

The next Meeting of the
Cymbidium Orchid Club of South Australia Inc.
will be held on
Wednesday 23 April 2008
at the
Burnside Community Centre
401 Greenhill Road Tasmore SA

**Meetings are held on the 4th Wednesday
of each month February to November**

Visitors Welcome

Program

- 7.00 pm Auditorium opens, benching of plants & trading table
- 7.15 pm Beginners Class. Note early start time (All Welcome)
- 7.45 pm Viewing of Plants & Popular Vote
- 8.00 pm Official Opening and Presidents Report
- 8.15 pm Seedlings on the Show-bench
- 8.20 pm Workshop and Demonstrations
- 9.00 pm Plant Raffle Draw
- 9.15 pm Popular Vote and Judging Results
- 9.30 pm Close of Meeting and Supper.

THE NEW

CYMBIDIUM NEWS

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Australia Inc.

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JUDGE'S CHOICE—BEST OVERALL

One Tree Hill 'Doris'
Grown by Les Nesbitt

Volume 9 Number 3, April 2008

The New Cymbidium News Vol 9 No 3—April 2008

The New Cymbidium News is published monthly – February to November inclusive and is the Official Newsletter of the Cymbidium Orchid Club of South Australia Inc

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SUPPER ROSTER 2008

Wednesday 23 April	Glenn Stearnes / Luania Nowakowski
Wednesday 28 May	Mary Heddle / Brian Heddle
Wednesday 25 June	Rosemary Bray / Pamela Leske
Wednesday 23 July	Vacant
Wednesday 27 August	Carmel Beasley / Wendy
Wednesday 24 September	Vacant
Wednesday 22 October	Vacant
Wednesday 26 November	Vacant

Many thanks to all the volunteers—See Andrew Nowakowski to volunteer for vacant spots.

PROGRAM 2008

(see article, page 16 for more information on program / speakers)

Wednesday 23 April	Workshop
Wednesday 28 May	Stud Plant Discussion
Wednesday 25 June	Santa Barbara —Graham Morris
Wednesday 23 July	Stephen Early from Melbourne
Wednesday 27 August	Colin Gillespie
Wednesday 24 September	Good Bug—Bad Bug (to be confirmed)
Wednesday 22 October	Panel Discussion
Wednesday 26 November	Justin Priddy

SHOW DATES 2008

Winter Show ———	Munno Para Shopping Centre 13—19 July 2008 (set-up 12/7/08)
National Show ———	Noarlunga Leisure Centre 23—24 August 2008 (set-up and judging 22nd)
Spring Show ———	West Lakes Shopping Centre 31 August 2008—6 September 2008 (set-up 30/8/08)

NOTICE BOARD

COFFEE MUGS

New coffee mugs will be available for purchase shortly.

The new mugs are black with a photograph of a cymbidium on them and of course, with our new name.

Price to be advised.



PENS

Your committee has ordered good quality Adler pens which will be for sale to members and non-members. These pens will be available at our National Show as well as club meetings. We are hoping they will be available at the May meeting.

Price to be advised.

COCO FIBRE

*The coco fibre is available from Graham Morris—Valley Orchids
There are 3 sizes available
\$9.50 per 4½ kg block*

WANTED

Don't forget our WANTED section.

Please contact: Peter Hall—pejeh@optusnet.com.au

Telephone: 08 8294 5562 or 0416 179 019



2008 NATIONAL CYMBIDIUM ORCHID SHOW

Can anyone intending to exhibit at the National Show please get your registration forms in as soon as possible.

Your show marshall can't design the layout until he knows how many exhibits there will be.

Can those attending the dinner, please also complete the form and return to Andrew Nowakowski.

**ANYONE INTERESTED IN SPONSORING THE EVENT—
PLEASE CONTACT RAY BRADY**



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

April 2008

The next meeting will be our yearly meeting to assist all our growers who have questions about handling plants from the beginning to flowering and beyond. With a hands on program and the limited time available it's necessary to keep things moving so that everyone gets the chance to see each stage.

The committee has set up, what we hope, is a program for 2008 that will appeal to all members, with new speakers and new ideas. Should anyone have other ideas please notify a committee member, as we may be able to fit it into our schedule.

At the time of this report, committee member Hazel Alsop was in hospital. We wish her a speedy recovery and hope to see her back soon.

As August quickly approaches, our secretary Jeanne has followed through on some of the questions we need answered with the Onkaparinga Council on parking as nobody wants to risk a parking fine. There will be ample areas provided and the head ranger was very cooperative in sorting this out.

Very few people have returned forms of intent as yet. These are needed to both set up and do layouts of the area. Many of our sponsors have responded very well and Tinlin Wines and Neutrog Australia have added more help to what they have already pledged.

Over the years Fleurijn Orchids – Holland, have given outstanding support to the National body and COCSA and also into the future as the major supporter.

For those who have noticed that the current mugs for the club do not have the correct club name, new ones have been ordered and will soon be available.

As your plants begin to flower bring them along to the meetings so everybody can enjoy them.

FERTILIZERS

I suppose over the years there has been numerous articles written about fertilizers and to some it may be a pretty boring subject. I am writing this article mainly to satisfy us new or novice cymbidium growers.

We often hear that a certain grower has more spikes and produces better quality flowers because of his/her magic fertilizer. As new growers we tend to over fertilize our plants. It seems to be a human trait to add just that little bit more, we think that the little bit more will make them grow bigger and flower more. If we go back to the species orchids, they survive and flower in their natural habitat with a little leaf litter and sometimes very little water. Orchids are essentially a low nutrient plant and even our hybrid cymbidiums would grow and flower without fertilizers, if they have adequate light, water and humidity with some air movement.

There are numerous brands of fertilizers on the market that vary enormously in their NPK values. I will list a few water soluble fertilizers.

Cressdale Pty Ltd Horticultural Solutions

HS0-12—help to improve quality and colour of blooms

HSO-22—assist in growing vegetative growth

HS0—12 = N/12, P/12, K/20 and trace elements and calcium

HSO-22 = N/22, P/8, K/12 and trace elements and calcium.

Nutri-Tech Solutions Pty Ltd

Nutri-tech Triple Ten: N/10, P/10, K/10 liquid fertilizer with chelated trace elements and organic fertilizers.

Nutri-Key Shuttle Seven—chelated trace elements with micronutrients and major elements iron as being the larger percentage iron as from shuttle,

Nutri-Tech calcium shuttle sequester/chelated shuttle with minor and major elements.

Slow Release Fertilizer (controlled release pellets)

N/16.32, P/4, K/10.4. Release the fertilizer according to temperature.

INFORMATION FROM YOUR REGISTRAR OF JUDGES

Judge's Meeting

A judge's meeting has been called for Tuesday 20 May at 7.30pm at the home of Ben Knobben.

All judges are asked to attend.

Telephone Ben on: 8356 0215

Ben has put some new innovations in place which need to be discussed. Judging format for the upcoming shows including the National will be discussed as a matter of urgency.

Scribes

We are in desperate need of scribes for this year's shows especially for the National.

If anyone can help out, please contact Ben Knobben.

Availability of Judges for the National Show

Will all judges notify Ben if they are available for the National Cymbidium Show—24 August 2008 at the:

Noarlunga Leisure Centre

David Witton Drive

Noarlunga Centre

SAROC Fair

Your committee has decided to mount a display again at this year's SAROC Fair. Anyone who has some plants and/or is willing to help set up the display, please notify Ben.

The fair is being held on the June long weekend at:

Pulteney Grammar School

South Terrace

Adelaide

Your committee feels it is important to support SAROC and it is a good opportunity for members to catch up with friends from other clubs, share information and maybe pick up a few tips for your own displays.

Ben Knobben
Registrar of Judges

5	Hybridising—Graham Morris	<i>Hands on demonstration of how to mate a flower, what to look for in the parents, and what to expect from the process.</i>
5	Making a Show Display— Coralie and Gordon Hime, Pam and Elmore Leskie and Ben Knobben	<i>3 teams will put together a show display (in 20 minutes). They will have 5 cymbidiums and will show what is required to make a spectacular show display. It will look simple, but requires lots of planning and thought. The aim is to encourage anyone who has not yet participated in a show, to actually put in their first display. It is not hard and can be very rewarding and is very necessary for the club, if we are to be successful.</i>
7	PowerPoint Display— Graham Morris	<i>Anyone not necessarily wishing to watch a display can view the presentation given by Graham Morris to the Santa Barbara Orchid Congress, about the Australian orchid scene and Valley Orchids. The PowerPoint presentation will repeat continuously during the demonstrations.</i>

This is a meeting which should have something for everyone, experienced or not so experienced. It is an opportunity to invite newcomers, or those wanting to know a little about orchid growing, to come and see how it is done.

Try to bring a friend.

Graham Morris.

10-15°C 10 months, 15-20°C 7 months, 20-25°C 5 months, 25-30°C 3 months.

Neutrog Strike Back for Orchids

N/8, P/3, K/10 with trace elements and calcium.

Strike Back is recommended by our club who have officually endorsed the product.

Strike Back is an organic based slow release fertilizer with trace elements and calcium. Our club members and one of our commerical growers, Graham Morris are extremely happy with the growing results so far and hopefully we shall have a much better flowering season this year. Secondary and trace elements are essential for healthy growth.

Nitrogen (N) needed for healthy plant growth.

Calcium (Ca) cell integrity and permeability also improves disease resistance.

Magnesium (Mg) a major component of chlorophyll and essential for activation of enzymes and plant respiration, also serves as a carbohydrate-based microbial stimulant.

Sulhur (S) required in protein and amino acid synthesis as well as in the structure and metabolism of plants.

Iron (Fe) essential for clorophyll formation, also in photosynthesis and respiration. Iron is the most abundant element, but this reluctant element is often not plant available. Iron plays a major roll in maintaining the maximum green required for high-production photosynthesis. One of the essential elements required for biological nitrogen fixation, iron is an oxygen carrier for chlorophyll production. It increases leaf thickness which enhances nutrient flow. It makes the leaf darker with more capacity to absorb solar energy and increases the cuticular wax in the leaf.

Zinc (Zn) is involved in the many enzyme systems including growth hormones, stem elongation and carbohydrates and protein synthesis.

Manganese (Mn) involved in photosynthesis, respiration and nitrogen metabolism and is a central component of chlorophyll. Manganese is often called the element of life. It is a critical enzyme activator. It is essential for carbohydrate and nitrogen metabolism. It accelerates maturity. Participates in the oxygen evolving system of photosynthesis.

Cont/...

Copper (Cu) mainly found in plant roots, it helps in nitrogen metabolism and is also involved in the plants enzyme system.

Boron (B) is involved in 16 plant functions including flowering, cell division at growing points and pollen germination.

Molybdenum (Mo) conversion of nitrogen for protein synthesis. Nitrogen-fixing bacteria require molybdenum for the nitrogen fixing process.

Deficiency symptoms when lacking in secondary and trace elements.

Calcium (Ca) - death of young growing tips. Yellowing leaf tip and margin. Weak stems (spikes). High calcium can cause deficiencies of potassium and magnesium. *I also read that high calcium can cause nitrogen draw down which cannot be right because the nitrogen content is calcium nitrate and is approximately 15.5%.*

Magnesium (Mg) - patchy yellowing of leaves between the veins, starting in older leaves and spreading to young leaves.

Sulphur (S) - is similar to nitrogen deficiency, with overall leaf yellowing and stunted growth. It shows in new growth. Too much sulphur can cause salt burn on the leaf margin and lowers the pH and may cause leaf drop.

Iron (Fe) - the area between the veins of young, then old leaves turns yellow. Too much may cause dark brown spots on young leaves then on older leaves.

Zinc (Zn) - mottled yellowing between the veins in young leaves, they die back from the edges and fall off. Too much results in iron deficiency and is seen in the young leaves first.

Manganese (Mn) - first seen in young leaves showing interveinal yellowing, brown spotting or lesions. Too much and older leaves show random spots with a halo of yellow tissue around them.

Copper (Cu) - stunted growth and die back of shoot tips and distorted young leaves. Too much can promote iron deficiencies resulting in poor root growth.

Boron (B) - abnormal growth or death of growing tips, poor root development. Too much and older leaves have yellow leaf tips and fall off. Much too much can kill your plants.

Molybdenum (Mo) - with low molybdenum, nitrogen isn't utilised so it looks like nitrogen deficiency with older leaves yellowing. Reduced growth with long, thin leaves. Too much—not known, plants can tolerate fairly high levels of molybdenum.

WORKSHOP AND DEMONSTRATION—APRIL CLUB MEETING

We will have six displays operating. Members will divide into six groups who will have about 10 minutes to watch the following demonstrations.

1	Deflasking— Moss Bray	<i>A demonstration of how to deflask and hints on care to ensure minimal losses.</i>
2	Judging— Kevin McLean	Discussion about what the judges are seeking when they judge your flowering plant. Display plants will be used.
3	Dividing a cymbidium— Geoff Spear	<i>How to divide a cymbidium. Demonstrations of how to do it and what is the best to get good flowering immediately.</i>
4	Tissue Culture— Kevin Western	<i>Kevin will explain in simple terms, the process of mass producing our cymbidiums, and what equipment is required.</i>

DETAILED PROGRAM FOR 2008

23 April 2008	<i>Workshop and Demonstration—see next page</i>
28 May 2008	Stud plant discussion Allumination By Glenn Heylen and Moss Bray
25 June 2008	<i>The Santa Barbara International Orchid Show and Congress</i> By Graham Morris
23 July 2008	<i>Growing Cymbidium Species Down Under</i> By Stephen Early from Melbourne This presentation was given at the Santa Barbara Orchid Congress
27 August 2008	<i>A Presentation from Colin Gillespie From Melbourne</i> A relatively new grower achieving remarkable results. He uses very advanced growing conditions
24 September 2008	<i>Good Bug—Bad Bug</i> By Presentation on using predatory insects to control our problem pests <i>Please note: this presentation is to be confirmed.</i>
22 October 2008	<i>Panel Discussion</i> mainly regarding modern growing conditions, focusing on watering and spike initiation
26 November 2008	<i>The Colourful World of Cymbidium Caniculatum</i> By Justin Priddy Justin will present the talk he gave at Santa Barbara

Your committee are very excited about the proposed 2008 program and hope all members feel the same way.
Many thanks to Graham Morris for doing most of the 'leg work'.

Nitrogen (N) - yellowing of older leaves, poor plant growth, thin pale soft leaves. Too much—quick growth, lots of leaves can cause poor root development and poor flowering.

Essential nutrients plants need from (soil), potting medium, air and water for healthy growth

Macro Elements (major)	<i>Carbon (C); Hydrogen (H); Oxygen (O); Nitrogen (N); Phosphorus (P); Potassium (K)</i>
Meso Elements (secondary)	<i>Calcium (Ca); Magnesium (Mg); Sulphur (S)</i>
Micro Elements (trace)	<i>Iron (Fe); Molybdenum (Mo); Boron (B); Copper (Cu); Manganese (Mn); Zinc (Zn)</i>
Others	<i>Chlorine (Cl); Sodium (Na); Silicon (Si); Nickel (Ni); Cobalt (Co)</i>

Growing Medium

We all have our special brew to grow our orchids, especially now that coco coir is being used in our potting mixes. The coco coir is relatively inert and if used alone can cause drawdown losses, nitrogen and phosphorus. Coco coir takes a long time to break down and it never becomes hydrophobic. It remains hydrophilic (water attracting). The coco coir is also non acidic and needs to have a good percentage of pine bark with lime added. Most organic media have some capacity to tie up nitrogen so that it is not available to plants. Coco coir does immobilize nitrogen and phosphorus but not as much as composted pine bark. Coco coir has excellent physical stability (the capacity to provide air and moisture to plant roots).

Coco coir does not significantly expand or shrink when wet or dry and has long term stability. In some of the articles that have been written they suggest that the coco coir is relatively inert or a sterile media and in some articles they suggest that the coco coir is biologically active. If we use a mix of coco coir, composted pine bark and some Seamungus and strike back, then the mix will support a diverse population of beneficial micro organisms. The vast majority of these organisms are not pathogenic and can be beneficial in suppressing the development and proliferation of some soil borne diseases.

Cont/...

Wayne Baylis and I also use a product called Humas + 4. It is a raw organics humate with added calcium. It contains dense mineralisation and organic acids, lignite and leonardite, 67% carbon, 40% humic acid and retains the insoluble humin fraction. Humins are where most of the dense mineralisation occurs. The product also contains 70 minerals, organic carbon is the home base for beneficial micro organisms. Raw humates are a powerful fungi stimulant. The amino acids, complex carbohydrates and low pH comprise perfect fungi food. Combination of humic and fulvic acids. We add about 10% Humas + 4 to our potting mix when we repot. I also add humate soluble granules and twice a year I add some beneficial fungi, entomopathogenic fungal species beauveria bassinana, metarhizium anisopliac, verticillium lecanii and bacillus polymyxa. I use these products (which are not fertilizers) to complement my use of Neutrog, Seamungas and Strike Back, and to help the plants combat bulb rot.

Peter Hall
pejeh@optusnet.com.au

CYMPPLICITY MARCH V08

April sees the start of a new flowering season. Whilst we see the odd early bloomer gracing the show bench from now on most eyes are peering deep into the pots for the first telltale signs of spike initiation and with it the expectation of a new show season. Spikes generally appear from the base of a well made up lead and are usually rounded in shape but not always. Some spikes initiate within the outer leaf bract and it is usually the splitting of this bract that indicates its presence. Then we have some clones that will flower a second time off last years growth as well as this years new leads. Basically anything that looks like a spike around now is a good chance of being one. I have a few seedlings coming on and some have two per bulb. So what are my chances here two spikes, one of each or two new leads? I'll go one of each.

From this early spike initiation we must now take serious care if we are to nurture them into a strong well presented spike. Whilst small these new spikes are favoured food of the slimy things in our pots and from now on a snail baiting program is to be undertaken. A common practice now is husk removal and dead leaf removal and care should be taken as many a flower spike has been ripped off or broken by a careless

PLANT WRITE UP MARCH 2008

JUDGES CHOICE—ORCHID OF THE NIGHT / BEST IN OPEN DIVISION

One Tree Hill 'Doris' (*mini*)
grown by: Les Nesbitt

One spike of seven flowers. A rather small plant but well presented. The flowers were small but very clean and very early for this time of the year. Well done Les Nesbitt.



JUDGES CHOICE—FIRST DIVISION

Florida Cracker 'Trinity' (*intermediate*)
grown by: Silvester Ng

One spike of seven flowers. The flowers are orange and slightly cuppy. It will be interesting to see it again in a year or two because with 5-6 spikes it would be very eye catching. Well done Silvester Ng.



Monthly Competition Results For 26 March 2008

JUDGES CHOICE

Best Overall	One Tree Hill 'Doris'	Les Nesbitt
Best in First Division	Florida Cracker 'Trinity'	Silvester Ng

OPEN DIVISION

Miniature Pure Colour First Prize	One Tree Hill 'Doris'	Les Nesbitt
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FIRST DIVISION

Intermediate Green First Prize	Pendragon x Minikin	Silvester Ng
Intermediate Brown First Prize	Devon Elf 'Vivienne'	Silvester Ng
Intermediate Other Colour First Prize	Florida Cracker 'Trinity'	Silvester Ng

grower tidying up his or her plants. I like to remove husks after a rain (you know, wet stuff from above....) as they are soft and easy to remove. If dry I split the dead portion down the middle and pull with a sideways movement and taking extra special care if I see anything that even resembles a spike.

Watering is still kept up to ensure the potting mix remains evenly moist. With the plants and spikes being 98% water it is no wonder why it is so important. Feeding is still balanced to high potash and don't ignore the benefits of foliar feeding paying particular attention to the undersides of the leaves. This is where their pores are and fertiliser is absorbed via these pores. Secondly the under leaf watering/feeding will keep two spotted mites down so there is a double benefit here. A feed of iron chelates at the rate of 1 g per litre has been recommended at this time of year as well as introducing some calcium into the feeding as well, I assume to further strengthen spikes. I suppose there must dozens of different feeds, additives etc that people use to just give their plants that little bit extra that tips the judges points in their favour or gain that bit of a psychological advantage.

With the spikes being so small and still well protected by their bracts we should commence spraying our plants for scale to clean them up. Oxalis seedlings also pop up now after the opening rains (confident hey) and should be removed whilst small and easy to prick out.

With the emergence of our spikes we soon start taking stock of how many stakes etc we will need for this year. We should try and bench as many as we can for this years spring show and I personally will do my best and hope everyone else does as well. The spring show is the centrepiece for the year and I still reckon a big display of cymis is what makes any show.

On the maintenance side of things you can still divide a plant this month but by months end is getting a bit late as you want them to settle in before winter. If a late divided plant does throw out a spike I would probably remove it unless you have waited 10 years for the bugger to flower and it was the act of division that did the trick. The flower spike will take too much out of a plant recently divided, especially if new roots have not formed and it is this drain on the plant that will affect next years flowering as well as the new growths will also struggle.

Cont/...page 10

PAULINE'S LABORATORY SERVICE

FOR ALL ASPECT OF CYMBIDIUM
TISSUE CULTURE

CONTACT PAULINE OR KEV McLEAN

PHONE...(08) 8386 0430

POSTAL ADDRESS...13 WENTWORTH ST.
MOANA
S.A. 5169

EMAIL....pkmclean@arcom.com.au

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to lots more people than we have managed in the past.

This article is just a taste of the Santa Barbara Show. There will be a bigger article in The Australian Orchid Review soon, and we will be talking about it, and showing photos of it, for the June 25th meeting. Make sure you attend. I think you will find it all interesting.



Grand Champion—Santa Barbara—Karen x Hawaiiin Sunset Hatfields



Selling Area at Santa Barbara

Graham Morris

I personally, was very happy to be present, to hear the high quality presentations. We are fortunate, that we have procured copies of some of the presentations, for representation to local meetings soon. Additionally, two of the Australian speakers, have agreed to come to Adelaide later this year and talk to us. Don't miss those meetings.

On Saturday night, they held a fabulous dinner. In excess of 200 attended and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Besides the good food and drinks, they honoured 10 of their hard working old (mostly retired) members. The 10 dignitaries, were a who's who, of world orchid history. I personally did not know some of them, but the achievements of those honoured on the night has changed the face of orchid growing throughout the world. The ACS did it all fabulously, and all present will remember the night forever, particularly those who were honoured. They also had an auction of plants and memorabilia which was of great interest to all. There was spirited bidding for some very rare and hard to get plants. A couple of examples, were an original division of Dorothy Stockstill "Forgotten Fruits", which I thought was a steal at about \$200, and flasks of unusual seedlings which fetched over \$150, per flask. Over \$4000 was raised on the night.

During the show, there was a selling area, where about 65 vendors offered huge numbers of plants for sale. Each vendor paid well over \$1000, to have a selling stall. I estimate well over one million dollars worth of plants were sold at that venue over the 3 days. People left there with arms full of plants. If you were lucky enough, to have someone in a wheel chair, they were loaded with plants as they left. Babies were either taken out of their prams and pushers, to make way for plant, or just buried in the plants. It was an incredible sight. Huge numbers of buyers, prepared to buy lots of plants, often at very high prices. Additionally, the local nurseries were promoted, and were well patronized over the duration of the show.

As stated earlier, the show was big and spectacular. It was probably 2 or 3 times the size of the National Show, which we had in Adelaide, 3 years ago. The quality of the plants displayed, and the actual displays, were of high standard. However, I do believe, the best of our showbench orchids, would have competed very well with their winners. It also made me think, that we do not appreciate the standard of our shows, and just how good they are. We have the opportunity, this year, to really try to promote our forthcoming national show, hopefully

Tom Burian Orchids

**RSD 87 Lot 25 Heinjus Road
STRATHALBYN 5255**

**NURSERY OPEN WEEKENDS ALL
YEAR ROUND**

**OTHER TIMES BY APPOINTMENT
ONLY.**

LOTS OF NEW RELEASES

**CONTACT TOM BURIAN
ON 0412 391 989**

FOR FURTHER DETAILS.

Try and increase light levels and keep plenty of air movement between plants. Autumn is a problem time of year with fungal problems spurred on by favourable conditions. Hopefully you will get some flowers from plants that did not flower last year and took notes on what you did different that resulted in flowers. To those that do experience this satisfaction a pat on the back. This is what orchid growing is all about. Understand your plant. Sure, you have 100 cym. They are not all the same. They all have different parentage and as such demand different cultural conditions. Find out the parentage, read up or ask, and adopt some of these learnings and you are on your way. An example. A hybrid with *Cym canaliculatum* in the background. A look at the plant shows the deeply channelled leaves so there is some dominance by the parent. I read up. Dry winter, moist summer, hot, grows in trees... mmmm. So I hang him low in summer and high in winter, plenty of water in summer less in winter and bingo after owning it and not flowering it for 5 years it flowers. It was flowering size 3 years ago but was not a happy chappy snuggled in amongst everything else where light levels were low and air movement was restricted.

In summary April is where things start to pick up and become interesting. As winter nears and our spikes get a move on we get to the more serious part of ensuring that they grow to the best of their potential. An early look at my plants and conversations with other growers suggest we should be in for a good year but I also feel for those who were not so lucky with the heat and wish them all the best as they try and bring these plants back to health.

Steve Howard

Editor's Note: Many thanks to Graham Zerbe for organising this article.

THE SANTA BARBARA INTERNATIONAL ORCHID SHOW AND CONGRESS

The Santa Barbara International Orchid Show, is one of the world's most famous annual orchid shows. This year it was the 62nd show, and was open to the public, from Friday 29th February, till Sunday 2nd March. It is held at the local showgrounds, and attracts huge local participation and considerable overseas visitors.

Santa Barbara is in USA, about 120 kilometres north of Los Angeles, right on the west coast. It seems to be a very affluent area, with many multi million dollar mansions. The climate is mild, probably similar to that of Adelaide, but not experiencing our highs. It can however, sometimes go below freezing, overnight. The locals support the show in large numbers. On opening day, the main daily newspaper, had approximately one third of the front page, devoted to the show, and all the motels, had a magazine, with the front cover also promoting the show. There were some 10,000 paying visitors to the show, over the 3 days, plus hundreds of competitors.

The show was spectacular, with large numbers of fabulous displays, and lots of really good orchids. Although it is run by the American Cymbidium Society, there were lots of other orchid genera displayed. I estimate that approximately one half of the flowers on display were non cymbidiums. They have 2 sets of judging, one for cymbidiums, and the other for orchids other than cymbidiums. They have two champion orchids. A champion cymbidium, which is regarded as the real champion, and a champion, other than a cymbidium, and it seems to work ok. This year the show was rated as not one of the best, perhaps because it was relatively early, because the date is somehow linked to Easter, which was very early this year. It was also not a good flowering year this year, probably similar to our poor flowering year of 2007. There were very large numbers of fabulous phalenopsis on display. While I am not a phaly grower, I was hugely impressed by the quality and colour of the phalenopsis on display. There were huge big round whites, with lots of immaculately presented flowers on each spike, and big numbers of yellows, pinks and spotted varieties, which had to be seen to be appreciated. Many were first flowering seedlings.

On Saturday, they hold their annual congress. This is where the dozen or so chapters making up the ACS, meet. They start the Saturday, early with a breakfast, an ACS Board meeting, and a get together of the various chapters. They then go into a series of lectures. This year there were 6 speakers, all invited from overseas. Each speaker talks for about 45 minutes, and they also provide tea breaks and lunch. It started at about 8.30am, and didn't finish till almost 5pm. All the presentations were fabulous and kept the 120 or so participants enthralled for the whole period. There was a presentation from India, one from England, one from New Zealand, and 3 from Australia. Reports given since the Congress, rate this year's, as the best ever.