



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

(Established in 1947)  
A.B.N. 92 531 295 125

20<sup>th</sup> April 2026 Volume 67 No. 4  
Annual Membership : **\$17 single, \$20 family**

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**Next Meeting :** Mon 20<sup>th</sup> April 2026

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

**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 ALL SIGN the ATTENDANCE SHEETS at the front door on arrival. Please do

**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** begins at 7.30 pm and will be **Jean Fulcher** talking to members about the practicalities of **Growing Bulbophyllums**. **Jean** is one of our most experienced and knowledgeable growers and **Bulbophyllums** have always been one of her favourites. Come along and find out some 'growable' types.

**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** generally starts around 8.30-45, after the judging. 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 the 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 why not show off your skills, but shop bought stuff is also perfectly acceptable. **However, in all cases please avoid things containing nuts** due to potential allergies. **AND don't forget - bring your own mug or cup with you**

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

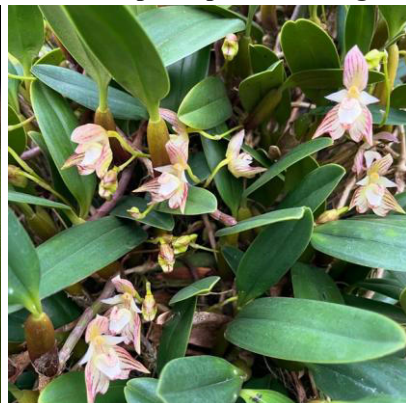
**Our March supper volunteers are** – **Lisa Harris and Annie Tao.** Thank you for helping ladies.

**Our Guest Speaker** will be **Graeme Russell** who will be speaking about **"Dendrobium speciosum culture and his own overall orchid growing set up"**. Graeme is a senior member of several clubs, a down to earth grower, and a delightful human being. He is something of a specialist in **speciosum** and I can't wait to learn something from him.

**A couple of possible cool growing Bulbophyllums ?**



**Bulbophyllum ambrosia** from northern Vietnam



**Bulb. rothschildianum** from N.E. India



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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](mailto:jimbrydie@aussiebroadband.com.au))

**President Pete** – Our monthly meetings are always good and March was no exception. It started with another very interesting presentation, this time by Dennys about successes in growing maxillaries. Thank you Dennys.

As usual the benching was extremely good for this time of the year with a wide range of very excellent plants benched which became the topic of our after-supper presentation for the night. Instead of a guest speaker, Cary Polis, Jim Brydie, and Lina Huang led a plant description session, selecting a combination of unusual and well grown plants from the benching to discuss with the growers and other members of the audience. I always enjoy these sessions as they are not only informative but also interactive with members. I hope you enjoyed it too. I wish to thank Cary, Jim and Lina as well as all of the members who participated in the discussions.

Attendance at the March meeting continues to be very good with 43 members, was well as 4 visitors which is great to see as this indicates people are being attracted to our society and meetings and let's hope they will join the Society and we continue to grow.

We will continue with the culture classes as everyone seems to enjoy them, so please keep on making suggestions as your ideas are valued and we want to encourage participation in the society every month.

Again, our supper was good with members taking the time to talk to each other and enjoy each other's company. Please continue to bring along a plate to share as the supper break is a good time for members to socialise and is an important part of the meeting.

Keep safe and I look forward to seeing you at our next meeting. (Cheers, Peter)

### Other Society News

**1. Unwell?? - AS we repeat each month, infectious diseases like COVID and influenza are still about.**

**If you are feeling unwell – please do not attend.**

**2.** At our last meeting *Dennys Angove* took the Culture Class and did a wonderful job talking about *Maxillaries*. We are so lucky to have so many experienced growers willing to share their knowledge. Thank you to all who take on this role for us. We all gain from sharing our experiences.

**3. No New Members** this month but several visitors again. I hope our visitors enjoyed the night. We are always pleased to see new faces and to hopefully introduce people to the amazing world of orchids.

**4. Jim's email problems** – In addition to emails the society sends to members from the society address, our editor Jim maintains personal email contact with many other societies and friends and mails out complimentary copies of our newsletter to 'bulletin friends'. Many of these have been contributors of articles and information over the years.

*Unfortunately*, new anti-scam provisions being applied by some email hosts including Hotmail, Outlook, and Life have ruled Jim's email address as a potential scammer and now reject all his emails (Jim suspects it is because he regularly emails to multiple receivers). Jim can receive from those email sources but cannot send to them. He gets a bounce message from every email he sends.

There is nothing Jim can do other than start a new email account with a different email service such as gmail, which he has done, but most of his new gmail emails to his existing 'friends' are ending up in their junk folders as his new address is not a recognised 'friend'.

The purpose of this explanation is to explain to Jim's dilemma to those who aren't seeing his emails anymore. Please spread the word to make sure you look in your junk box regularly to see who is in there that perhaps shouldn't be.

Isn't tech life complicated?

**5. Chris Wilson's Oncidesa's** Chris hasn't been able to make recent meetings but he has been in touch to send us a picture of one of his flowers from his *Oncidiinae* breeding that he had planned to bench. It is gorgeous as well. (see right)



It's *Oncidesa Kuring-gai* no.23 (another made by Chris) crossed with *Gomesa marshalliana* x (*marshalliana* x *forbesii*) 'Alpha'. Obviously the *Gomesa* pollen was stored in the fridge due to the different flowering times of the parents.

Chris tells us : "Some years back I did a deflasking demo for KOS and of the few miserable survivors this is the first to flower with a second plant in bud. The flower is 4 cm across and it is the product of pollinating an April flowering plant with one that flowers late October. So if consistently flowering at this time it will extend my flowering season".

See the way orchid breeders think? Well done Chris. I hope you get back to meetings shortly.

**6. Outreach Events: by Lina, Adrian, Dennys & Jenny** Each year the government runs a Seniors Festival with various events put on over a two-week period. Ku-ring-gai Council supports the festival within the local area & invites community groups to submit suitable events for publication in their Seniors Festival booklet.

For the first time this year, our society (KOS) ran a couple of events as well as participating in the 'Everything for Seniors Expo day'. We were also able to include information about our monthly meeting in the booklet. The KOS events were also posted on the 'what's on' tab of the council website.

Of the two events that required registration, 70% of participants saw the information in the Seniors Festival booklet, so being able to link in with this community initiative certainly helped reach more members of the public. The first event was a practical repotting session & culture discussion called 'Learn how to grow orchids' and was hosted by Lina, Adrian & Jenny. The session was booked to capacity and very well received, the audience was actively engaged & asked questions throughout and afterwards. We gave away a few lucky door prizes which went down a treat – who doesn't love a freebie!



Later in the week Dennys gave a presentation on 'An orchid adventure in Iceland', supported by Lina & Janine. It was a nice intimate tutorial session which all guests enjoyed greatly. Dennys & Lina manned a table at the 'Everything for Seniors Expo Day', hosted by Ku-ring-gai Council. The Expo was a busy event and many folk stopped by our table to chat, ask questions and take an info leaflet. Our monthly meeting and the St Ives Orchid Fair were highlighted at each event. We were extremely pleased to welcome a couple of attendees from the events to our March meeting as well as a visitor who came to the monthly meeting after seeing it advertised in the booklet. As a society, we try to run events that raise awareness of orchids in the wider community with the hope of encouraging others to appreciate these wonderful plants and maybe start growing their own & hopefully, also get involved in the enjoyable social aspect by joining a society.

All the events were enjoyable and we hope to participate in the Senior Festival again next year.

**7. Membership fees – Announcement** – If you were expecting a newsletter but didn't receive one, it may be because you failed to pay your membership. Please contact our secretary at [kuringgaiorchidsociety@gmail.com](mailto:kuringgaiorchidsociety@gmail.com) to check if you thought you had paid. Fees can be paid at the meeting or by bank transfer.

**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](mailto:kuringgaiorchidsociety@gmail.com) to confirm your payment.

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### Coming Events 2026

**Fri-Sun 15,16,17 May** - ORCHIDS OUT WEST - 9-4 Fri.&Sat. - 9-2pm Sun. Hawkesbury Racecourse

**Sat-Sun 28,29 June** - Mingara Annual Orchid Fair - Mingara Rec. Club, Mingara Drive, Tumbi Umbi.

**Fri-Sun 7,8,9 Aug** - National Orchid Extravaganza incorporating the Paphiopedilum Society of NSW. The Arena Sports Club, 140 Rookwood Road, Yagoona

**Fri-Sun 18,19,20 Sept.** - ORCHIDS CENTRAL - Club Condell Park, 178 Eldridge Road, Bankstown,

**Sat 10 Oct** - Orchid Species Soc N.S.W - AUCTION & SHOW, W. Pennant Hills Community Church 41-43 Eaton Rd, West Pennant Hills.

**Fri-Sun 4,5,6 Dec.** - Summer Orchid Festival, Georges Hall Comm. Centre Hall, 188 Birdwood Rd Georges Hall

An Easter Message

**Be grateful that no matter  
how much chocolate you  
eat, your earrings will still fit.**

**Best of the evening Species: *Den. hekouense*** - grown by *Jean Fulcher*



I was really delighted by this cute little newcomer. I say newcomer because it is new to me and we had to get the grower Jean to tell us a bit about it when we showed it during the plant description.

Most of the following comes from a wonderful paper – *Dendrobium hekouense* (Orchidaceae), a new species from Yunnan, China.

by Liu, Z.J. & Chen, L.J. (2011).

*Dendrobium hekouense*, an attractive miniature species from Hekou in southeast Yunnan near the Vietnamese border, where it was found in submontane subtropical forest on limestone at elevations between 1000 and 2000 m. It grows as an epiphyte in primary evergreen broad-leaved subtropical forests on limestone slopes in highlands to the south of the Tropic of Cancer. It

flowers there from August to September, at the end of the rainy season.

It has also been found in northern Vietnam where it grows on the typical landscape of limestone hills, at 1300–1500 m. It occurs in broad-leaved, mixed, and coniferous forests.

The main habitats of *Dendrobium hekouense* are in a region subject to the SW monsoon, which runs from April to September, when the region is covered by dense fog in the morning and night. There is no fog in the dry season that begins in October, running onto March. The average annual temperature here is 17.6°C: the average temperature of the coldest month being 10.1°C, and the hottest month 23°C.

The forests here are dominated by species of beech and oaks and relatives which host *Dendrobium hekouense* plants on their branches. The canopy density of these forests is often 80%–85%, but *D. hekouense* usually grows on the more or less sunny canopies of big trees. It is interesting to note, as observed by Liu and Chen, that the orchid almost always grows on the underside of the branches, and the flowers spread horizontally with the mouth of the lip and the cylindrical mentum in transverse direction to prevent the influx of rainwater into the flower.

It is apparently quite rare in the wild, but too little is known of its range, the size of its populations and threats to its habitat as yet to assess its environmental status.

I believe that it typically blooms in the fall, with the foliage dropping just before and as they are flowering. It has single flowers on a single inflorescence. In its natural habitat this orchid flowers between August and September, during a period that coincides with annual rain. Once the flower season has finished, new growths will emerge again to repeat the annual cycle.

Isn't it amazing that there still jewels like this in the orchid world that man keeps on discovered year after year. What an amazing group of plants.

Congratulations Jean. A gorgeous little gem and you grew it perfectly. Thank you for sharing with us.

**Best of the Evening Novice – *Dendrobium unknown*** grown by *Lynn Dabbs*

A beautiful orchid and well grown. But 'unknown' always presents questions. What is it? Is it a hybrid or a species? If I don't know what it is, could I grow it?

Having no name doesn't detract from the beauty of an orchid, but it does substantially detract from its value when you want to sell it or sell a division of it.

I am quite certain that Lynn's orchid is either *Dendrobium bigibbum* (or its synonym *Den Phalaenopsis*) or a hybrid dominated by *bigibbum*, but just for a moment, I would like to focus on its 'no-name' status.

Surprisingly, I suspect that probably up to half the orchids in growers collections or dangling from trees in their backyards these days no longer have labels. Probably less so among the rather professional growers, more so among the gardener growers, but a big percentage anyway. This is especially the case in older growers collections where orchid care, repotting, and attention to detail begin to decline in relative importance to other factors affecting their lives. It is a sad fact of life that plastic labels degrade over time and need to be replaced. And so does the writing in permanent ink or even 2b pencil that we traditionally use to write orchid names on the labels.



When we are repotting regularly we notice a degraded and brittle label and replace it with a fresh one, good for another 5 to 10 years, and manually transfer the information from one label to another. In my own case, the information transferred was not just the orchid name. I used to record where I got the orchid from, and when. And I would also write every repot date on the back of the label (just the month/year such as 2/26). The extra information often helped when assessing why an orchid might be beginning to decline or not do as well as expected. Obviously, as an orchid aged, the long list of potting dates became irrelevant so I would rationalise to just the last few.

But, no matter how assiduous or careful you are at keeping records and replacing labels, labels still fall out or are pulled out to read and put back in the wrong pot, or the label breaks, or becomes unreadable. Too many become another of the great 'unknown'. It just happens – so what then?

An unknown can't be identified without its flowers, but even when in full flower it sometimes takes a very experienced grower who has seen an awful lot of orchids to recall what it might be. The flower, plant form, and inflorescence will usually quickly give you the genus. The flower, experience, and knowledge, will usually quickly separate species from hybrid, and even usually limit the choices to a smaller group. For example, orange *Cattleya* types largely derive from what used to be *Cattleya* (now *Guarianthe*) *aurantiaca*. Flower shape, size, and their physical features can get you closer and closer but unless it is something with unique characteristics, that's about as far as you can usually get.

For best of the evening write ups I usually explore all these avenues with you in writing, hoping to help the grower understand their orchid a little more, but also hoping that more and more up and coming clever growers begin to follow the processes and take over and improve on the methodology over time.

### ***So, back to Lynn's lovely orchid.***

In the May 2015 bulletin I wrote an article called "The Bigibbum Complex" which attempted to explain the almost ridiculous naming history of this species, or group of closely related species. I will only reproduce parts of that here but I believe the complete May 2025 bulletin can still be found on our website.

Basically, as the story goes, ...For many years the understanding was that there was one species (known at the time as *Den. phalaenopsis*) that occurred in eastern Indonesia on the islands near Timor, and that everything that occurred on the Australian mainland, was *Den bigibbum*. But later, taxonomists came to believe that the specimen of *Den phalaenopsis* used to define that Indonesian species was actually a specimen of a *bigibbum* plant from Australia and so the name *Den. phalaenopsis* was invalid.

Still, the consensus at the time was that the Indonesia/Timor species was a separate species to the other 3 separate populations in Australia, which were all *bigibbum*, so a new name *striatensis* was proposed for the Indonesia species. Are you still following so far? I wouldn't be surprised if you stopped for a coffee or tea or to go watch TV.

Anyway, around the same time as my article, in 2015, another taxonomist Peter Adams reported that DNA studies had shown there was insufficient difference between the DNA of the 4 populations to make any of them separate species, so the Indonesian species is just another variety of *bigibbum*.

The big problem for orchid growers is that these 4 groups have been interbred and cross bred using a wide variety of parent names based on the understanding of whatever applied at the time the crossed were made, and those outcomes were used as parents with other closely related species. No one can tell the difference between the species from the wild, the hybrids and the species names that were applied over a 50 year or more period.

They are a HUGE BLODGE of indistinguishable species and hybrids and the orchid judges know it. If you call one of these *Dendrobium bigibbum* there isn't a person in Australia who would be brave enough to argue with you.

So Lynn, congratulations on your best of evening *Den. bigibbum*. You are growing it rather unusually but it obviously works so keep doing it like that until it doesn't.

PS : In the 2015 summary, Garrie Bromley, who grows all these types exceptionally well, offered some tips on growing them. *He said he grows his plants in an enclosed but unheated glasshouse but it can be grown in a shadehouse provided it is under a roof and can be given no water at all during its winter rest period. After the flowers finish at this time of year (May), Garrie says they should be hung up high where there is good light and air movement, and should be given no water at all until the new growths are well under way in spring. Something like the culture regime we have been taught for *Catasetums*.*

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**The Smartest Man Alive** - A small passenger plane is flying from Dallas to Denver when the engine sputters and dies. The pilot gets out of his seat, runs to the back of the plane, grabs a parachute, opens the door, then says, "Sorry, there are only three parachutes left," and jumps out.

This leaves 4 passengers: a boy scout, a college professor, a priest, and a doctor. The doctor says, "Guys, I need to be saved. I heal people and am a valuable resource to the human population." He grabs a parachute and jumps out.

The professor says, "Well, I've won the Nobel Peace Prize and spoken to the leaders of the free world. The President of the United States has called me the smartest man alive. It is obvious I need to be saved." He grabs a parachute and

jumps out, leaving the priest and the boy scout... but only one parachute.

The priest smiles sadly at the boy and says, "Son, I've lived a long and fruitful life. You are young and have the rest of your life in front of you. Take the last parachute."

The scout replies, "It's okay, Father. The smartest man alive just jumped out of the plane with my knapsack. The other parachute is here on the floor beside my seat."

**Best of The Evening Hybrid: Phal. Tzu Chiang Senrima x pulcherrima - grown by G & L Bromley**



What a delightful orchid, but one that had me fooled.

When we talked about it at the meeting during our plant description, I was convinced it was a line bred variety of the species that used to be known as *Doritis pulcherrima* variety *Chumpornensis*. But while it certainly contains a strong influence of that orchid in its background, the official records show it also contains gene contributions from at least 14 other *Phalaenopsis* species.

The introduction of *pulcherrima* to this particular hybrid only came from the cross listed in the Best of the evening title. That is, *pulcherrima* is only 50 % of the genealogy.

It's hard to believe that the flowers at the left only have 50% of its genes from *pulcherrima*, presumably var.

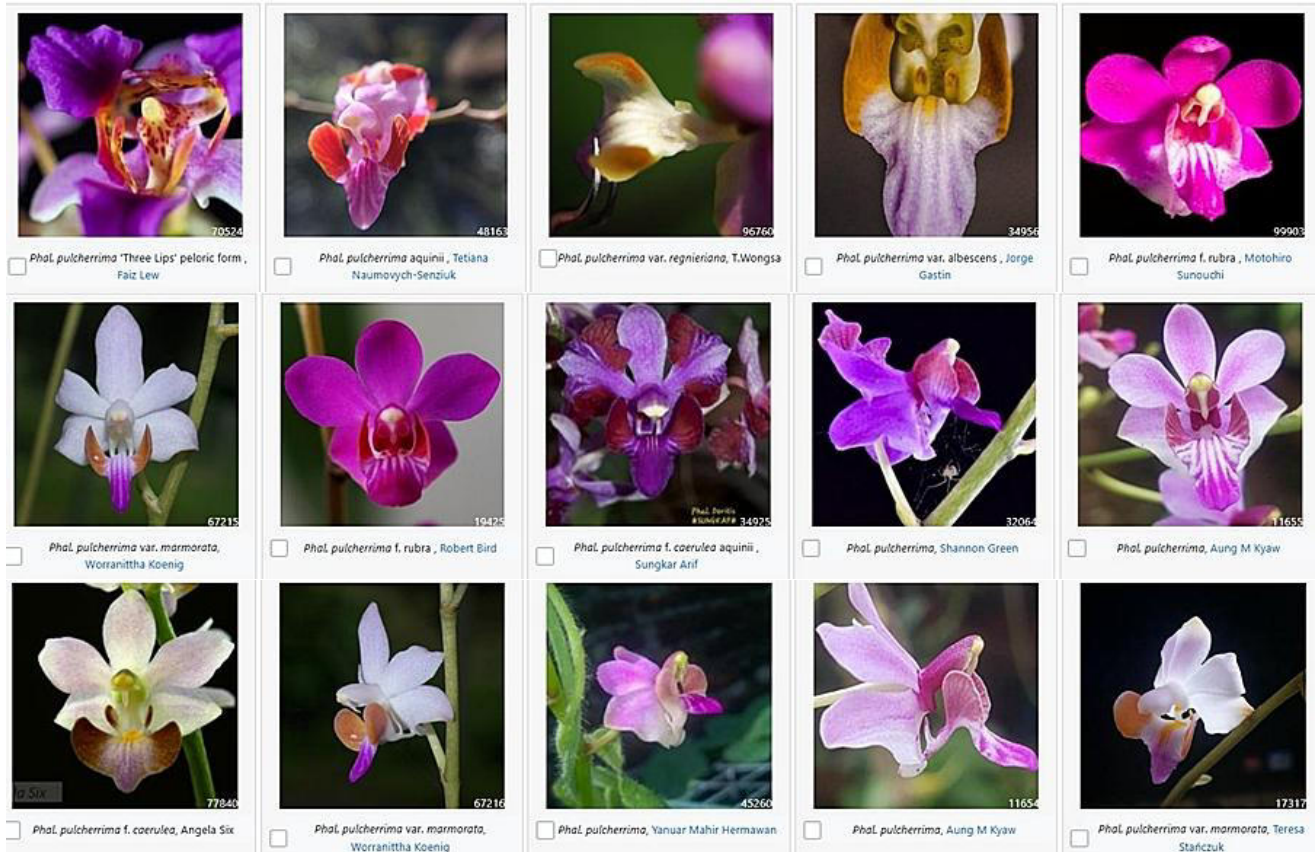
*Chumpornensis* because it is the only *Phally* species with these small flowers on a vertical inflorescence, and variety

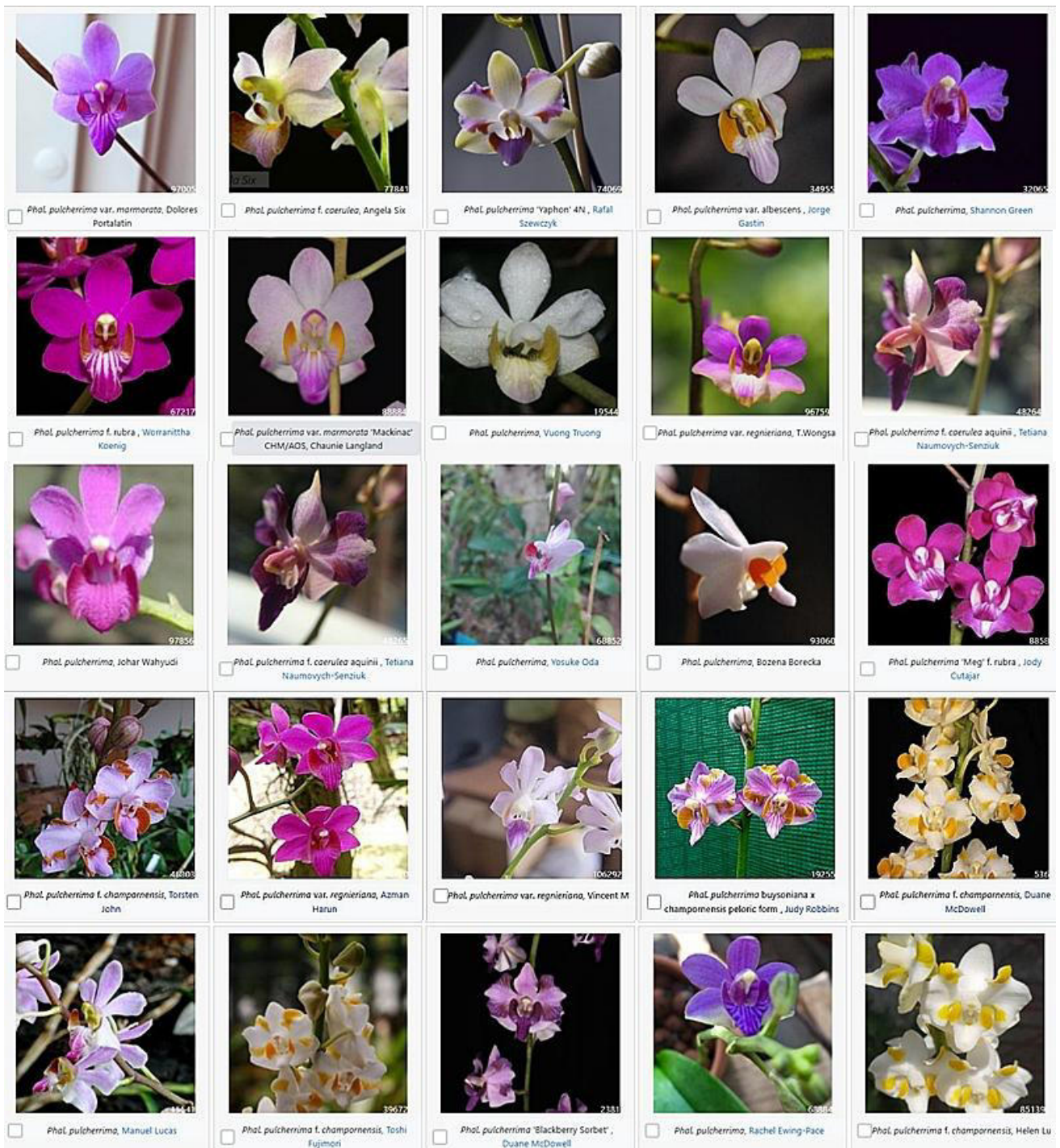
*Chumporensis* is the only one of its kind with a petaloid flower form like this (parts of the lip format duplicated in the petals) and in the colour combinations we see here. Talk about dominance. The other half of the gene pool has disappeared.

But, I guess that strange things happen and I have no other basis than probability to question it.

Which brings me to try to explain *Doritis* or *Phalaenopsis pulcherrima*.

Well personally I have no doubt we should be calling it a *Phalaenopsis* - there are differences, but technical. The problem has mostly come because it grows very differently to every other *Phal.* and it is the only *Phalaenopsis* that looks like this. Its DNA may be still be *Phalaenopsis* but it sure looks like it is at least starting a new branch on the tree of life going in a different direction. And although we know every species covers a range of variations in its appearance, the variations within *pulcherrima* as a species look rather extensive. Look at these few picture panels borrowed from the *OrchidRoots* website to illustrate the substantial variances in the species.





And this only 40 samples from over 90 pictures available.

In addition, as well as the flower shape and colour, there are at least half a dozen named and very different looking forms – a couple of which are recognised by many as separate species. All of which look to me at face value as variants on the growth pattern of a *Doritis* (if it still existed) than they do a *Phalaenopsis*. That is dry growing, bright light growing stiff, thick leaves, a vertical spike with small, *pulcherrima* shape flowers.

The main separated or half separated variants are

1. *Phal deliciosa*
2. *Phal buyssoniana*
3. *Phal* var *Chumpornensis* (variously spelt and accepted as *Chumponensis*, *Champonensis*, *Champorensis*)
4. *Phal regnieriana*

The case of *Chumpornensis* is a curious one. It is supposedly only found naturally (or perhaps was first found there?) in the Chumphon province of Thailand. That province is a long narrow area on narrow peninsular of land on the left of Thailand, that joins Thailand and Malaysia. The province is up the top end of the peninsular, fronting along the bay of Thailand. I have no idea why the '...ensis' name is spelled so many ways but as the province name begins 'Chum', I have stuck to that.

Another curiosity is that the variety is quite different in two separate ways. Instead of purple/pink, its flowers are

white and yellow/gold (some kind of albino). Secondly, the flowers are petaloid – meaning that the form of the petals have taken on some of the special shape characteristics of the lip. This is a genetic variation that does sometimes occur in a number of different orchids and has been prized in some circumstances for enabling the creation of attractive ‘splash petal’ colour forms in hybrids.

However, from what I have been able to find in regard to var. *Chumpornensis* I can't determine whether it is being noted for being petaloid, albino, or that it is both together. There are *pulcherrima* cultivars that seem to be var. *Chumpornensis* but which are just identified by a cultivar name. Perhaps they are hybrids between varieties – who knows?

The Baker's published distribution data for '*Doritis pulcherrima*' says “.... Widespread from northeast India through Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, then southward through Malaya, Sumatra, and Borneo. In Thailand, plants have been reported from all regions, except in the vicinity of Bangkok. Plants are usually found at relatively low elevations, but collections have been reported from as high as 4250 ft. (1300 m). Plants generally grow as terrestrials in the shade of bushes and shrubs. They are normally found in sandy, well-drained soil that contains an accumulation of organic debris.

I have no reason to doubt the substantial breadth of occurrence of the species but I am a little surprised by the almost inferred description of its habitat. I searched substantially for native habitat photos of *pulcherrima* and found quite a few different ones. But surprisingly, they were all of the orchid growing on sandstone substrate in blazing sun. Much like this set below from the Ko Hong province in Cambodia recorded in an episode in *Gardeners Chronical* by François Sockhom Mey, and the fourth from a location on Hainan island in China from an environmental protection group involved in replanting natural species, including *pulcherrima*, (KFBG)



In the *Gardeners Chronical* entry the observer tells us : Visiting the veals of Cambodia was another opportunity for me to localize and admire the beautiful *Phalaenopsis pulcherrima*. Once known under the name *Doritis pulcherrima*, this orchid can be quite common in some places in Cambodia. It favors open and sunny habitats, especially veals where it is often found growing among large flat sandstone rocks.

There may well be some composting detritus in the cracks in those rocks but as you can see the roots are all over the rock surfaces and the surface appears to be their main location. These are clearly growing as lithophytes in full sun. Nearly all habit pictures I find display this same habit. That must tell us something.

I have never grown *pulcherrima* well even though at least one plant has survived my total neglect for many years. They must be tough if you give them half a chance. I think I will have to get Garries to do a culture class for us on growing this one. He grows them better than anyone else I know.

Congratulations on a wonderful BOE Garrie and Lesley. They are a delight when grown as well as this. I can't quite understand the supposed breeding of this particular one, but only because it just looks like a fabulously line bred improved *Chumpornensis*. Gorgeous whatever it is.

PS? – in gathering info for this write up I found the following interesting explanation on the American OS site concerning *Phal. pulcherrima* var. *buyssoniana* that they present as new species in its own right.

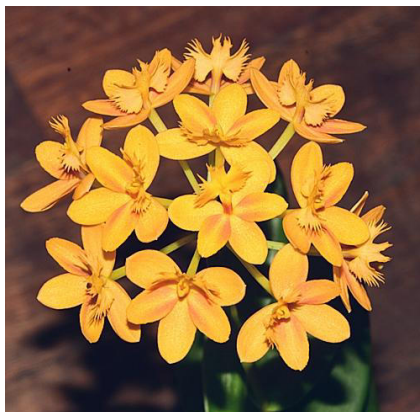
“This species has often been considered synonymous with *Phal. pulcherrima* or, at best a varietal form. However, *Phal. buyssoniana* has been found to have 76 chromosomes while *Phal. pulcherrima* has only 38. While this might suggest that *Phal. buyssoniana* is nothing more than a spontaneous tetraploid variant of the latter, colchine-treated tetraploid conversions of *Phal. pulcherrima* have proven not to look at all like *Phal. buyssoniana*. The flowers of this species are pale pink with little variation in color intensity.”

It seems clear that there is a difference between manmade colchine treated tetraploid *pulcherrimas*, and the naturally occurring var. *buyssoniana*'s but to me it seems a rash interpretation to say that means the naturally occurring *buyssoniana* is therefore a separate species. It may turn out that is the case but I don't know enough about the subject to accept that decision on what seems to be just a difference in colour. In my ignorance that may not be exactly what they are saying but I think more study and understanding is required.

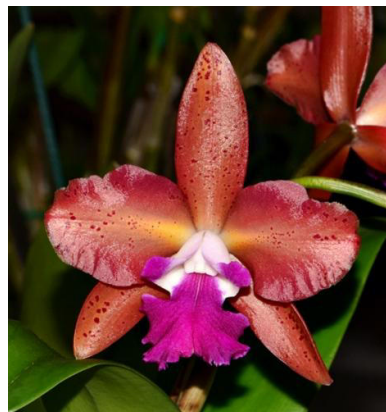
**More Delicious Pictures from our March Benching**



**Catt unknown**  
Helen Wong



**Epi. Topaz Sunny 'Bright'**  
G&A Cushway



**Cattletonia Topaz 'Hot'**  
Lina Huang



**Den. Airdang Green**  
Nancy Yao



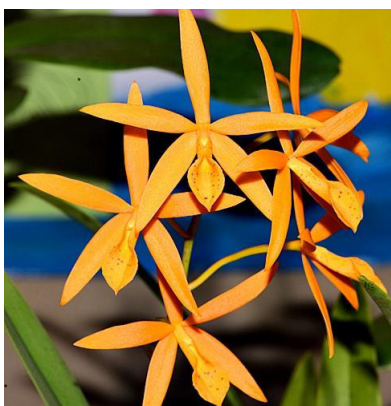
**Bulb. macranthum**  
P & J D'Olier



**Phal unknown**  
Adrian Zderic



**Gombrasiltonia Hilo Ablaze**  
Dora Law



**PVC Golden Peacock**  
G & A Cushway



**Brassidoste Gilded Tower**  
Brenda Walker



**Vanda Ashley Lowe**  
G & L Bromley



**Den. Speewah Twist**  
P & J D'Olier



**Galeopetalum Arlene Armour**  
L & P Au



**Vanda Alice's Anie**  
G & L Bromley

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Did you hear about the new restaurant called Karma? There's no menu - you get what you deserve.

## And a couple more for Good Luck – all wonderful orchids



Milt. Queen Anne - L. Huang



Phal bellina – Fred Gorginian



Onc. Sharry Baby Sweet Fragrance

### Who needs a glasshouse - By Dr Fred from the WSOS

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Contrary to popular belief, you can grow an impressive number of cool and intermediate orchids in Sydney in a simple shadehouse. However if your interests extend to warm growing tropical orchids, you should consider the alternatives carefully.

A glasshouse brings with it a new set of problems including expense, heating, ventilation, and temperature and humidity regulation. Not only orchids thrive in this environment. Pests also multiply faster. In short you become responsible for a new micro-climate, akin to an intensive care unit.

A common initial problem is how to stop the temperature rising uncontrollably in summer, when increased ventilation and shade may be required. Some species may need added heat in winter.

If you have the space and money a purpose built glasshouse is ideal. However, there are a number of smaller and cheaper alternatives you may wish to consider.

**Prefabricated hothouses** - These are plastic frames covered in clear plastic and can be obtained in a range of sizes from your local hardware store. If you have limited space these can be a very economical solution to the problem of over-wintering tender species. I use mine in winter for tender species such as Zygopetalums and small seedlings.

Another big advantage of these small units is that you can set up any number with different aspects and microclimates to suit a range of different orchids. Once you find the best aspect, you can choose a hothouse to suit the space. They are easy to move and dismantle. The plastic of course has a finite life.

And with any vertical stacking system, care must be taken to ensure that run-off does not carry disease from the plants above. Trays can help prevent this.

**Pergolas** - Many frost-tender species such as Cattleyas can be satisfactorily wintered under the polycarbonate of a pergola. In winter little shading is required. If space is a problem, consider hanging the orchids higher under the roof.

**Indoors** - A number of options are open for indoors. A sunny bay window is ideal. If you have a solarium it may only need some attractive stands to maximize the use of available space and light.

**Wardian cases** - A Wardian case was an expensive piece of furniture in its day, often made to measure and as large as a wardrobe. Fans, heating and lighting were included of course and featured expensive polished timber construction. A great way to display your collection if money is no object!

**Fishtanks** - Tanks can be obtained (often second hand) in many sizes and require little modification to serve a similar purpose. Essentially terrariums, they house smaller orchids, indoors or out. They are waterproof and can be moved fairly easily with the seasons to maximize winter light. The lid position regulates warmth, ventilation and humidity. A novel use is for deflasking tiny plants. A layer of coco-chips and gravel in the bottom of a small tank is a suitable medium and the water level is easily seen and monitored.

Before you decide, speak to members of the Society with glasshouses. No matter which option you choose, the only certainty is that you will never have enough space!

*PS from JB: All variations of the artificial environment we provide to grow our orchids involve managing light and shade, warmth, and control of humidity. I will present more on these in a little more depth in coming months.*