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Next Meeting : Monday, 21st September, 2015

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

The **Culture Class** starts in the **front** room at **7.20pm**. This month you have to put up with **Jim Brydie** and a **plant doctor session**. You can bring in any orchid on which you would like any kind of advice, but as Spring is just around the corner, perhaps it is a good opportunity to focus on plants that need a fresh start for the new growing season and some instructions on what you need to do to get a sorry plant going again.

The **main meeting commences at 8pm** and we have yet another fantastic speaker. Native orchid expert **Mick Korszenowski** is coming back to continue last years discussion on **variations in Dendrobium speciosum**. It won't matter if you missed his talk last year. Mick knows more about speciosum than anyone else I know and never fails to explain his subject clearly and simply. He tells a great tale and is a wonderful speaker.

And by the way. If you haven't visited the ANOS Warringah groups Spring Show at Forestville before, you must make sure you get there this year. (Forestville Memorial Hall, Sat 12th and Sun 13th September) There are all sorts of fantastic native orchids on display, but the show of speciosums from Mick and Bill Dobson and others, at the height of their season, is simply unbelievable.

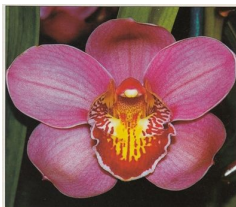
Spring is coming and the benches are going to be full of glorious orchids the next few months. Don't miss a meeting. Our **summer volunteers** this month are **Dom Tavernese** and **Jessie Koh**. Thank you for helping.

Best of the Evening Hybrid – Cymbidium Regal Flames 'Queen of Hearts' (Geoff LeMarne)

This makes 2 August meetings in a row for this lovely orchid. (which at least makes my write up job a bit easier if you let me repeat myself)

Regal Flames is a quite recent cross developed by by Gordon Giles at Dural here in Sydney. The cross is Wyong Flame x Alexandra's Flame and the clone "Queen of Hearts" was awarded an AM of 82.5 points in 2010.

As I observed last year, both parents of Regal Flame feature a mix of the same two orchids - Lancashire Rose and Khan Flame. There are many others involved, but these are two important forebears. Lancashire Rose is a nice full shaped pink and it has been used to create some wonderful orchids like Lancashire



(Lancashire Rose)



(Khan Flame)

Khan, Wyong Ruby, Blazing Rose, Blazing Fury, and Yowie Rose. The other background parent, Khan Flame is a little more recent and can be anything from deep pink to dark brownish red. It has been used to create many of the modern trend of dark red to dark pink strain of Cymbidiums. I guess that orchids like Geoff's Regal Flame 'Queen of Hearts' is just what the breeders were aiming for when they pursued this trend of big bold dark flowers.



Geoff is a master grower of these massive, stately orchids and kindly loans us a few for our display at St Ives each year. They are always a great feature for us and a huge contributor to the orchid quality level in our displays.

Congratulations on another best of the evening Geoff, and thank you for helping.

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

1. Suppers – A wonderful spread again last month members. Thank you all for contributing. I am sure all our visitors (and there were many) went away impressed with our hospitality. Did you know there were 65 people attended last month? But lets not drop the ball. Keep up the good work for our own pleasure this month.

2. October is our AGM – our October Meeting is also our AGM and this is your official notice. The minutes of last year's AGM are attached, as is a form for nomination to join the committee. We would love to see some new faces to join in the fun. The current committee are a great group but a couple have had to stand down. and I can assure you that being on the committee doesn't unduly impose on other aspects of your life. **Please think hard.**

3. St Ives Orchid Fair – Another great show once again, and this year the weather was perfect. All those happy orchid lovers enjoying and sharing their hobby, bragging, and buying new treasures for their collections. And yet again the display teams showed their innovative skills in ways to show off orchids big and small.

At our last meeting our President Kevin and Display Team leader Pauline both did a wonderful job of personally thanking all of our members for their work in setting up and running this show. It is our major event for the year and our biggest fund raiser by far. We would find it hard to manage without it but it doesn't happen by itself. You answer the call each year and we get the job done. Thank you.

I have one more thank you however, and that is to the Fair Management Committee which is made up of delegates from the 4 clubs that 'own' and run this show. These delegates do a fantastic job, unseen by most of us, in planning, organising, and managing the Fair. Not only do they meet regularly throughout the year to keep it on track, but these same members nearly all work flat out every day during the Fair as well. They work like Trojans and we all owe them a great thanks.

Kuringai's Display – We came 2nd yet again this year but it was a lovely display and very innovative as you can see in these pictures. Congratulations to Pauline and her team and to everyone who loaned us plants. Set up day is an amazing chaos with workers from all societies tripping all over each other, and out of it all comes such works of beauty. Amazing.



Congratulations yet again everyone. We will win it one day, but it's all only fun.

4. And now, on to the next Event. The Berowra/Kuringai Show at Hornsby Westfields - Thur 24th – Sun 27th Sept. Don't rest on your laurels though. We need your plants and physical help all over again for this next one. A show schedule and nomination form are being sent out with this Sept bulletin, and the show is just after our next meeting.

As you will see from the attached show schedule, we have increased the prizemoney this year. First and second in each class are \$10 and \$5, the Champion Novice/Species/and Hybrid are \$25, and the Grand Champion \$50. I know that isn't going to make you instantly decide to put every orchid you have into the show, but it might be something of a reward for those who do support the show. And by the way, we would really appreciate it if you did give us all your lovely flowering orchids to bench in the show.

Set up is Wednesday afternoon 23rd Sept, and your plants must be delivered to the show area outside David Jones on level 3 at Westfield between 12 noon and 3pm. If you can't make that, but wish to put a plant into the show, contact one of the committee members at their numbers on the front page of this bulletin.

There will be a members sales table operating during the show. The Society takes a 15% commission on all sales but this is a great opportunity to move on some of those spare divisions, and to make way for a few new orchids. Make sure your sales orchids are clean, disease free, and well established. You don't need to provide a written list of sales plants, just a yellow price tag in/on each orchid, clearly marked with a sales price AND your name or initials. We want your plants, but we must reserve the right to reject plants that are not up to the required standard.

And finally, we need your help to man the show. Rosters were circulated last meeting and the number of volunteers was disappointing. Roster shifts have been defined in 3 hour periods but please don't feel that means we only want you for 3 hours. If you can possibly offer to help us for more than one shift we will love you (anyone want a kiss?). The rosters will be circulated again next meeting (which is just a few days before the show), and we beg you to be generous with your time. If you can't be at the meeting, but can volunteer, contact Kevin on 9484 7072.

Bark left over from Last order - It seems that due to a misunderstanding, we are left with 11 bags of bark from our last order – 3 large, 5 medium, 3 small. If you need a bag, please contact Kevin on 9484 7072.

Coming Events

Fri 4 to Sat 5 Sept - North Shore OS show, Foyer of Concert Hall on the Concourse, Victoria Ave, Chatswood

Thurs 17 - Sat 19 Sept – MWOS show, Dee Why Grand shopping centre, Pacific Pde Dee Why, shopping hours

Thur 24 – Sun 27 Sept, Berowra & Kuringai OS's, Westfield Hornsby Show, outside David Jones upper level

Fri 2 - Sun 4 Oct, Southern Orchid Spectacular, Caringbah High School, 85 Willarong Road Caringbah

Sat 31 Oct, Species Orchid Society Show and Auction, Thornleigh Community Centre Hall, Phyllis Ave, Thornleigh

Best of the Evening Novice – Cymbidium unknown – (Peter and Betty Ng)

Wow, Best of the Evenings two months in a row. You two sure can grow Cymbidiums, and anyone who can grow Cymbids this well must do pretty well with other orchids as well. I don't think you will be in Novice class for long.

It's unfortunate that this one has no name. It looks like a really nice orchid and judging from the shape, probably a fairly modern hybrid too. The "no names" can occur for all sorts of reasons. Labels wash off in the weather, the grandchildren pull out the labels and throw them away, or we even create them ourselves by failing to put a label back after repotting etc. It is frustrating but once done it's done, and it doesn't make a nice orchid any less ornamentally attractive.



This lovely green of Peter and Betty's looks a bit like one I have seen before called Lunara x Kelly's Winter (see at left) but of course there must be a lot of nice greens in that sort of category.

I guess we will never really know, but whatever its name used to be, it is now Kuringai Orchid Society's August Best of the

Evening Novice. Congratulations on another Best of the Evening Peter and Betty. It is a delightful orchid and was really well grown.



Best of the Evening Species – Stenorrhynchos spp. affin speciosum ? – (Jim Brydie)



I acquired this orchid from Mike Hynes. It was imported as *Sten. speciosum*, and Mike always benched it as such, but there are a few things that make me unsure about the name.

When I first visited South America in 1999, having always admired Mike's plant, I made sure I purchased a couple of plants of *Sten. speciosum* for myself.

Australia's plant quarantine conditions, including fumigation with methyl bromide, make importing plants into Australia an expensive and risky process, but my *Stenorrhynchos* plants came through ok, and responded reasonably well to cultivation. The only thing was, they didn't look the same as Mike's plant. My new *Stenorrhynchos* had distinctly mottled leaves, and when they finally flowered, the spikes weren't as compact, and the flowers weren't as red as Mike's.

So, did I have a different species, or was *Stenorrhynchos speciosum* that variable? I didn't know, and it turned out that *Stenorrhynchos* was virtually unknown in Australia so no one else I talked to seemed to know either.

I consulted the internet and my library. You would think it would be a simple thing to see published information on each species and quickly work out which was which, but in this case, it didn't turn out to be so easy. One book said *Stenorrhynchos speciosum* was found from Florida in the USA right down to Peru in South America, but it turns out that the Florida plants are now regarded to be a species that was initially called *Stenorrhynchos lanceolatus* but it was part of a group that were subsequently moved from *Stenorrhynchos* to a related genus – *Sacoila*.



Sacoila lanceolata

Sten. speciosum ?

The flower heads of *lanceolatum* look quite similar to *speciosum*, which is obviously a problem when you just look at internet pictures of heads of flowers, but the plant form is quite different. *Speciosum* has a permanent basal rosette of leaves, while *lanceolatum* has just a few leaves that at best form a loose rosette, and which usually die off before the plant flowers. Of course plant form isn't what the taxonomists use to separate genera and species, it is mostly structural differences in the flowers. I won't go into that for the moment, but to show you how confusing it is just looking at images of the flowers, look at these internet samples:



millii

albidomaculatum

glicensteinii

speciosum

lanceolatum

navarensis

How's that for confusing? There are differences in the shape of the column and the lip etc, etc, but it certainly shows that you can't choose which species is which from a picture of the inflorescence. At least two of the species above aren't even *Stenorrhynchos* any more. 'navarensis' is now '*Coccineorchis navarensis*', and as I explained earlier, 'lanceolatum' is now '*Sacoila lanceolata*'.

But, getting back to what the Best of the Evening plant might be, and please remember I am no taxonomist. I think the two best information sources are 1. "The Internet Orchid Species Photo Encyclopedia", a free website at www.orchidspecies.com/ and 2. the subscription database 'Orchidwiz'.

Ruling out species now regarded as part of other genera, the internet photo encyclopedia tells us that: "*There are 5 Stenorrhynchos species spread in all the tropics of the new world (ie the Americas). They are characterized by having thick roots, fine textured leaves that can develop before or after flowering, a long terminal inflorescence with many partly closed flowers. The sepals and the column foot form an obtuse mentum, the petals are attached to the dorsal sepal and the lip is concave. The column offers up two stigmas and a linear acute rostellum with 2 pollina.*"

The 5 species they list are :

Sten. millii – this is accepted by most experts as just a synonym for *Sten speciosum*, so I choose to rule that out as a name for my plant.

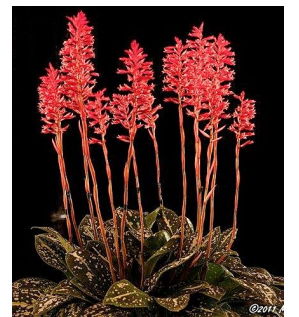
Sten. vaginatum – This is another species that seems to have no leaves at the time of flowering. In addition, its flowers are never red like the other 4. They are a sort of pinkish orange. The leaves are not mottled. I rule it out of further consideration.

Sten. albidomaculatum – There seems to be little information on this one. The internet photo encyclopedia just says : "*Found in Colombia and Venezuela as a medium sized, cold growing terrestrial that blooms in the fall on a terminal, erect, many flowered inflorescence.*" It doesn't give a flower size but explains that the name stems from the white spotted lip, petals and sepals.

Orchidwiz doesn't give a description or information but it contains judges descriptions from 4 American Orchid Society cultural awards and there is a picture of one awarded. The descriptions say that the leaves are deep green spotted or blotched with light green or one case white. The sepals are variously "red", "light red", or "coral" and in one case the dorsal had a white margin. The petals and lip are white but may have a pink stripe or flush.



Sten vaginatum



albidomaculatum Mello Spirit

Sten glicensteinii – The internet species photo encyclopedia says : "2cm flowers. Found in Veracruz and Chiapas states of Mexico and Costa Rica as a terrestrial.

Orchidwiz has a longer, independent description from orchid guru Charles Baker. In part he tells us that it is found in *Mexico and Central America including Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, generally around 1400m elevation but up to 2200m. A terrestrial plant with growths to about 19 cm tall, that emerge through a basal rosette of dark green petiolate leaves (ie having a basal leaf stem), from a cluster of thick roots. The flowers are red, while the lip is white with a red tip.*

Interestingly, I also found a good definition of this species on the website of the Species Identification Task Force. The plant and flower description match that of Charles Baker but they add the following interesting item :

"*Stenorrhynchos glicensteinii is immediately divorced from its relatives by its obligate epiphytic habit, shorter stature, unmarked leaves, densely-flowered club-shaped inflorescence, usually more vividly scarlet floral bracts and flowers, and by having a white lip with a consistently dark red apex.*" In a botanical glossary, I found, that the term "obligate epiphyte" means: a plant that consistently grows in aerial habitats and typically dies soon after falling to the ground. So clearly, this *Stenorrhynchos* is a genuine epiphyte, whereas nearly all others are terrestrial.

Sten. speciosum – From the internet photo encyclopedia we find : *flowers 1.8cm. A medium sized, cold growing terrestrial in seasonally dry forests or plains, in humus or on steep embankments or an occasional epiphyte found in French Guiana, Guyana, Surinam, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay and Argentina in moister areas of semi-deciduous forests at elevations of 1200 to 3000 meters. A spiral rosette of 6 to 12, petiolate, dark green and white variegated, persistent leaves. Blooms in the mid-fall and winter. Erect 20 - 90cm inflorescence, many (about 60) spirally arranged, long-lasting red flowers at the apex.*

Orchidwiz (Charles Baker) widens the range of countries to include Mexico, Cuba, West Indies, and Central America, which seems curious. More curious he also tells us that in Mexico and most of Central America they are found at much lower elevations (300m to 1000m), and that in Mexico : "*They usually grow on tree trunks, in tree crotches, and in holes in trees, but they are said to grow on rocks and the surface of the ground in thickets and open grasslands.*"

Summary - Mr Baker is a far more orchid knowledgeable person than myself, but personally, I can't help but wonder whether some of the information he draws on might come from reports of "*Stenorrhynchos speciosum*" that were really other species misidentified as *speciosum*.

I will never know where Mike Hynes plant came from originally. He used to import plants from all over the place, and it would have been quite a long time back. Perhaps far enough back to when even *Sacoila lanceolata* was regarded as *Stenorrhynchos speciosum*? I will never know. What I do know is that my mottle leafed *Stenorrhynchos* came from Ecuador. And one additional thing I notice about both plants, is that the leaves on the mottle leaf plants form a fairly flat rosette (leaves parallel to the ground), whereas the leaves on the plain green plant stand much more upright, standing up at 45 degrees or more to the ground.

Of the 3 potentially possible species names (*albidomaculatum*, *glicensteinii*, and *speciosum*) for the ex Mike Hynes plant, the descriptions seem to be consistent that the only one with dark green, petiolate, unmottled leaves, is *Sten. glicensteinii*. Both the other two always have mottled leaves.

As to those with mottled leaves, I am surprised at the poor information available on *albidomaculatum*. All we have is that they occur in the north west of Sth America, in Colombia and Venezuela. The only descriptions we have are the AOS cultural award descriptions, and for those to be valid as a species description, we must accept that the plants judged were validly named. The picture of the awarded plant shows a mottle leaf rosette that is clearly still present and healthy when the plant was in flower. It could easily be a *Sten. speciosum* from what we see, and without some more descriptive diagnosis from a qualified orchidist, I am unconvinced about the difference between the two mottled leaf species. It may finally be decided that they are separate species, but if so, I am guessing that they are more in the realm of variations of one or the other than they are close to *glicensteinii*. If the internet photo encyclopedia is right, then all the mottle leaf types come only from South America and no further north. If Charles Baker is right, all 3 species overlap in territory. Time will tell which is right.

Given the information currently available, I think my plain leaf species has to be *Sten. glicensteinii*. I have examined its flowers and all have the red tip lip that is supposed to be distinctive of *glicensteinii*, although the body of the lip on my plant could barely be described as white. Maybe white with a pale red flush? It's flower head is also distinctly club shaped, as described for *glicensteinii*, as opposed to the more vertical inflorescences of the mottle leaf types.

And, for those of you who would still like to get one for yourself, don't forget Ray Clements of Tinonee Orchids was selling seedlings of the plain leaf types at St Ives Fair for \$15. Why not get in touch. ---- Jim Brydie

Zygostates by **Jim Brydie**

Like most growers, when I first began growing orchids I was attracted by the stunning beauty of big flowers like the *Cymbidiums*, *Cattleyas*, and *Phalaenopsis*, but it wasn't long before the second wave of amazement struck me. How could so many staggeringly different plants and flowers all be orchids? I had to know more, and the more I found out, the deeper I was hooked.

Again "like most new growers", I started with plants given to me by more experienced growers, supplemented by whatever I found on sales tables at society meetings or shows. I killed many while I was learning, but don't we all? (Please say yes, I don't want to be alone)

Soon however, I was trolling nursery catalogs from all over the country.

Like a true ratbag orchid collector, I always seemed to be drawn to genus names I had never heard of, always wanting to try something new. It was a bit like the names of exotic places in travel catalogs. The unknown makes you think of things you have never seen, new places, different people, different ways, ... that treasure of "just over the horizon", ... and these orchids were for sale!

Zygostates grandiflora was one of those new names I came across long ago, and I decided to buy a seedling. It sounded rather nice. A small fan shaped orchid with lots of 2cm green and white flowers. I don't know why it in particular interested me. It was probably that it seemed rare at the time, was available, and I could buy it.

Until recently, the genus *Zygostates* was reported to comprise only 7 species, all from Brazil. However, the genus is one of those groups that has been in debate for some time. Species have been moved back and forth between *Zygostates* and a closely related genus called *Dipteranthus*, and also occasionally with *Ornithocephalus*.

At present, Jay Pfahl's "Internet Orchid Species Photo Encyclopedia" tells us that all the *Dipteranthus* species have now been folded into *Zygostates*, making it a larger group of perhaps 24 species. These are mostly from Brazil, but some are from wider parts of South America. By the way, the Internet Orchid Species Photo Encyclopedia is a great free website detailing thousands upon thousands of species, and with pictures too. (<http://www.orchidspecies.com/>)

Zygostates grandiflora has been regularly available on and off at Australian nurseries over the years, but is the only *Zygostates* I have ever seen sold or traded here. Right now (2015) it is available from Dark Star Orchids in NSW as mounted advanced seedlings for \$20. *Grandiflora* is arguably one of the most attractive of the genus so perhaps its popularity within the genus shouldn't be a surprise.



Z. grandiflora (close up)

Z. grandiflora is an epiphyte found in the coastal Brazilian states of Rio De Janeiro, and Espirito Santo (which is just north of Rio). It occurs from sea level to 1000m. The plant format is an open fan of light green, medium thickness leaves that hide a small pseudobulb in the middle. Overall, the plant is about 12 to 14cm tall so it is a miniature but not tiny. Old growths remain leafy on the plant for years so that it eventually makes a nice clump of leafy fans. The arching 20cm inflorescence can carry up to 30 flowers, arranged all around the stem but standing clear of it. The flower is non-resupinate (lip uppermost) and the flowers don't open widely. The white petals project forward either side of the column, and the green sepals fold back, so the white parts of the flower are dominant. The natural spread of the flower is roughly 1cm wide x 1.8cm tall. The description might not sound overly attractive but I assure you, the plant in flower is one of the cutest, prettiest little orchids I have grown.

Z. grandiflora nearly always seems to come mounted. Both my plants were purchased that way. I think I must have bought my first plant about 30 years ago, and while I was learning, it grew slowly and only flowered occasionally. Eventually however, as my culture improved, so did the plant's growth and flowers. About 5 years ago, it was flowering rather nicely and I decided to bench it in my local Species Orchid Society annual show. For ease of transport and display, I sat the plant and its cork mount in a 100mm squat pot with about 5cm of sphagnum moss packed around the mount to hold it upright and to show it off. I know you are wondering if it won anything but I'm afraid I can't tell you. If it won anything it would only have been a first or second in its class but the point I am trying to make is that after the show I took it home and just hung up the whole thing, pot, sphag, mount, and all. The next time I noticed it, 6 months later, it looked better than it had ever looked so I just left it as it was. If it ain't broke, don't fix it. In fact, for several more years, I just left it alone and it just grew and grew.

More recently I took it completely off the old mount and potted it into an open mix of sphag, crumbled styrene foam, and jumbo perlite, and it seems to be growing really well. The pot hangs about 1.5 meters off the ground in my polycarbonate roofed shadehouse. It gets good light, good air, and wouldn't stay too wet too long. It has never shown any negative effects from the winter temperatures where I live, including exposure to 0°C for short periods overnight. Last year it had 6 spikes covered in flowers, and I think this is one of the most delightful miniatures in my collection.

But what of all those other *Zygostates* species? I am mystified that we never see them here. From the internet it is clear that all over the world many of them are grown. Surely there must be a few in collections in Australia?

From all the photos on the internet, perhaps the next most grown species is *Zygostates lunata*. This is also a Brazilian epiphyte, from moderate elevations in wet montane forests where there would be mist and dew nearly every night. The flowers are smaller than *grandiflora* but as they open more, the natural spread is also nearly 1cm. The green and yellow lip dominates the display and there are up to 30 flowers on a 12-15cm inflorescence.



Zygostates lunata

From the additional pictures below, quite a few of the other species look rather nice as well. I wonder if we will ever see them in our catalogs or sales tables in Australia? Surely they will come, but maybe not for some time. In the meantime, you know where to get a *Z. grandiflora* to try.



Z. alleniana



Z. dasyrhiza



Z. densiflora



Z. pustulata



Z. apiculata



Z. obliqua



Z. pellucida

Acknowledgements : the Internet Orchid Species Photo Encyclopedia, the Orchidwiz database, internet pictures