



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

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Annual Membership : **\$17 single, \$20 family**

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Next Meeting : Mon 16th February 2026

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

Infectious diseases like COVID and influenza cause a problem. If you are feeling unwell – please do not attend.

The hall is open from 6.30pm to set up the hall - please help. Benching can begin from 7 pm but no benching until all the class dividers and descriptors are in place. Give the set up team time to get things organized.

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

The society sales table will also be open as usual with pots, sticks and fertiliser etc. and hopefully also spare divisions of members plants. Please respect the **"Sales Table Open / Sales Table Closed"** signs and give our sales table managers time to set up and get themselves ready before you start grabbing stock and offering money.

There will also be the usual generous monthly raffle – drawn after the guest speaker.

The Culture Class for February – starting at **7.30 pm** the class will be run by **David Floyd** who will talk to members about **growing Stanhopeas**. Dave's down to earth and practical discussions are always hugely popular.

The Main meeting commences 8pm – with the formalities of the general meeting, presentation of reports and news, and while judging of the benched orchids takes place (*all over in about 30 mins – leading to the 'supper break'*).

The Supper Break – This part of the meeting is not only the chance to have a refreshing 'cuppa' and a bite to eat, it is the free zone time for members to admire the orchids close up and to meet other members. We should all make the very most of it.

For supper itself, the club supplies the tea/coffee/milk, sugar etc **but we ask members to bring their own cup or mug AND to bring in a contribution of edibles for the supper table. Just a small plate.** If you are a cook, show off your skills with something special, but shop bought stuff is also perfectly acceptable – **however, in all cases please avoid things containing nuts** due to potential allergies. **AND remember - bring your own mug or cup with you**

NOTE - Supper is not self-serve. Volunteers are assigned to serve the food for hygienic reasons.

Our January supper volunteers are – Liz Pyne and family assisted by Jessie Koh. Thank you all for helping.

February Speaker – Will be **Jim Brydie** again, this time on a talk called **Weird but Beautiful**. This is about all the kinds of orchids you have never seen and never heard of and why they look the way they do.

A few pictures from our January Meeting



Stanhoepa inodora



Vanda Princess Mikasa 'Blue'



Dendrobium secundum

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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)

President Pete – At our January meeting it was great to see everyone again after the Christmas and New Year period. I hope everyone had a wonderful break and I wish you all the best for the coming year.

It was good to see so many attendees at for our first meeting of 2026. We had about 42 members and as well as 3 visitors. We are so lucky that visitors want to come to our meetings with many of them eventually going on to join as new members. They do this because they can join in and have a good time and we should continue to encourage visitors so that our society continues to grow.

The benching was extremely good for this time of the year with a wide range of very excellent plants benched. Of particular note was an unusual *stanhopea cirrhata* benched by David Floyd, who gave a brief explanation of how it lacks the horns typical of more derived species. David has been very good to the society with his culture classes and assistance to members and in recognition of this we presented him at the meeting with the Oxley Achievement Award to 2025.

At our January meeting we tried something different with the discussions about *Oncidiinae* and *Phalaenopsis* led by some of our members. I hope you found this useful and, if so, we will develop this into the future.

We also introduced a few changes to the benching classes to better reflect what members are now benching. Members tastes in orchids and what they buy and grow, change over time, and we want to reflect this in the classes being benched. We hope this suits the members better and we will continue to provide assistance as these changes are introduced.

I wish to encourage members to make suggestions for future culture classes, and we hope to provide the first of these about growing *stanhopeas* at our next meeting.

I look forward to seeing you at our next meeting.

Cheers, Peter

Other Society News

1. 2026 – we are off an running on a new season although we had a problem in January when we couldn't find the place cards for the benching sections so we had to resort to little hand written cards. Such is life. No-one can remember sighting them since our November meeting but they have disappeared. We should have new ones printed for the Feb meeting and the new ones will incorporate the recent class changes. Check them out at the meeting but please also read and use the revised **2026 Benching Guidelines** sent to you before the meeting. This document defines the classes and sets out the rules for the pointscore competition.

2. Excellent speakers in January – I think our experimental replacement speaker program in January was very successful. *Christine and Lesley did a wonderful job talking to growers about Phalaenopsis*. I won't try and repeat all their insights but it struck me as perfect that they downplayed the nature of the medium in which these beautiful orchids might be grown. Lesley grows them perfectly in a peat and perlite mix, Christine grows hers just as well in a bark mix, and they talked about other specialists favouring sphagnum moss. Can you get a better example of there being no 'one perfect formula'. It's not like getting a flat-pack instruction sheet. You have to understand what the orchid needs and do that. Thank you ladies. Your discussions were much appreciated.

Adrian Zderic spoke to his classes about his techniques in growing a batch of *Oncidiinae* hybrids. It was fascinating to hear his methods for using keiki paste around the base of divisions to promote bursts of new shoot growth as the division settles in. It certainly looked to be effective. Or at least I think that's what he told us – I didn't take notes.

Which leads me to pass on some abbreviated info Adrian supplied me later.

He says – I use Gogo juice plus Seamungus every 3 months or when I remember

- Charlie Carp in my 1000 litre water tank when refilled
- Epsom salt in my 1000 litre water tank when refilled
- Mancozeb once a month
- Bloom booster in blooming season or month before
- Kahoona pellets version when I repot /repeat yearly
- Strike back pellet version when I repot /repeat yearly

Applying time for the keiki paste doesn't really matter but best after blooming or in growing season

Thank you Adrian. I suspect you may get a few questions next meeting.

3. Welcome to New Members – At our last meeting Yulan Yap, and Caleb Hanly signed up as new members - welcome to the club. I hope you enjoy our meetings, make new friends, and even gradually pick up knowledge and

skills in orchid growing. If you are an orchid beginner we try to hold basic orchid culture classes before most meetings and there is usually a wonderful display of delightful flowering plants to admire each meeting.

The skills take a little while to gather together so I hope you are patient, and to existing members, please seek out our new members and say hello and welcome them to the club.

4. Annual membership fees – Serious Announcement – There are still 42 “members” who haven't paid their renewal subscription. We are one on the best value memberships in Sydney and your fees help enable us to continue that way. Please don't keep overlooking. If it's a case of not sure if you have paid or not – please ask Jessie at the next meeting, or email the club email, we can work it out for you – BUT you need to PAY each year.

You can at the next meeting via Jessie, 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.

5. In creating new benching cards to replace the ones that we couldn't find at our January meeting, the committee has decided to make changes to the class divisions for the Phalaenopsis classes. From this month on, there will be a new Phal Species class and 3 flower size classifications for the Phalaenopsis hybrids. The 4 classes will be :

Class 32 - Phalaenopsis Species

Class 32A - Phalaenopsis Hybrids – Miniature flowers - up to 50mm

Class 32B - Phalaenopsis Hybrids – Intermediate size flowers – flowers 51-75mm across

Class 32C - Phalaenopsis Hybrids – Larger Flowers - flowers 76mm or more across

Best of the evening Species: Stanhopea graveolens - grown by **Lisa Harris**



Another orchid that was also BOE in February 2025 bulletin but that one was an orchid owned by Robin Stewart, this one by Lisa Harris.

Graveolens comes from Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras in forests up to 2700 meters elevation which makes it one of the cooler growing types for we Sydneysiders. Orchidwiz tells us that they grow as epiphytes in riverine forests meaning a warm, moist environment and the one picture I have seen in nature was on the vertical trunk of a huge tree but other sources also give it as an occasional lithophyte (on rocks).

At a recent meeting David Floyd explained to members as to how the shape and form of the three segments of the lip are what is used to identify species and to separate one for another. The picture below offers picture of six different Stanhopea species showing how

variable the lip format can be, and another excellent shot from the “Stanhopea Guy” (below) allowing a clear comparison of the graveolens lip.

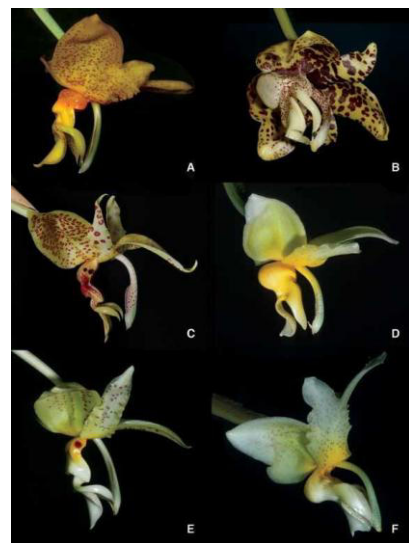
In Stanhopea, the top portion of the lip (the bulky perfumed part where it joins to the flower) is called the hypochile, the next segment is called the mesochile (a



short middle section that carries the horns), and end part is the epichile which is usually shield shaped or heart shaped.

In the picture at the right the letters designate as follows: A – graveolens, B – hernandezii, C – oculata, D – pseudoradiosa, E - ruckeri, and F – saccata. The pictures and chart were produced by G Gerlach.

Of the 60-70 species of Stanhopea, some like graveolens can be grown easily outdoors in Sydney but there are others that require a warmer environment. It's is best to ask before you rush off to by any particular one. It would be



disappointing to fail at growing one that you find later you didn't have the facilities for in the first place.

Congratulations on your Best of the Evening Lisa. You are a really high class grower these days.

Best of the Evening Novice – Phal unknown grown by *Robin Stewart*

What a display of flowers. I might have staked the two main stems a bit closer together although I don't know quite how, but even as is it sure makes a show.

It is unfortunate that find so many with no name tag on delightful Phallys these days, but specialist suppliers are now churning out thousands of unregistered and un-named crosses because the market they are aiming at don't care what it is called. Most home buyers wouldn't even know it's a Phalaenopsis.

And is that wrong? Well no, it's just that my era as an orchid grower interested in hybridisation and recording of breeding is coming to a close. I wonder how long we will even bother with the distinction between species and hybrids as we sometimes already have trouble proving the difference between some of very different looking species and their hybrid cousins.

But now that I have had my little whinge, just for a lark I went looking to see if I could figure out where the stripes in Robin's Phally come from. I am going to have quick skim through the various Phalaenopsis species and do an "imagine" of which ones might have been part of the background of Robin's 'unknown', to impart the stripes.

You can see from above that Robin's orchid has a yellow background colour - so what Phalaenopsis species have a yellow base colour, stripes of one kind or another, and red colouring to supply the red or purple in the stripes?

First, what about yellow as a base colour? If you go searching for yellow Phal. species on the internet you will find dozens and dozens but if you look at each of those same species more closely it is common to find that while many species do have individuals with a nice yellow background, each of those same species has many others with a white or green background and in some the background is even barely discernable because the red colour dominates and virtually fully overlays the background colour. At least on the front side anyway.

In breeding, it seems that yellow can be a problem because it is recessive against any of the colours based on red (such as pinks, purples, or browns). Here are some 'yellow' example species.



sumatrana



fasciata



hygrochilus



maculata

From the flowers above you can also see that a very large number of Phalaenopsis species have red or red/brown blotches or stripes – which indicates genes for red. In some the blotches almost form lines but even where they do these lines are horizontal across the narrow breadth of the petal or sepal.

The lines in Robin's orchid go from the centre of the flower outward - which is the opposite direction. The lines are associated with the vein structures within the leaf as opposed to the surface blotches or stripes that go across the veins. That 'flower centre outward line pattern has been deliberately bred into many Phalaenopsis hybrids, beginning with the big white and pink flowered hybrids that began to appear especially after world war 2. However, among all of the 83 or so Phalaenopsis species, there are very few that display that striping pattern and in some it is only visible in very pale coloured forms. Now isn't that curious?



Phal javanica



Phal lindenii



Phal schilleriana



Phal equestris

Phal javanica from above is probably the prettiest little Phal species of all but it comes in quite an array of colours and patterns so don't expect to get one like that red one above if you go buy one. Here are some of the nicer ones.



However, although javanica has been used as a direct parent in over 120 crosses, the results seem to have been interesting rather than outstanding, and I doubt that javanica is the source of the stripes in Robin's orchid.

Which leaves us with the 3 others. Of those, the most curious to me is *Phal equestris* in which I could never see stripes. But, if you look closely at some of the paler forms, its colour does show in faint striping outward from the centre of the flower out so its generic colouring seems to be based in its veins.

When I looked into its hybrids more closely, equestris seems to be the only possible source of stripes in an orchid like



Tariflor Pixie at the left. Tariflor Pixie (2006) does contain a tiny 0.6% of schilleriana in its way past but Tariflor Pixie's oldest breeding lines show no striping until an 1896 hybrid called Cassandra is introduced. Cassandra is used 3 times in the background to

Tariflor Pixie and occurs on both parent lines. Cassandra itself is a primary hybrid between two species – equestris and stuartiana. You will have to take my word for it but stuartiana is not regarded as a stripe source so in cassandra they must come from equestris.

Despite it being hard to see stripes from Phal equestris, after searching several lines I concluded it must be an imparter of stripes.

Next - Phal schilleriana? You can see from the picture of the pale flowered schilleriana on the page above that its colouration is also related to its vein system and can look like striping, but when I looked back through the schilleriana F1 hybrids (i.e. where schilleriana is a direct parent) I do not see any significant striped outcomes. The Orchidwiz database does not contain pictures of EVERY F1 hybrid so I may be misinterpreting that outcome but my immediate conclusion it that schilleriana is not any magical producer of striping.

The last species with obvious striping characteristics in Phal lindenii. Now obviously some individuals have more distinct striping than others but it is easy to see that it is a solid genetic character. The species comes from the Philippines and occurs as an epiphyte at 1000-1500m elevation so it is cold hardier than many Phallys. Its flowers are 25- 35 mm across and it has 5 to 7 simultaneous flowers on a short spike.

A good example of lindenii's contribution of stripes comes in its cross with a complex schilleriana/sanderiana hybrid called Pink Profusion in 1960. I can't find a picture of Pink Profusion but the cross with lindenii is called Peppermint and its picture is shown at the left. Peppermint is obviously a strong candidate for ongoing breeding in the striped pink category and they call this type 'Candy Stripes'.



However, my research also highlighted some completely unexpected results. I tried look back to see where the first stripy Phal hybrids began to be a big factor in hybrid Phallys. I was only using Orchidwiz, and one version back from its latest, and despite it's very large picture library, it doesn't have pictures for a lot of the older crosses, especially from the 1950's to 1980's.

But I kept running across strikingly coloured and marked Phal hybrids with declared parent breeding being essentially only plain white flowers. The very first clearly striped Phalaenopsis was Phal Cassandra from 1896 (see above) but there does not seem to be any concerted effort to make stripes a feature until the 1960's and 70's. Two unusually distinct striped hybrids from that era look to have been Phal Diamond Head (left below) and Calypso (right below) –

both from 1954 but by different breeders. Diamond Head is an almost ¼, ¼, ¼, ¼, mix of the pink Phal schilleriana and three pure white species (amabilis, rimestadiana, and aphrodite) that some argue are close to the same. The picture at the right looks consistent with that except for the stripes. They could come from a mutation during breeding, but they look pretty much what you would expect from one of the centre out stripe species. I am a little suspicious that the reported breeding may not be correct but I am only guessing.



The other example Phal Calypso (far right) is an even more complex hybrid but still only involving 5 species including the 4 parents in Diamond Head. The extra parent is Phal stuartiana. I can't see how that mix could even remotely produce a hybrid that looks like the picture above so where do you go from there? Mutation, or error, or secretly undisclosed breeding? I can't give you an answer.

Congratulations on your best of the evening Robin. A lovely orchid.

Best of The Evening Hybrid: Vandachostylis Thai Noi x Apichart - grown by **Garrie & Lesley Bromley**



This orchid from Garrie and Lesley's collection also won best of the evening when it was benched in Feb last year when we saw it for the first time and I wrote up a more comprehensive 'BOE' for it and explained its background. If you missed it then and would like to know more, you can find that write up in the March 2025 bulletin.



The pictures here have been adjusted slightly make them clearer as I suspected that the night time lighting dulled the tones somewhat, but I assure you it is an amazingly coloured orchid.

Essentially, this one is a mix of two minor Vanda species (flabellata and testacea) and two doses of Rhynchostylis coelestis. I suspect the coelestis's would have been the blue flowered varieties, because it does also come in pinks and white.

I don't know if it has been registered yet but I certainly haven't seen it about on sale. I suspect it is one of those orchids that only someone with Garrie and Lesley's connections could even find.

Rhynchostylis coelestis seems to me to be the star parent in this cross and is one of my favourite orchids with its modest plant size, and short upright spikes of generally blue and white flowers. Colour can vary as with many orchids, the blue can be pale or deep, and it also comes in pink, mauve and white, but it is blue and white varieties that always catch my eye. A lovely orchid, but a warm grower as I suspect is Garrie and Lesley's beauty.



Congratulations messrs Bromley. It is a stunner and perfectly grown as usual.

My teacher told me not to worry about spelling because in the future there will be autocorrect And for that I am eternally grapefruit.

Billion dollar idea.
A smoke detector that shuts off when you yell
"I'm just cooking!"

THIAMINE - C₁₂H₁₄N₄O₅ *By John Rees*

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In February this year, I visited a nursery northwest of Bangkok called Suwannaphum. It Is not open to the public and exports to Vietnam. With 40 hectares under shade cloth, we were allowed free reign and the section of older Vandas and Rhynchostylis demonstrated excellent culture. There was a smell of thiamine as though it had been used recently in his fertilizer program.

Thiamine =	Vitamin B =
Produced by plants	Needed by humans who can't produce it, obtained from whole grains and legumes for example.
Accentuates root growth	Required for maintenance of nervous system*



The image (at left) shows some of these old Vandas with no leaf drop and lots of roots. We believed that thiamine was being used to enhance root growth and, thence, plant growth.

About ten years ago, Trevor and Jan ran monthly cultural meetings at their home in a space which would be crowded if 15 turned up. Often there was more than 30.

When he re-potted plants he would always spray with Auxinone. I bought 5L for \$80 and divided it into 10 x 500 mL lots which were quickly snapped up.

Auxinone's active constituents are 0.075 g/L of Naphthalene Acetic Acid (NAA), 0.075 g/L of Indole Acetic Acid (IAA), and 2.25 g/L of Vitamin B1 (Thiamine). These ingredients work together to stimulate root development, promote uniform shoot emergence, and enhance vigorous early leaf development in plants.

Rooting powder sold by Bunnings is Naphthalene Acetic Acid.

It appears that its use could be extended from just at repotting to a regular use in the fertilizer program to enhance root growth, as it seems Suwan at Suwannaphum was doing.

Today, Auxinone is only available in 20 litre containers for about \$260, although someone has broken it down to 1 litre lots and is selling it on eBay.

There are others, Agricrop Growth Formula comes in 5 litre containers for about \$65 which is almost twice as expensive per litre as Auxinone although it contains the same chemicals in the same concentrations.

*During World War II, prisoners of war in SE Asia were fed polished rice, and very little of it, and they suffered from beriberi, the result of lack of vitamin B1 in their diet and that caused nervous system deterioration.

The above article was reprinted from Glasshouse Country Orchid News (Oct. 2025) with the authors permission. With thanks.



AUXINONE *Information by Russell Stracey, story compiled by Peter Siemsen.*

Russell Stracey has been sharing his experience with the root growth stimulant 'Auxinone' for several years, with consistently positive results across a range of orchids.

(Left) : Nuleaf sell 1L for about \$25).

Russell uses Auxinone at a rate of 1 mL per litre, cautioning against stronger mixes. He typically applies it once along with his regular fertiliser program, and then again, a couple of weeks later. Within weeks, he observes increased root activity.

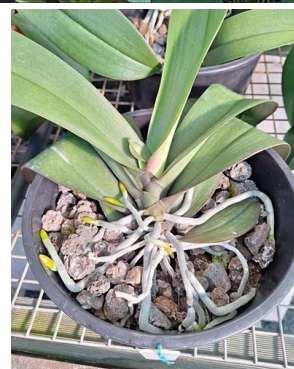
He has seen particularly strong responses in Vandas, including plants that were top cut after outgrowing the shade house. Cut surfaces were treated with Mancozeb, followed by drenches of Auxinone combined with Peters 20-20-20. Although some plants sulked initially, regular fortnightly applications led to healthy new growth.

(Right): Root growth on his Vanda after three months using Auxinone at a rate of 1 mL/L

(Far Right) - Progress of Vanda top cut taken on 21 August this year.

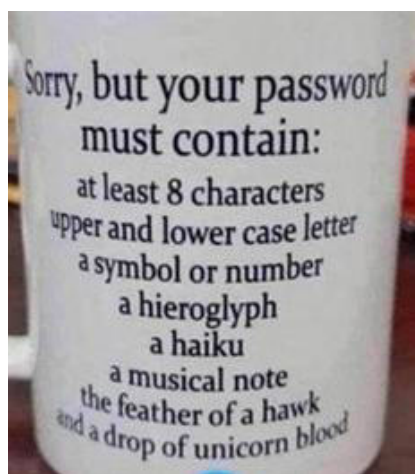


(Lower Right) - Phalaenopsis have also shown good root development when grown in free-draining media and treated with Auxinone and fertiliser. The picture shows Phalaenopsis orchid root development supported with Auxinone and Peters 20 20 20 fertiliser and Auxinone at rate of 1 mL/L



(Left) standout example is a six-year-old Vanda 'Yano Blue', which produced extensive new roots, flowered, and developed multiple basal keikis following treatment.

All photos supplied by Russell Stracey.



Humour

Please, would the person who lost their new iphone 15 PRO outside the mobile phone shop about 30 minutes ago, please stop calling my new phone

The statistics on sanity these days are that one out of every four persons is suffering from some sort of mental illness. Think of your three best friends, if they're okay, then it's you.

The Final Test *Wayne Visser © 2024*

We're on a path that twists and turns - Through landscapes ever changing
 Sometimes it's hard, and so we learn - Through patterns rearranging

The trick, it seems, is not to fight - Against the unexpected
 Keep moving on towards the light - And don't become dejected

Easier said than done, I know - Yet that's the final test:
 To fall and rise, to love and grow - While letting go the rest

More Pictures from our Delicious January Benching



Phal Unimax Sweetie



Phal corni-cervi (dark red var)



Phal 'unknown'



Coelogyne Linda Buckley



Maxillaria triloris



Dendrobium Bota Blue 'Ocean Blue'



Phal 'unknown'



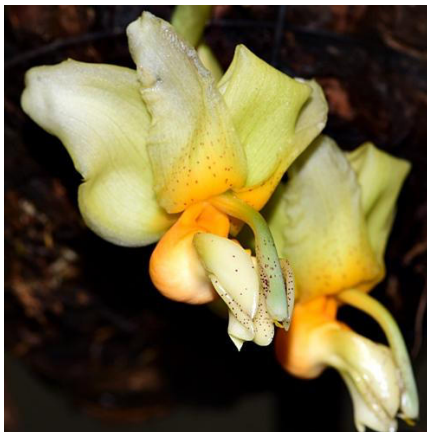
Renanstylis Junus Alsagoff



Stanhopea cirrhata



Phal unknown



Stanhopea saccata



Den Sherry Abe