

## MIRIAM ANN ORCHIDS NEWSLETTER ALAN'S COLUMN MARCH –APRIL 2011

Greetings fellow orchid growers! Hope all of our plants are growing well. It is marvelous how headlines in newspapers, magazines etc will often make you look twice to see what it was all about.

A few weeks ago I received the Manawatu Orchid Society Inc. newsletter. As newsletters arrive all the time I usually glance at them and read them later on. When I glanced at the cover page it had, "I only grow plants that don't need VIAGRA. With a title like that I read the continuing story of what it was all about. It was going to be the title of the talk at their next meeting to be given by Mr Ray Walker. I would imagine the Society will have a good roll up at their next meeting to see what it was all about.

### 19<sup>th</sup> AOC Orchid Conference

Now is the time to start thinking about attending the 19<sup>th</sup> Conference. This will be held in Perth from the 11<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> September 2012 at Burswood Convention Centre. The centre is only 15 minutes from Perth C.B.D.

Perth is renowned for its native orchids which will be in full bloom in the famous Kings Park. So now is the time to start planning your annual holidays to coincide with this Conference. I know I am thinking about it – how about you?

For further information regarding the conference, contact Merle ARRAH on [aocconference@dodo.com.au](mailto:aocconference@dodo.com.au) For news as it comes to hand.

### Broome Orchid Club

Those growers in the southern states who will be travelling over to the west during winter, keep in mind there is a friendly orchid club in Broome. They hold their meetings at Broome Circle House at 10am on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month. For further particulars contact the Secretary Helen Macarthur on 08 9192 1427.

### Old Time Favourites

Way back in 1966 Paul Gripp of Santa Barbara Orchids made out a list of ten old time cymbidium ones you should have! Finding these plants today would be very difficult. As there is a following of growers these days who collect old time plants. I will reprint the list here.  
DORCHESTER 'ALPHA' – ESMERALDA – GIRRAHWEEN 'ENID' – LUCY 'GOLDCREST' – OLYMPUS 'ALBENS' – QUEEN MARY – JANETTE 'A. McBEAN' – JUNGFRAU 'SNOW QUEEN' – RIO RITS 'RADIANT' – SWALLOW 'EXBURY'!

How many of these do you have? I have a lonely two!. Let us know of what other "OLD TIMER" you would like to see on Paul's list.

After all the rain (down the east coast) we then had temperatures in the forties! Many growers in the Sydney area while others up north are experiencing bulb rot in many genera. Heat problems first. Cut out the dead leaves off just below the burn with your secateurs dipped in bleach or MERRI KLEEN. Dip before moving onto another plant. Then spray plants with a good protective fungicide such as CAPTAN® - THIRAM® or MANCOZEB. Spray twice 14 days apart. If you are experiencing bulb or root rots you will need to treat the plant plus pot to control invasive fungi. If you are troubled by one of the rots you can drench your plants with one of the phosphites such as AGRIFOS 600®. Remember, phosphite is both a systemic fungicide and a fertiliser. It will help control *phytophthora palmivora* in orchids. *Phythium* can also be controlled. It has been said that AGRIFOS 600® can also help in the control of *Erwinia spp.* (paph and phal plants). The rate for AGRIFOS 600 is 1.7ml per litre of water.

Cymbidiums should be only watered when needed. Keep plants just moist. Water in the evenings during March. Fertilise weekly with a low nitrogen content high K, such as MERRI FERT, CAMPBELLS "YELLOW" or PETERS "GROWTH" or "BLOSSOM BOOSTER". If the weather remains hot, a couple of applications of magnesium sulphate at 1.25g per litre of water. Apply

on its own. Check collection for two spotted mites. If mites are giving you nightmares, try integrated pest management. This the use of Predatory mites. I found while working at Cecil Park Orchids when the CSIRO were doing their trials – the use of Typhlodromus occidentalis worked very well for us. He also remained in the nursery for many years! Phytosciulus persimilis established itself quicker, but disappeared when the food ran out! So why not give them a try!

Where can you get them??

BUGS for BUGS – 28 Orton Street, Mundubbera Qld, 4626 Phone 07 7165 4663.

HAWKESBURY INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT SERVICE P.O. Box 436 Bourke St, Richmond NSW 2753 Phone 02 45601331.

BIOLOGICAL SERVICES P.O. Box 501 Loxton S.A 5333 Phone 08 8584 6977.

For chemical controls see last newsletter.

CATTLEYAS: are still growing well. Repot if necessary. Look for scale, if present use ANTI SCALE® keep plants just moist. Depending where you live, water every 3 or 4 days– either early morning or late afternoon.

Fertilise weekly with GROWTH BLOOD AND BONE®.

AUSTRALIAN NATIVES new growths are still growing well. The growths on our speciosum are certainly growing well this year. Apply a fungicide every 21 days if the weather is bad. Watch for dendrobe beetles. ECO-NEEM seems to kill them. One reader advises using CONFIDOR® at a modified rate. Watch out for the little native borer. Loopers are also around. During hot weather water every third day.

PHALAENOPSIS are growing well. Water every third day. Look for mealy bug. Spray with ECO-NEEM® every ten days till plants are clean. Watch for bacterial spot. Spot spray with HY-KLEEN® During March you can start to repot. Fertilise weekly with CAMPBELLS "YELLOW" – PETERS GENERAL PURPOSE or MERRI FERT. On hot days, keep the humidity up – around 70%.R.H Repot if necessary, don't forget to read the good articles on Phalaenopsis in recent issues of the Australian Orchid Review. It is now available at most Newsagents.

HARD CANE DENDROBIUMS are now in full growth, getting ready to send up their autumn winter spikes. Keep plants just damp. Fertilise weekly with a good organic, but be ready to change over to a high K fertiliser at the beginning of April. Watch for loopers. If present pray with DIPEL®. Give plenty of light once the weather starts to cool down.

MISCELLANEOUS plants may be divided and or repotted once the weather starts to cool down water in the afternoon until the equinox. Watch for mealy bug – grasshoppers etc. Spray with ROGOR 40 or ECO-NEEM®. During March spray a good fungicide such as MANCOZEB or CAPTAN®.

## **Tech Talk**

Over the years I have often spoken of a fungicide called THIRAM (T.M.T.D.). So below are a few notes about this fungicide. It is a dithiocarbamate fungicide that was released to the agricultural industry in 1934. It is mainly used as a foliar protective fungicide. It is compatible with most agro chemicals. It is harmless to plants at rate concentrations and is of low toxicity to warm blooded animals, except chooks, for it has been used as a bird repellent. It has also been used in market gardens to keep for legged animals away (rabbits – deer etc.) It has a L.D.50 of 1000 oral and over 500 dermal. The usual rate for ornamentals is 150g per 100L (1.5g per litre of water).

## **Miriam's One Stop Shop**

All your potting needs now in stock. Cymbidiums mix DEBCO medium and coarse bark ready to use. Sphagnum moss in handy packs. Many types of fertilisers including BIOMIN CALCIUM. Hormones for plant growth ORCHID MATE in most grades. PORT POTS etc. A range of plants always available.

PLEASE NOTE: TINONEE ORCHIDS carry a range of our fertilisers. So if you live up north give Ray a ring for your favourite fertiliser. Tinonee always have our MERRI FERT and MERRI COTE in stock.

For anyone travelling down the South Coast of NSW there are 2 dates to remember. THE EUROBODALLA ORCHID CLUB INC. will have their Winter show in the CWA HALL, Queen Street Moruya SET-UP Thursday 2pm to 5pm open to the public Friday 15<sup>th</sup> July 9am to 5pm and Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> July 9am – 2pm.

Spring Show held at the SPORTS & LEISURE CENTRE, BLUE WATER DRIVE, NAROOMA NSW Set-up Thursday 2pm to 5pm open to the public Friday 26<sup>th</sup> August 9am- 5pm, Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> August 9am–5pm and Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> August 9am – 1pm.

Well this is all for now. Don't forget the Castle Hill Fair being held on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> till Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> April 2011. If you require any special items give me a ring as soon as possible so as I can get it in for you. Those of you that ordered goods for 27<sup>th</sup> February will be at our stand on 8<sup>th</sup> April. The next class will be on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March at 2pm All welcome. Please note the April class has changed due to the Castle Hill Fair and it is now 2<sup>nd</sup> April at 2pm.

TILL NEXT TIME

GOOD GROWING

ALAN & MIRIAM MERRIMAN

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