

Rockhampton Orchid Society Inc.



www.rockhamptonorchidsociety.com.au

Newsletter-May 2020

P O Box 5949

Red Hill Rockhampton 4701

Founded 1955

Editors notes

Hello all, well May is upon us and the Corona Virus is still having a major impact on our lives. At this stage our General Meetings and Grower Groups are still suspended. The Management committee will make a decision if we recommence our General Meetings in June but this will be dependent on what restrictions are in place for that period, the June newsletter will advise what we will be doing.

Barry and Faye English have advised that the Orchid Supplies Store is again operational, **BUT BY APPOINTMENT ONLY**. You must ring and arrange a time to call. They do not want multiple people there at the same time. So please be respectful of this requirement, otherwise it may shut again.

I am guessing you all are like me that have lovely orchids flowering but unable to show them off. For those on Facebook you might like to send photos to ROCKHAMPTON ORCHID SOCIETY page or ORCHID LOVERS CENTRAL QUEENSLAND group and we will put up the photos for all to enjoy.

Memberships are now due. I have two bank deposits from February who I don't know who they are for:- 18 February Cash Deposit \$30 and 20 February Transfer which only says Membership 2020 \$30 If one of these is yours please advise Sandra so the membership records can be updated.

Mother's Day this year was very different for most families, with my 90 year old mother living in Gladstone due to the 50km travel radius I was unable to visit her. But I was fortunate to have my oldest son and his family now living with me, and my youngest son still living in Rockhampton so this year I am very blessed. I am sure other members will also experience this with either not being able to visit their mothers or not having their families visit. *"I hope everyone had a Happy and Healthy Mother's Day."*



Notice to Members - please assist with cleaning the hall after the meeting
The closing date for articles to be included in the next newsletter are to be received by the 5th June 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 th
<u>February</u>	AGM & Gen.Meeting Tuesday 25 th Growers Group Saturday 29 th
<u>March</u>	CANCELLED
<u>April</u>	CANCELLED
<u>May</u>	CANCELLED
<u>June</u>	General Meeting Tuesday 23 rd Growers Group Saturday 27 th
<u>July</u>	General Meeting Tuesday 28 th Growers Group Saturday 1 st Aug.
<u>August</u>	General Meeting 25 th Growers Group Saturday 29 th
<u>September</u>	General Meeting Tuesday 22 nd Growers Group 3 rd October.
<u>October</u>	General Meeting Tuesday 27 th Growers Group Saturday 31 st
<u>November</u>	General Meeting Tuesday 24 th Growers Group BBQ <u>To be confirmed</u>

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BEST WISHES TO ZOE KIDMAN



Some members will be aware that Zoe Kidman suffered a stroke a few weeks ago. She is still in hospital and will be receiving rehabilitation until the end of May at this stage. As she is unable to individually thank everyone who has sent her best wishes she has asked me to thank everyone on her behalf.

We all wish Zoe a full and quick recovery.

Below is an article previously included in a 2016 Newsletter, as it is great advise for new growers I felt it appropriate to include in this newsletter.

SUGGESTED TIPS FOR NEW GROWERS

1. If you purchase a plant anywhere other than reputable nurseries ensure they are disease and pest free. Scale, mites and other nasties are visible so you can offload them; it's what's in the mix that you can't see that can present an ongoing problem in your bush house. A bucket of insecticide in which you can dunk your pot will bring most to the squashable surface. Don't however be too heavy handed with the dunk or you will float out a lot of loose mix. (Wear protective gloves) Isolation from your established plants is a good idea until you are absolutely sure the nasties (if any) have all departed.
2. When you bring "new" plants, to keep your watering regime on a level scale, they need to be repotted into your standard mix, which of course can differ with different genera. Repot when your plant is in active growth, which can be any time of the year with hybrids and a specific time with species.
3. In your bush house; have a bin (with a lid) so all the fallen leaves and spent flowers, along with their stems, which you always cut off with sterile cutters can be placed daily.
4. A plant dies in the pot – get it out of the bush house! It may have died from a disease you have missed in your daily rounds. If you have a plant on the suss side, take it out and have it checked by the advanced growers at your next growers meeting, or let it take its chances outside.
5. After you discard the dead, diseased or dying plants NEVER reuse the medium, sterilise the pot with a strong bleach mixture before reusing. Old mixes of bark or sphagnum are great used on your garden beds as a mulch or even dug in.
6. On inspecting your plants daily, if one is loose in the pot – stake it so it is firm, loose plants (of any genera) never flourish as they can't make a stable root system. Crooked plants don't bench well so ensure you have them staked firm and straight with room for forward growth.
7. Nobody can tell you when to water. Your bush house has its own distinctive microclimate. This is perhaps the hardest thing to learn (if one ever does). No two seasons are the same so you must study your plants. There can be two reasons for problems – Dehydration- under watered or Drowned - over watered. If you think you are over watering knock one out of its pot you will find some of the roots in the centre of the pot, black and going rotten, consequently they are not getting any sustenance to transfer to the plant. Under watered you will find the roots, dry, flaccid and lifeless.

Hymn.

PEST CONTROL

At this time of the year when some growers wrap their greenhouse to protect against the southerly/westerly winds, pests tend to thrive in this environment where there is less airflow. Some of the most destructive pests are thrips and mealy bugs which cause damage to flowers, buds and leaves. These pests suck the goodness out of the plants.

THRIPS (thysanoptera)

There are many species of thrips that feed on plants, in Australia there are 35 varieties. Thrips are common on many genera of orchids – Vandas, Dendrobiums, Cattleyas, Phalaenopsis to name a few. Because they are quite small they are difficult to see with the naked eye, especially if they are on darker coloured flowers. They are much more easily detected after the damage is apparent. On infected flowers a dry brown outer rim to petals are evident if they have been infested (photo below). They most often attack buds and new growths sucking out the plant sap, in my Phallys the damage caused to buds is apparent when the deformed flowers open.



Thrips feed in buds and flowers by using their mouthparts to pierce the surface of the plant tissues and suck up juices from leaves, stems and flowers. Blooms may become prematurely brown, and their petals spotted, streaked, silvery or discoloured. Damage to leaves appears as chlorotic spots, wilting and eventually dropping. Plant growth can be stunted, and a severe thrips infestation will kill an orchid. If you suspect that thrips are present, gently blow into an open flower and watch for the

insects crawling around inside the blossom. Because of their method of feeding and ability to travel from plant to plant, thrips, like aphids, may introduce and spread virus through an orchid collection.

The adults of thrips are brown or black. The winged adults (males and females) are found mainly on flowers and developing growths. Females deposit their eggs beneath the surface of the plant tissue. Often the only visible evidence of this is the callus tissue formed by the orchid in response to the wound. The nymphal (immature) stages are creamy yellow to pale orange and resemble adults without any wings. The nymphs feed on the tender young plant growths, and then drop to the medium to pupate. The pupae are a darker orange colour than the nymphs. As they are generally below the surface of the medium, they are unlikely to be spotted and more difficult to control with pesticides. When they emerge as winged adults, they fly back up to the plant to feed, lay eggs and begin the cycle once again. Each female is capable of producing 25 to 50 eggs at a time, and many species reproduce at a rate of three to five generations per year. Their reproduction rate is more rapid in warmer temperatures, making thrips a more difficult pest to control in this area.

Thrips are among the more difficult insect pests to prevent and control, but some measures that help include covering all vents and doorways with insect-proof netting, segregation of infested plants and disposal of all affected loose plant material, and overall good general sanitation and/or removal of all weeds and plant debris from the growing area



The life cycle places their eggs and pupal stages fairly well out of the reach of most pesticides. Therefore, multiple applications of the chosen control method or pesticide at weekly intervals are needed to control successive generations of these pests. As with many unwanted insects, monthly rotation of control measures is also recommended, especially when using chemical pesticides. Alternating between at least two different chemicals helps to avoid raising resistance to control measures in the insect pest.

Insecticides such as insecticidal soap, Mallet, Success, Confidor are all recommended for use on thrips, and are listed as safe for use on orchids as well, although when spraying on flowers Success is

kinder than Mallet and Confidor to the flowers.

MEALY BUGS



Mealybugs are serious pests of orchids and next to scale insects are probably the most difficult to control pests of orchids in greenhouses. Most definitely, they need to be dealt with immediately upon discovery. The damage done to plants by mealybugs is considerable, causing a loss of vigor and a weakening and loss of leaves, buds, and flowers through their feeding. In addition, mealybugs create copious amounts of honeydew which make plant parts sticky, attracts ants, and provides a substrate for sooty mould. Though some mealybugs vector plant viruses apparently no orchid viruses are known to be transmitted by these insects. Mealybugs are not particular about their host and probably all species of orchids are susceptible to mealybugs, especially when cultivated. Mealybugs are classified in the family Pseudococcidae, and are closely related to the scale insects. In fact, mealybugs can

be thought of as a kind of soft scale that does not form the protective cover that most scales produce for protection.

The pest species are in the genera *Pseudococcus*, *Planococcus*, *Phenacoccus*, and *Dysmicoccus*. Immature to adult mealybugs may measure 0.5-8.0 mm in body length. All of the known orchid feeding species are coated with a waxy secretion that hides the body of these insects. The more common species of these odd insects that infest orchids are immediately recognised in the adult stage by the white, yellowish-white, whitish-grey, or pale pink to pale blue in color coating. The body is oval and the sides of the body have short waxy filaments and there may be 2-4 short to long filaments on the posterior end of the body. These filaments sometimes give the impression of numerous legs.

Mealybugs can be found on all plant parts, but especially roots, rhizomes, pseudobulbs, and the underside of





leaves. They are adept at hiding on roots and rhizomes deep in the potting media, in crevices and under sheaths. Unlike scales, mealybugs wander in search of feeding places and will leave plants, be sure to check for them in cracks and in joints on benches, under lips of pots and trays, and other hiding places. The immatures are small, and white to yellowish or pale pink. Hatchling nymphs, or crawlers, are not easily seen without a magnifier and hide under cover, but older nymphs

appear like diminutive adults. Orchids become infested with mealybugs in some combination of three methods: purchase of an infested plant, movement from infested to un-infested plants that are in contact with each other, and windblown colonization. Mealybugs are active and will crawl from one plant to another, pot to pot, and across benches. Mealybugs will leave plants and hide under rims of pots and trays, in bench crevices, and even drop from overhead plants. Spread of crawlers can occur both indoors and outdoors by floating on breezes or air currents produced by circulating and heater fans. The occurrence of infestation hotspots may be due to crawlers settling on plants where the air currents are the weakest. Similar effects are found with aphids, scales, and spider mites.



Mealybugs have a three-stage life history: egg, larva (nymph or crawler), and adult. Eggs are laid within a waxy coated egg sac produced by the female. The eggs hatch after about 10 days into the mobile nymphs, the crawlers, that appear as diminutive adults. The crawlers are the most active stage that can move between plants and will develop through several growth periods before becoming adults. Adults of most species are also active. Thus, unlike scales where the crawler finds a suitable site for feeding and remains fixed, mealybugs will move about to find feeding sites. However, the most common pest species is the long-tailed mealybug and it is



parthenogenetic; no males are known of this species.

Male mealybugs do little feeding and only in their youngest crawler stages. Mature males are small (1.5-2.5 mm) winged creatures whose primary function is to mate, and then die. Females and immatures do not fly, but they will crawl off of the plant and migrate throughout a growing area.

In a warm greenhouse or indoors there may be upwards of 8 overlapping generations per year.

In greenhouses mealybug management is difficult because of their propensity to move into the potting medium and feed on roots, or for the crawlers to work their way into tight places. Repeated application of any treatment is required to kill the immatures, and treatments are at their greatest effectiveness against the small crawlers. Hand removal is effective only for the obvious adults and larger nymphs. All control efforts must begin immediately following discovery. Even light infestations restricted to one or a few plants can



explode rapidly and necessitate chemical methods. When possible, immediately isolate infested plants from others to prevent the mealybugs from moving amongst them. Also, check the lips and cracks of pots, trays, and benches because females will wander and leave the plant to find hiding places. If plants other than orchids are grown, check those also as they may be a source of infestation.

Because the life cycle of mealybugs can be so short combined with the overlapping of generations, you will need to do a treatment every 10-14 days in order to bring a serious problem under control. Because mealybugs are such a problem there are few effective "home remedies" available. To deal with an established infestation, the use of an insecticide will likely be necessary. Be aware that non-insecticidal treatments are often not very effective for elimination of mealybugs without diligent application and follow-up treatments.

Persistent populations of mealybugs or infestation in many plants may demand the need for use of synthetic insecticides. Of course, always follow label directions and never exceed the minimum recommended concentration given in mixing directions! Recommended solutions are based on extensive testing for selected pests and plants. Orchids are tough plants, but are sensitive to many chemicals, particularly under direct sunlight or high heat, and while certain species may not react to a given formulation others may, so testing is justifiable.



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Rockhampton Orchid Society Inc

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Red Hill Rockhampton
Queensland. 4701

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Your 2020 ROSI Orchid Diary

**BELOW CALENDAR HAS CANCELLATIONS OF
SHOWS UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

6th June – STOCQ Meeting hosted by CIDOS
24th to 26th July – Caboolture Orchid Show
7th & 8th August – Maroochydore Orchid Show
8th & 9th August – Agnes Water O&FS Show
4th & 5th September – Childers & IDOS Show
4th & 5th September – Nambour Orchid Show
17th to 19th September – Maryborough Orchid Show
18th & 19th September – Noosa DO&FS Show
26th & 27th September – Rockhampton Orchid Show
25th & 26th September – Glasshouse Country OS
25th & 27th September – Hervey Bay Orchid Show
9th & 10th October – Bribie Island Orchid Show
14th to 17th October – Caboolture Orchid Mini Show
23rd & 24th October – Nambour Species Orchid Show
14th November – STOCQ Meeting hosted by SBO

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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

Rockhampton Orchid society Inc. disclaims all responsibility for any losses or damage, which may attributed to the use or misuse of any material published in this Newsletter

SATURDAY 5TH DECEMBER
ROSI CHRISTMAS DINNER & AWARDS EVENING
FRENCHVILLE SPORTS CLUB