

GYMPIE & DISTRICT ORCHID SOCIETY Inc.



NEWSLETTER

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www.gympieorchidsociety.com.au

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Our last meeting was held on Saturday 26th October at Doug and Lynne Wilson's residence. Lynne our librarian had copies of orchid magazines for our members to peruse or borrow and Doug's enthusiasm for growing phalaenopsis was demonstrated by an encouraging talk on growing these long flowering beauties, full of tips and practical advice.



Doug's current potting mix is:
2 parts coconut husk
1 part coconut peat
1 part charcoal
1 part perlite

For the coconut husk he uses Amgrow Garden Mulch which he buys from Sauers in Gympie.

He uses 9 month Osmocote as fertilizer and repots his plants every one or two years.

When repotting, Doug's advice is to remove any yellow or damaged leaves from the bottom of older plants so the stem and roots can be immersed further down in the new potting mix.

Opposite left: Doug's purpose built Phalaenopsis House



Doug has 2 fans running in his Phally house to increase air flow and only heats his house a few days of the year if the winter temps are really low. He waters at 9am which allows the plants to dry off completely before evening. Again good airflow helps this process.

Especially in cooler weather, water left on the leaves overnight could result in a fungal disease called crown rot, a condition which is very hard to treat.

Phalaenopsis require heavier shading than most other orchids and like filtered or indirect light.

Flower stems are cut off after flowering to promote new growth.



Doug is also well known for his expertise in growing dendrobiums.

This specimen is *D. superbiums gigantum*

I recently looked at this youtube video which shows how to produce phalaenopsis keikis from old flower stalks without the use of keiki paste. The link is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SGOlvjGubow>

Robertson's Orchids nursery near Nambour provides quality phalaenopsis plants and regularly update their stock with imported cultivars from leading overseas nurseries. The web address is: <http://www.robertsonorchids.com.au>

According to Orchid Whiz, Doug's *Dendrobium superbiums* (opposite page) is a natural hybrid between *Dendrobium bigibbum* and *Dendrobium discolor*.

Club members Jim and Leanne Evans and John and Lavina Rees are currently in Ecuador attending the 22nd World Orchid Conference. Of Ecuador's approx. 16000 plant species over 4000 are orchids making it the the most orchid rich and diverse country in the world. This youtube clip from the W.O.C. website will get you a quick overview of Ecuador, its orchids and the program for the 22nd World Orchid Council. <https://youtu.be/rKs0P4lLlwc>

One orchid native to Ecuador currently flowering in several of our member's orchid houses is *Schomburgkia rosea*.



Schomburgkia rosea

At our next meeting there will be a slide show presentation featuring orchid species native to our own district. It was only after meeting with several members of the Gympie Field Naturalists that I became aware of the diversity of terrestrial species in our region both in the hinterland and coastal heath and wallum regions. Besides those you may already be acquainted with, there will be a couple of slides of epiphytes you may not have seen before.

Our Christmas party will be held at Jim and Leanne Evan's house at 106 Pine Valley Drive, Pie Creek at 3.00pm on Saturday 2 December 2017. Partners are included. There is no need to bring anything other than alcohol if anyone would like to enjoy a cold beer or wine or similar. Punch will be provided. It would be appreciated if members could advise whether they will be attending.

Continuing the theme of orchid species, this unidentified *Cymbidium* orchid from Elwyn's collection became the centre of our focus. It had



been given to him by an elderly lady years ago and another club member has suggested it might be a species.



So with that to go on I took some photos and went away to do some research.

It has also occurred to me that some of our members might also have this plant in their collections and have knowledge of its identity.

So first some trivia: there are 52 known species of *Cymbidium* of which 3 are native to Australia, *C. madidum*, *C. suave* and *C. caniculatum*. And there are over 14000 registered hybrids world wide. Most of the other species are native to China and South East Asia and the earliest hybrids and lineage is from these plants. In the end I found 3 species contenders based on flower shape and color all of Chinese origin.



C. faberi



C. changingense



C. lowianum

Of these the first two have upright flower spikes whilst *C. lowianum* is pendulous like our unknown subject and closer in flower shape. The flowers of this species can vary in colour from lime green to yellow.

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday night, the 28th November at the church building on the corner of Pine and Duke St. Entry to the carpark is off Duke St. See you there!