower shape is much the same although some are fuller than others, but the colours come in amazing variation. This lilac blue one is really lovely. Nice one Stuart.



(d) The green **Coelogyne Burfordiense**, and (f) the green and red **Coelogyne Salvaneraniana** – (both from P&J D'Olier) All of the green flowered Coelogyne are my favourites but they aren't common and most need warmth. But its worth saying that all the three orchids seen in this set are perfect candidates for Cary's waterwell pot culture.

(e) **Lycaste aromatica** – (A. Tao) Aromatica is one of a group of mostly yellow flowered Lycaste from around Central America. They are basically a deciduous type that drops all leaves over winter and begins again in the new season with a heavy flush of flowers, new leaves, and bulbs. They make beautiful large pots



(g) **Miltoniopsis Breathless 'Brilliant'** – (A. Tao) a perfect example of the lovely 'Pansy' orchids Miltoniopsis.

(h) **Phal Younghome Gentleman** – (L&G Bromley) This really appeals to me with that odd lip and colour. It is an odd hybrid deploying 3 or 4 unusual species in the background. Probably the reason for the lip shape but it works.

(j) **Oncidopsis Mem. Martin Orenstein** – (novice bench) I haven't seen one like this before. A lot of Miltoniopsis but also some Oncidium in different types. Seemingly an experimental mix but doesn't it look nice?