

### PREVIOUS MEETING: 1<sup>st</sup> APRIL 2007

**Apologies:** Ann & Alistair Mackay, Lina Muller, Norma Murray, Michael Victor, Selwyn & Toni Krull.

### Last Meeting:

Important points to remember on Water Quality:

- Monitor the PH of your water as the availability of nutrients to a plant varies at different PH levels.
- A PH of 5.6 – 6.5 is ideal.
- It is also important to measure the EC of your fertilizer solution as a solution with a high concentration of dissolved salts will result in reverse osmosis taking place.
- Aim for an EC reading of 0.8 – 1.2 ms/cm
- Tips for managing poor water quality:
  - Apply very weak solutions of fertilizer more often.
  - Flush your pots well & regularly to leach out excess accumulated salts.

### Plant Table Results:

What a stunning display of Cattleyas this month. Thus a special category was created for them.

### Member's votes resulted in the following:

Hybrids:	1 <sup>st</sup>	Oncidium Sherry Baby	D. Norval
	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Ascocenda Fuch's Harvest	R & T Moss
		Moon x Gho Chia Long	
Species:	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Cymbidium Dolly Featherhill x Golden Elf "sundust"	R & C Hewson
	1 <sup>st</sup>	Aerangis mystacidii	F. Steel
	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Cattleya bowringiana	R & T Moss
Cattleyas:	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Cattleya bowringiana	C.van Niekerk
	1 <sup>st</sup>	Cattleya Winter Lace	M & Y Bond
	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Lc Tainan City 'General'	R & T Moss
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Lc Chyong Guu Swan 'White Boulder'	M. Downey

Thank you to everyone for bringing their magnificent plants to share with us.

### Raffle:

The plant on raffle, Vascostylis Pine River 'Deep Sea' was won by Colleen de Villiers. Congratulations and good luck with your plant. An Ascocenda Bicentennial is the raffle plant for May and tickets will be R10.00 each.

### New Members:

We welcome Desmond & Jennifer Scherwitz who have joined us this month. We hope that you will enjoy growing beautiful orchids with us

### GONUBIE GOSSIP:

**Shop News:** The shop open times for May are:

- Saturday 12<sup>th</sup>: 14h30 – 16h00
- Monday 21<sup>st</sup>: 14h30 – 16h00

### Culture Tip for the Month:

**Some more points on Watering:** The best way to decide whether to water your orchids or not is to check the potting medium. This is done by:

- (a) Sticking your finger or a sharp end of a pencil into the medium. If the medium feels wet or the pencil is moist, delay watering for a few days and then check again. Water when the medium feels slightly moist and not entirely dry.
- (b) Water by Weight. Lift your orchid an hour or so after you next water. Make a mental note of how much it weighs. Lift it again in a few days and when it feels significantly lighter, water.
- (c) Pull out the plant's label and feel whether it is wet or dry.
- (d) Have a Tester Pot. The same size, full of the same mix but without a plant in it, on every bench. When in doubt, tip the mix out to see whether you should water or not. Bearing in mind that pots containing plants will dry out sooner because the plants are using water. Return the mix to the tester pot quickly, before it has time to dry out and place back onto the bench, ready for next time.
  - ❖ Whenever you water be sure to:
    - a) Use tepid water as cold water can shock your orchid.
    - b) Wet all sections of the plant's container.
  - ❖ Avoid watering plants during very cold spells.
  - ❖ Remember to stop watering Dendrobium Nobile and Kingianum **now**. Only mist plants occasionally to prevent pseudobulbs shrivelling.

### NEXT MEETING: 6<sup>th</sup> May 2007 - GONUBIE SHADEHOUSE TOUR.

Starting at Mike & Yvonne Bond / 6 – 8th Ave, Gonubie, then on to Lina Muller / 126 – 13<sup>th</sup> Ave, Gonubie and will round off the afternoon with tea at Ann & Alistair Mackay / 16 Evan Street, Gonubie.

**Plant Table:** There will be a plant table at Ann & Alistair Mackay's house so please remember to bring your flowering plants.

**GOS QUIZ:** First correct entry drawn was Johan Gouche'.

**APRIL'S ANSWER:** Catasetum or Cycnoches.

Catasetum a genus of 70 species from Central & South America. Plants produce inflorescences bearing either male or female flowers. The plants generate colourful male flowers in ideal conditions and bland female blooms are produced when the plant is under stress. The male blooms have an unusual and very fast pollen-ejection mechanism. Catasetums must be watered and fertilized copiously in summer. During winter catasetums have a rest period and should be watered sparingly and fertilizer should be withheld.

### MAY'S QUESTION:

Which orchid is commonly known as the bucket orchid?

### Social Outing – 19<sup>th</sup> May 2007:

A walk on Owen Schafli's farm has been arranged for 19<sup>th</sup> May, weather permitting. We hope to spot at least 7 orchid species. We will depart from Pioneer at 9h00. Remember to bring your own refreshments and to wear comfortable walking shoes.