



Western Suburbs ORCHID SOCIETY

wsorchidsociety.com

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Plant of the night for November



Dendrobium Gerald McCraith

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Next Meeting:

December 19th at 7pm
Christmas Party

Meeting Address:

Club Five Dock RSL
66 Great North Rd, Five Dock

Websites:

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

Email:

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Facebook:

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

Submissions:

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

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Editorial

Last month we had a talk from Vic Petrovski on orchids for beginners. This was good for the basics and I hope it was of value to our novice growers. Thanks heaps Vic!!

Coming up this month we have our Christmas Party, yay! Remember we're at Club Five Dock this time and we start at 7pm. For those unfamiliar with the venue I've included a map on page 4. Two plants only per member for benching, and please bring a gift or three for the monster raffle.

A **HUGE** Thank You! for Wendy Choy, who has agreed to take on the role of point score collator for our monthly benching and shows. This is a very generous offer of help and we love you madly for it. 😊 Please be gentle with her as she learns the ropes.

Also a major Thank You! for Mrs Chan, who provided us with supper last month. I always love spring rolls so you're welcome again anytime. 😊

The Growing Competition has been half-won by Phil Festa, who's entry was in flower last month. Well done Phil! See page 6 for a photo. My little plant is alive and growing but it's still a tiddler by comparison, and I hear a couple have died.

Lastly, a Merry Christmas to all. May your presents be plentiful, the food yummy, the weather beautiful, and the company warm and cuddly. Have a fabulously fun time!

Our first meeting for 2023 will be in February.

Cheers, Sam.



Minutes of WSOS monthly meeting held on 21st November 2022

General Business:

- Arthur Midgley is retiring from doing the benching and show results. We'll need a new person to take this on starting at the December meeting. Wendy volunteered. Thanks Wendy!
- Christmas Party will be at Five Dock RSL this year.
- Sam handed out POTN photo to Cuong Tran.
- Sam handed out Champion Paph rosette to Dimitri for Winter Show.
- The Growing Comp plant has been flowered by Phil Festa! He's halfway to the finish.

TONIGHT'S SUPPER: Thank you Mrs Chan

RAFFLE PRIZES: Michael Luu x2, Arthur Midgley, Sam Stevens x2, Vic Petrovski, Mrs Chan, Sandra Rogers, Wendy Choy, Frances Turner

BIRTHDAY RAFFLE: not drawn

SUPPER RAFFLE: Gary Hodder

PLANT OF THE NIGHT: Dendrobium Gerald McCraith by Otilia Maia

Arthur's Notes

Number of exhibitors = 9

Number of plants exhibited = 35

Total views WSOS Flickr Photo Pages = 901560

Number of Photos on Flickr Photo Pages = 2879

Plant of the night was Dendrobium Gerald McCraith exhibited by Otilia Maia. This was a large many flowered orchid benched in the Australasian Native Class.

There were many high quality plants on display including the first flowering of a growing competition plant benched by Philip Festa. Congratulations to Philip.

Some members are still having problems with the new benching schedule and this delayed the meeting start a little bit.

WSOS events for 2022/2023:

Here's what we have planned for the year. We're always open to suggestions so if anyone has any ideas for future events, please talk to a Committee member.

December	Christmas Party
January	no meeting
February	TBA

AN OUNCE OF PROTECTION

When it comes to orchids there is no substitute for good clean living. In their natural habitat on rocks or trees, epiphytic orchids have evolved and adapted to be little troubled by disease. The closer we come to duplicating this preferred habitat the fewer problems we encounter. They need:

1. A potting mix allowing free drainage of the roots. This discourages rots and fungi.
2. A location offering enough warmth, sunlight, humidity and free air movement without overcrowding.
3. Reduced watering and feeding during any natural rest periods.

Each orchid species seems to have its own particular susceptibility or resistance to various infestations, again related to the preferred habitat.

Plants which are poorly situated will often have multiple problems. Any infestation should beg the question: "Is the plant happy there?". This is a demand to consider relocation and environment. Getting the temperature, sunlight, ventilation, feeding, watering and humidity right prevents many problems.

Prime orchid real estate is scarce and there is always a temptation to crowd in too many plants. This encourages spread of disease, reduces free air movement and access for inspection. The worst infestations are often on the side of the plant hidden away from light. Damaged and deformed plants are also prime targets. Disease rapidly spreads from neglected plants.

Monitor your plants regularly, particularly the crevices and underside of leaves. A visit at night by torchlight also gives a new perspective on pests, especially slugs, snails and cockroaches.

If a plant is not thriving, inspect it carefully for evidence of disease. This should include knocking it out of the pot to inspect the roots and the mix. A pot-bound plant is difficult to inspect and is susceptible to disease, so repot in good time.

Eliminate reservoirs of diseases. Adjacent garden plants can act as a serious reservoir for infestations and should not be left untreated. This can be very difficult with large rambling plants.

Sterilize cutting tools before use.

Check all new purchases carefully (hopefully before you buy) to avoid introducing new pests. Buy from reputable sources and if uncertain, isolate the plant for a period and monitor. Learn to recognise a good vigorous healthy plant and do not accept anything less. Routinely repot and treat all new purchases with eco-oil or a similar prophylactic.

Isolate sick plants. Destroy any showing evidence of virus.

Always practice good plant hygiene. Remove any dead material regularly, particularly old flower spikes and husks where scale and other pests hide. Covering rhizomes and stems with potting mix also creates hiding places. Only roots should be covered. Dispose of infected material promptly well away from the main collection. Keep the floor clean. If your orchids are popular with ants, expect aphids, thrip and scale. Aphids of course help spread disease.

Glass houses. Putting orchids into a glasshouse is analogous to putting a patient into intensive care; you become responsible for doing everything for them in a foreign and highly artificial environment. Temperature, humidity,

air movement and sunlight can be very difficult to get right even for a single species let alone a mixed collection. Simple problems rapidly multiply and become complex.

Don't put cool growing orchids into a hot house in the hope of pushing them along. Cool growing orchids will be happier in a shade-house. In fact I see less infestation among plants exposed to the elements than among those I shelter under the pergola. I therefore limit the time plants spend under shelter (usually in winter and when flowering only).

Growing Comp

Well done Phil Festa for the first flowering of the Growing Comp! Remember it was decided that we'd run the comp to a second flowering (which means another spike) so Phil is well on the way to a win with this one. What a lovely colour it has turned out to be too.

