



Western Suburbs ORCHID SOCIETY

wsorchidsociety.com

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Plant of the Night for February



Paphiopedilum Umatilla

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Next Meeting:

March 15th from 7pm
Irene Chalmers

Websites:

www.wsorchidsociety.com
www.flickr.com/photos/wsos/
www.orchids.org

Facebook:

Search for the group "Western Suburbs Orchid Society" and join

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At meetings or via email to the Editor before the first Monday of the month

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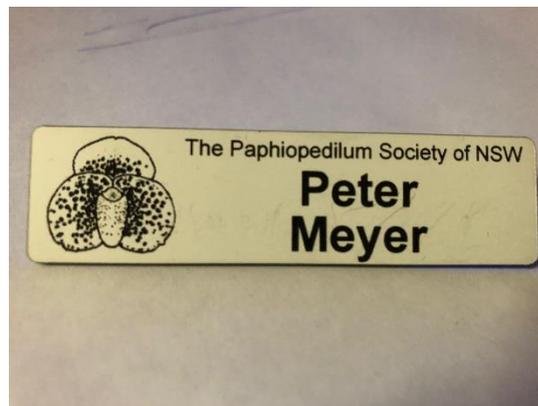
Editorial

Last month I ran an Orchid Trivia night, which from all reports (so far at least!) was well received and lots of fun. Thanks to OSNSW for the base trivia pack, and to me for researching some of the trickier questions. Mwahahaha! Well done team FAM (Frances, Arthur M and Michael) who won the trivia point score. They each took home a lovely orchid.

Coming up this month we have a visit from Irene Chalmers from OSNSW. Irene is a highly regarded judge and orchid grower and she always has very interesting topics to tell us all about. This is one not to be missed!

Please be aware that the Orchids Out West show has been cancelled for 2021.

Committee has been researching new name badges and has found a supplier who will do small amounts for us. Anyone who is interested in a new badge, please let myself or Peter Meyer know. They'll cost around \$10 each and will look something like this, but with our name and logo on them:



Please remember to register with me if you're coming to the March meeting. Phone, text, or email are all fine. My details are in the panel on the left. ←

Lastly, welcome to new member May Hui! We hope your time with us is fun, that your orchids thrive, and that you make lots of fabulous new friends. 😊

Cheers, Sam.

Minutes of WSOS monthly meeting held on 15th February 2021

General Business:

- Sam reminded everyone of our COVID safety plan.
- Welcome to 2021 from President Peter.
- Christmas Party report by Peter Meyer.
- Orchid Trivia night.
- New member May Hui joined the Society.

TONIGHT'S SUPPER: Thank you Peter McBryde

RAFFLE PRIZES: Jan Binovec, Peter McBryde x2, Frances Turner, Michael Luu, Wendy Choy

BIRTHDAY RAFFLE: December: Sam Stevens; January: Frances Turner; February: Wendy Choy

SUPPER RAFFLE: Wendy Choy

PLANT OF THE NIGHT: Paphiopedilum Umatilla exhibited by Dimitri Mitsios

MEETING CLOSED: 9:15pm

Arthur's Notes

Counts:

Number of plants benched = 26

Number of exhibitors = 7

Total views WSOS of the Flickr photo pages = 831,000

Number of photos on the Flickr photo pages = 2677

Orchid Benching:

Seven members exhibited 26 plants at the February Meeting. Quality of the benched plants was very high and the Plant of the Night was a beautiful multifloral Paphiopedilum exhibited by Dimitrios Mitsios.

You might notice that there are two first placed orchids in Class 7. This is my error partly due to the class markers not being available because we couldn't unlock the storage cupboard.

Orchid Trivia:

Thanks to Sam for arranging the wide ranging and very difficult in parts Orchid Trivia. Reminded me that in ancient times there was a theory that the practical orchid judging exam was easier to pass than the orchid theory exam.

Orchid Results:

Please check the judging results, they have compiled from the data kept by the Royal Horticultural Society and will give you a registered name if a crossing has been registered.

Example: Paph. parishii x philippinense has been registered as Paph. Umatilla

Pete's Place

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It was a great pleasure to welcome our members back to Carrington Avenue for our February meeting. Thank you to the members who supported the meeting and I was very pleased to see Phillip Festa back with us again. We welcomed a new member May who was enthusiastic and enjoyed our meeting. We will continue to run COVID-safe meetings for our members, as it's important to keep our society going.

The benching was small but very high quality and the trivia night that Sam organised was great fun and well run. Thanks Sam. Frances ran our raffle table very well as usual and the raffle plants were particularly good quality and varied this month.

Next month we will welcome Irene Chalmers to our meeting. Irene is a very knowledgeable orchid grower and a great and entertaining speaker so please come and join us and support your society.

I want to thank my hard-working committee and unofficial committee member Arthur Midgley. Arthur served on the committee for so long that it just doesn't seem right not to have him on the committee but that doesn't stop him always being there to help us.

I look forward to welcoming you all to our next meeting in March when I hope our number restrictions will be lifted.

Prez Peter!



Dendrobium Hibiki – Phil Festa

Novice Nook: Starting out with Paphiopedilums

BY GARY HART

(Reproduced with permission from the Paph OS)

It is often the case that orchid growers obtain some plants that they know little about, keep them for some time and one of three things happens:

- They sit on the bench for years looking completely healthy and never flower.
- They grow like mad sending up multi new growths but never or rarely flower.
- They die.

So after this growers often don't try again but move on to another genera that does seem to work in their conditions. As a beginner you are limited by your growing area and conditions. Do you have a:

- Window sill or conservatory.
- Shadecloth-covered bush-house or similar area.
- Glass- or poly-house, heated or unheated.
- Climate controlled environmental growing area.

The important environmental aspects about successfully growing (and flowering) paphiopedilums are:

- Light: Paphs are largely shade loving, however, too much shade, no flowers. 70% shade cloth cover year-round is a good starting point.
- Temperature: ALL plants grow at their best when temperatures are in the low to mid-twenties. I find they grow well between 12 and 30 degrees C.
- Humidity: Orchids like it. Paphiopedilums prefer around 50% or higher. If it gets below 25% plants shut down and wilt. Don't let this happen.
- Water: Paphiopedilums like to be moist, not dry or very wet. If in doubt whether to water, don't. Wait another day or two. Rainwater is best.
- Fertilizer: any kind is ok but a balanced NPK fertilizer with Calcium/Magnesium/Trace Elements is best. Use every second watering at recommended strength or weaker.

There are a wide range of Paphiopedilum orchids with over 100 recognised species and thousands of registered hybrids. Where do you start? My suggestion is acquire up to half a dozen different plants; let's say three species and three hybrids. Six will form a good base for comparison, as basing your success on one plant is silly. Try to initially acquire flowering-sized or better still multi-growth plants and not little seedlings.

There are a myriad of possible choices but possibly:

- Species: Paph. insigne, Paph. villosum, Paph. hirsutissimum
- Hybrids: Paph. Nitens, Paph. Invincible, Paph. Maudiae

I have selected six paphiopedilums that you can grow in all conditions from a window sill to a controlled environmental zone. They all grow rapidly into good sized plants, flower annually, and are very hardy. Initially grow them in the same location, and if you're not getting growth and/or flowers move them to a different spot. There are some paphiopedilum hybrids that are very irregular flowerers. This is often caused by two factors:

- They are largely genetically unstable/incompatible.
- They don't like their home.

If they are a plant/flower you particularly like, try one or more of the following to "get them moving!":

- Repot them into a new pot with fresh medium.
- Divide them and repot. The shock often initiates flowering.

- Place the pot inside a one-size-up larger pot. Fill the space between the pots with sphagnum moss. This insulates the pot in hot weather and increases humidity. (We largely use black pots, and black absorbs heat, so try white or clear instead.)
- Move them to a different location in your growing area, where they get more light, or less light, or more air movement, higher up, lower down, etc.
- Give them away to a friend for them to have a go at flowering them in their conditions. (I have seen this work.)

What you need for your plants are all the conditions I have mentioned as well as:

- A fresh open potting mix. Bark, perlite, and charcoal mixed together is a popular combination. Tap the mix down around the plant. Don't pack it down; you need air pockets for the roots to be happy.
- When you repot and divide (preferably in spring), keep the divisions to two or three growths. Single growths often sulk and don't have the strength to grow.
- Repot every two or three years regardless of the condition of your plant.
- Be observant and proactive with insect pests. Mealy Bugs are the main enemy of Paphiopedilums. With six plants go over them weekly and remove any bugs hiding in the growths with a cotton bud or toothpick. If you think you have mealy bugs in the roots, drench the plant with a bug killer, or repot and wash off any insects and infected media.

Good luck with your entry into the realm of the slipper orchids. If you are having troubles with your plant/s, please ask for advice. We want you to be successful and a happy grower!



Cattleya Waianae Leopard 'Ching Hua' x RTH Jungle Treasure – Phil Festa