

# Rockhampton Orchid Society Inc.



[www.rockhamptonorchidsociety.com.au](http://www.rockhamptonorchidsociety.com.au)

Newsletter-July 2020

P O Box 5949

Red Hill Rockhampton 4701

Founded 1955

## Editors notes

Well we are now in the 7<sup>th</sup> month of 2020 and Corona Virus (COVID19) is still impacting our lives and social activities. At the time of writing these notes Victoria is in the midst of large outbreaks with suburbs shut down and residents required to wear masks, NSW is experiencing growing numbers and QLD borders are closed to all travelers from VIC. What concerning and trying times we are experiencing.

At least with more "at home time" our greenhouses and gardens should be benefiting from extra activities. I must admit I have saved hundreds by not attending shows and purchasing new plants for my collection.

I have had a busy life since the last newsletter, Scott, my youngest son, who most would know, was diagnosed with a severe infection in his body on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June. Originally they thought it was in his spine as he could not walk, but after further investigation and ECGs they found a failed Aortic Valve. He was put on a Royal Flying Doctor plane and flown to Prince Charles Hospital Brisbane late on the 19<sup>th</sup> June and early on 20<sup>th</sup> June they installed a mechanical valve, after spending a few days in hospital he was flown back to Rockhampton Hospital on 25<sup>th</sup> June for recovery. I flew down to Brisbane arriving on 20<sup>th</sup> June and flew back on 27<sup>th</sup> June. After a few days he was feeling very unwell and was flown back to Brisbane where he went into theatre on arrival and they drained over 700ml of fluid from around his heart. He stayed a few more days and then was flown back to Rockhampton Hospital and was released on 8<sup>th</sup> July, but on 11<sup>th</sup> July he was admitted into Prince Charles Hospital and flew back on 14<sup>th</sup> July. Late last week he had another overnight stay at Rockhampton Hospital due to chest pain again. It has been very stressful times. While in Brisbane I caught up with Ken and Rosie Smith in the Prince Charles Hospital as Ken recovered from Bypass Surgery and I am sure all will wish him a speedy and complete recovery.

At our recent committee meeting it was decided to cancel our August General Meetings as the majority of our members are in the "at risk age group". It will be decided at our next committee meeting if we shall proceed with our September Meeting. Our September Show remains cancelled. At this stage we are still looking at organising a social trip in September/October before summer sets in again. Our Christmas Dinner and Awards evening is still proceeding at this stage.

We still have a lot of outstanding memberships, and I will display the list following in the newsletter. 2020 memberships that are paid by the end of August will be eligible for the Christmas Dinner subsidy, anyone who pays after August will not be eligible for this subsidy. We have continued to send out newsletters to unfinancial members understanding that it is the only club interaction at the moment, but if you no longer wish to remain a member please advise. After August no newsletters will be sent to unfinancial members.

In this newsletter Jeff Glover has submitted an informative article on *Rhynchostylis gigantea* and we thank him for his informative article.

**The closing date for articles to be included in the next newsletter are to be received by the 5<sup>th</sup> September 2020; articles received after that date will be included in the following month.     *Editor.***

Rockhampton Orchid Society - Orchid Store

Property Officers - Faye & Barry English  
110 Murray Street Rockhampton 4700

PHONE 4922 2637  
Email - englishf@aapt.net.au  
Closed Thursdays & Daily 12pm to 2pm

LARGE RANGE OF ORCHID SUPPLIES  
FOR ROSI MEMBERS ONLY

SALES BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

## R.O.S.I MEETING DATES 2020

<u>January</u>	General Meeting Tuesday 28 <sup>th</sup>
<u>February</u>	AGM & Gen.Meeting Tuesday 25 <sup>th</sup> Growers Group Saturday 29 <sup>th</sup>
<u>March</u>	CANCELLED
<u>April</u>	CANCELLED
<u>May</u>	CANCELLED
<u>June</u>	CANCELLED
<u>July</u>	CANCELLED
<u>August</u>	CANCELLED
<u>September</u> TBC	General Meeting Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> Growers Group 3 <sup>rd</sup> October.
<u>October</u>	General Meeting Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> Growers Group Saturday 31 <sup>st</sup>
<u>November</u>	General Meeting Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> Growers Group BBQ <u>To be confirmed</u>

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**Raffle Plant Caretaker:** Terry Dean

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## UPDATE ON ZOE KIDMAN

Zoe is now a resident of the Benevolent Aged Care Home  
at 60 West Street Rockhampton. Phone 4922 2033.

For anyone wishing to visit her you must have a current Influenza  
Vaccination Certificate prior to attending.

## UNFINANCIAL MEMBERS LIST

Understanding most members would pay their yearly membership at meetings or grower's group which because of COVID19 have not been held, but payments can either be direct transferred or personally deposited into our Club Account at My State Bank, either at Stockland Rockhampton or the branch at Bolsover Street. Our bank account details are:-

**BSB 807 009 ACCOUNT 100516491 NAME OF ACC. – R'TON ORCHID SOCIETY INC.**

I still have a bank deposit from February who I don't know who it is for:-18 February Cash Deposit \$30.

#2 - Alexander	#63 - Anderson	#116 - Barker
#74 - Black	#68 - Chopping	#111 - Dahler
#106 – Dawson/Fry	#58 - Dickenson	#98 – Gibson/Veinotte
#93 - Henderson	#32 - Henney	#90 - Hopes
#57 - Howes	#64 - Ledwy	# 24 - Lowrey
#78 - Lyons	#55 – Magee/Jones	#18 - March
#76 - McCabe	#105 McCartney	#53 - Niven
#81 - Perfect	#102 - Powell	#89 - Price
#104 - Price	#5 - Roberts	#79 Roberts
#108 - Rogers	#10 - Welch	#54 - Warner
#11 - Tjerkstra	#16 – White/Bertrand	#44 - Zierk

### Rhynchostylis gigantea

by Jeff Glover

It would be fair to say that in Australia, especially in Queensland and of course in the countries of SE Asia where it is endemic such as, Thailand, Myanmar, Malaysia, Cambodia and Vietnam; *Rhyn. gigantea* is an iconic orchid.



It can be found in many Central Queensland collections regardless of the timespan the grower has spent with the hobby and appears to have an enduring appeal. It seems to be one of those orchids that becomes among the first orchids purchased by many collectors. Once the floral display is initially witnessed it generally becomes a 'must have' item. Indeed, it was one of my first orchid purchases when I started collecting in the early 1980's. This desirous appeal appears to be in despite of its habit of only flowering once a year and usually over a short period of six weeks or so during Winter.

Individual flowers last up to 4 weeks with the first on the raceme most likely starting to wilt as those at the end of the stem start to open; depending on temperature and light conditions at the time of blooming.

For those fortunate to have a specimen plant; as they take many years to develop, the sight of multiple flowering racemes out at once is truly a highlight of any collection's yearly flowering cycle. The habit of growing plantlets (pups) ensures specimen plants become very large if they are not removed and grown as individual plants. This is an indicator of how the orchid received its name, 'Gigantea', the giant *Rhynchostylis* as it is known in Thailand.



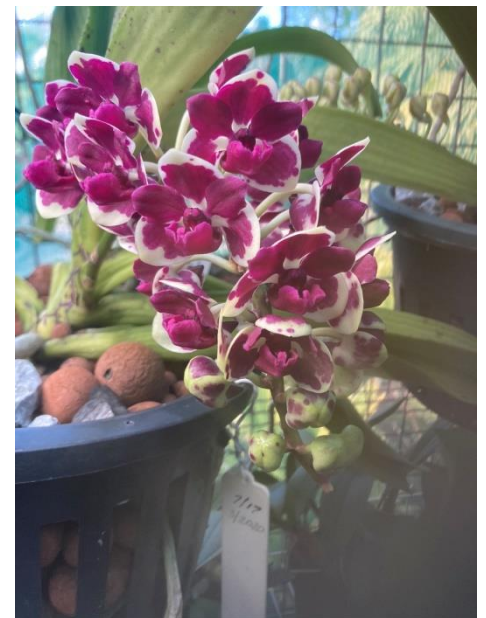
Solitary plants consist of large fleshy leaves emanating from a single stem in the standard monopodial growth habit consistent with all orchids that are members of the Vandaceous Family. These leaves are quite thick and store all the energy needed to produce the yearly blooms. Usually two to four leaves are a typical yearly growth outcome depending on how 'tropical' the climate is in the growing location. The racemes come from above the leaf axils and once bloomed, the leaves can take up two years to yellow and defoliate from the stem. New roots then appear from the remaining growth points which did not produce racemes. These roots are very thick and 'rambling' in comparison to other orchids and can become up to a metre or more in length which necessitates the need for basket or large hanging-pot culture. This process is quite slow and unfortunately can leave many plants with the 'palm tree look', and hence many growers do not remove plantlets, which when grown-on, cover the bare main stem to avoid this appearance. I remember witnessing many huge specimen plants at the 2015 Taiwan International Orchid Show; where one in particular was referred to as the 'Gigantea Tree'.



There is many cultivars, forms and varieties of *Rhy. gigantea* grown by collectors. Colours range from the typical white with pink magenta spots and fuchsia-pink forms to those in white with red maroon spots, orange-peachy tones, deep pink-fuchsia combinations, and a pure white or alba form. Most of the mericlones seen for sale today such as, 'Cartoon', 'Orange' and 'Chang Red' are cultivars which have been man-made (Line -Bred) then mericloned and as such, are not true varieties or forms despite them often being labelled in this manner.

Some of the more common natural forms are 'alba', 'flava' and 'rubra'. *Rhyn. gigantea* has been widely used in breeding with Orchidwiz

Ver.6, registering 172 first generation progeny. Some famous and sought-after hybrids have resulted, such as, *Rhyn. Kultana* (*Rhyn. Chorchalood* x *Rhyn. gigantea*) and *Vandachostylis Colmarie* (*Van. Sri-Siam* x *Rhyn. Chorchalood*).



When considering plant culture, it is obvious from its natural endemicity that this is a tropical orchid and the provision of as close as the grower can provide to these conditions will see the best outcomes. It is a heavier feeder during its growing phase from spring through to early autumn and fertilizer should be applied each week. Watering should also be increased and in the height of summer these plants can be watered each day; the more humidity the better. Pest and diseases are few and far between when compared with other genera. However, I have found that they are prone to scale and the undersides of the leaves should also be checked for this pest, with appropriate treatment being taken by applications of white oil or pest oil. If the infection is only slight or on only a few plants a soft toothbrush can be used for their removal. With fungal infections I have had success with 'surgery', as the leaves are so big and take so long to develop you really don't want to remove them, so cutting out the infected portion is often a better option. Mix some fungicide such as Mancozeb into a paste and apply it to the incised border to seal against further infections.

As mentioned previously, plants can take on a 'palm tree appearance' often as the leaves die the older roots die also. 'Top Cutting' is a very successful method of repotting as often the plant has naturally discarded its lower portion. So, cutting away this section which usually has old roots entwined in decaying potting matter ensconced in the basket gives the plant a new start so to speak. Plants that seem to have stagnated in this manner appear to 'bound away' in a new basket and potting mix. Baskets containing open large medium such as bark nuggets, limestone rocks and large charcoal pieces are the best potting material. Also, of late the availability of clay balls as used in aquaculture has proved to be a good potting material to include in a mix for *Ryn. gigantea*.



Overall, if you don't have one of these in your collection it might be time to consider it as an addition, as it grows very well in Central Queensland. Within our society there are many members who collect this orchid and there are some with extensive collections. The two nurseries that come to our Shows stock these plants as well as do other

Queensland based growers. It is also often available through sales by other members.

**Give it a go you won't be disappointed.**

**ROSI President, Jeff Bloxson admires his extensive**

***Rhyn. gigantea* collection**



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## **Your 2020 ROSI Orchid Diary**

BELOW CALENDAR COULD HAVE  
CANCELLATIONS OF SHOWS

7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> August – Maroochydore Orchid Show  
8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> August – Agnes Water O&FS Show  
4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> September – Childers & IDOS Show  
4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> September – Nambour Orchid Show  
17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> September – Maryborough Orchid Show  
18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> September – Noosa DO&FS Show  
25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> September – Glasshouse Country OS  
25<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> September – Hervey Bay Orchid Show  
9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> October – Bribie Island Orchid Show  
14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> October – Cabollature Orchid Mini Show  
23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> October – Nambour Species Orchid Show  
14<sup>th</sup> November – STOCQ Meeting hosted by SBO

**SATURDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER**

**ROSI CHRISTMAS DINNER & AWARDS EVENING  
FRENCHVILLE SPORTS CLUB**

### **Rockhampton Orchid Society Inc.**

[www.rockhamptonorchidsociety.com.au](http://www.rockhamptonorchidsociety.com.au)

Meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of each month (excluding December) at Calvary Lutheran Church Hall, Burnett Street, Nth. Rockhampton. Meetings commence at 7.30pm and plants must be tabled by 7.15pm

#### **Disclaimer**

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