



Ipswich Orchid Society Inc.

August 2026

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Editor's Message

Dear Readers,

It's that time again where we start preparing for the next big event, our Ipswich Garden Spectacular. Where to begin - fertilising, grooming, staking flower spikes, sorting out plants for sale, checking barcode labels, telling friends and family to book this date, make some craft items or make some jam or pickles if you can and so on. There is plenty to do.

In between these activities, there are so many orchid shows to enjoy on the weekends and find some good buys to add to your orchid collection.

The Ipswich Orchid Society website is now LIVE. Go to www.ipswichorchidsociety.org

Pop online and browse through the different sections. It is so good to have a one stop place for Ipswich Orchid Society information.

The August Growers Group workshop was well-attended. Our guest speaker Maurie Page gave an excellent and comprehensive talk on Dendrochilums. He arrived with a beautiful display of specimen plants and several trays of sale plants that were happily purchased by members. For those who do not know, the genus Dendrochilum was formally moved into Coelogyne on July 6, 2021. It was not a popular move with many orchid growers. However, they are now found in the Genus Coelogyne under the Section Dendrochilum. For those who missed out, I believe Brian Heath has booked Maurie Page for the October General Meeting.

For the September meeting, Richard Brackin has a new talk for us. It is Rarity in Orchids.

Until next month, Denise.

Society Events

Wednesday 2 September: General Meeting –

7 for 7.30pm – Uniting Church Hall, corner of Green St and Glebe Rd, Booval. **Guest speaker** is Richard Brackin who will be talking about ‘Rarity in Orchids’.

Tuesday 18 September: Committee Meeting –

7.30 pm – Uniting Church Hall.

Saturday 19 Sep: Growers Group Workshop -

2pm to 4pm. Please contact Colin Noy to make your booking on 0412 274 148. The topic is Soft Cane Dendrobiums presented by Paul Smith. The workshop will be held at Paul Smith’s residence at 13 Bowen Place, Blackstone. All members are welcome. Please bring a chair.

Saturday & Sunday 3-4 October: Ipswich Garden Spectacular, Silkstone State School, Prospect St., Silkstone

Date Claimer: Saturday 21 November – Bus Trip to Brisbane Orchid Society Show including a stopover visit to Fame Orchids. More details will follow.

Some Epidendrum Flowers from the Bus Trip to the Subtropical Orchid Conference at Bokarina last September.

Upcoming Shows

Saturday & Sunday 22-23 August, Queensland Orchid Society inc. Spring Show, Belmont Shooting Complex, Old Cleveland Road, Belmont.

Saturday & Sunday 22-23 August, Native Orchid Society of Toowoomba Inc. Dendrobium Speciosum & Hybrid Show, St. Pauls Lutheran Church Hall, cnr Phillip & James St., Toowoomba

Saturday & Sunday 29-30 August, North Brisbane Orchid Society Show, Pine River Showgrounds, 757 Gympie Rd., Lawnton

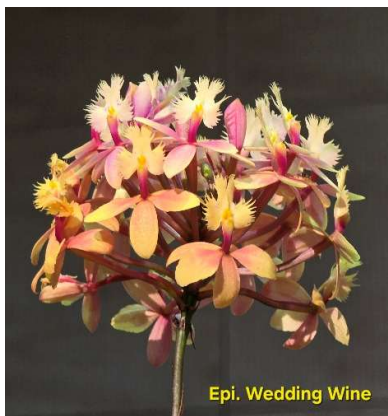
Saturday 29 August, Logan & District Orchid Society Show, Springwood State School, Springwood

Saturday & Sunday 5-6 September, Eastern District Orchid Society Show, Belmont Shooting Complex, Belmont

Saturday & Sunday 12-13 September, Combined West Brisbane Orchid Society and TAPS Spring Show, Auditorium, Mt. Coot-tha Botanical Gardens

Friday & Saturday 18-19 September, Toowoomba Orchid Society Spring Show, St. Pauls Church Hall, 28 Phillip St., Toowoomba

Friday to Sunday 18-20 September, Native Orchid Society of Toowoomba Spring Show, St Johns Lutheran Hall, 431 Bridge St, Toowoomba



Plant of the Night

Fredclarkeara Kataleya Marcus

Grower: Keith & Jenny Howard



Fredclarkeara Kataleya Marcus is a highly unique, intergeneric orchid hybrid belonging to the Catasetinae alliance. It was bred by the renowned orchid hybridiser Fred Clarke of Sunset Valley Orchids and registered by D. Marcus in 2025. It is a cross between Fdk. After Hours 'SVO Heaven Scent' and Catasetum Orchidglade 'JTM'.

As a complex intergeneric hybrid, *Fredclarkeara* (abbreviated **Fdk.**) is created by crossbreeding three distinct orchid genera: *Catasetum*, *Clowesia*, and *Mormodes*.

They are deciduous plants that produce thick, water-storing pseudobulbs. They go through a dramatic active growth phase followed by a strict winter dormancy.

Specimen of the Night

Brassocattleya Golden Bird

Grower: Belinda Stuart



Brassocattleya Yellow Bird is a very popular and highly resilient intergeneric hybrid within the Cattleya Alliance. It is a cross between *Brassavola nodosa* and Brassocattleya Richard Mueller. Known for its colour-shifting blooms and intense fragrance, this plant is frequently praised by hobbyists for its ability to thrive and re-bloom. It is a compact, sympodial epiphyte. It features narrow, tubular, succulent-like leaves (inherited from *Brassavola nodosa*) that grow upright from slender pseudobulbs. A fascinating trait of this orchid is its colour transition. Buds often open with a reddish, peach, or coppery-orange hue. Over 7 to 14 days, they transform into a brilliant, solid golden or canary yellow. The trumpet-shaped lip is frequently decorated with burgundy or red spots.

	<u>Popular Vote</u>	
1st	Bc. Yellow Bird	B. Stuart
2nd	<i>Paph. spicerianum</i> 'Craig's Choice' ACC/AOC	N&L Pointon
3rd	<i>Coel. tenella</i>	C&D Noy
3rd	Ctt. Night Sky 'Waxy'	K. Brackin
	<u>Plant of the Night</u>	
	Fdk. After Hours 'SVO Heaven Scent' x Ctsm. Orchidglade 'JTM' (Registered as Fdk. Kataleya Marcus)	J&K Howard
	<u>Specimen of the Night</u>	
	Bc. Yellow Bird	B. Stuart

	<u>Judges' Choice</u>	
Novice & Junior Growers - Cattleya		
1st	Bc. Topaz Galaxy 'Interstellar'	M. Harris
2nd	C. Unknown	P. Hogan
3rd	C. Unknown	C. Stirling
Novice & Junior Growers - Vandaceous		
1st	<i>Angraecum eburneum</i>	M. Harris
2nd	Phal. Unknown	C. Stirling
3rd	Phal. Unknown	C. Stirling
Novice & Junior Growers - Any Other Genera		
1st	Cym. Mary Green 'Green Gables'	M. Harris
2nd	Cym. Camelot Tartar x Red Squire x Bud's Glow	M. Harris
3rd	Onc. Schimmi	C. Stirling
Australian Natives - Species & Hybrids		
1st	<i>Den. aemulum</i>	C&D Noy
2nd	Den. Ku-Ring-Gai 'Paleface'	C&D Noy
3rd	Den. Elegant Heart 'Aurora'	K. Brackin
Small Exhibition Cattleya		
1st	Rth. Dal's Emperor 'Bat'	B. Truloff
2nd	C. Itsy Bitsy 'Yellow Pearl'	K. Brackin
3rd	Rth. Memoria Nick Woolley 'The Orchid Man'	J&K Howard
Large Exhibition Cattleya		
1st	Rlc. Agatha Lim 'Zoey'	B. Truloff
2nd	Rlc. Burdekin Jewel	B. Truloff
3rd	Rlc. Island Charm 'Carmela' x C. Breen's Jenny Ann	J&K Howard
Non-Exhibition Cattleya		
1st	Lc. Chief Sea 'Allura' (Not RHS Registered)	J&K Howard
2nd	C. Chian Tzy Guiding 'CT Red Top'	C. Crees
3rd	C. Unknown	J&K Howard
Cluster Cattleya		
1st	Ctt. Night Sky 'Waxy'	K. Brackin
2nd	Bc. Yellow Bird	B. Stuart
3rd	Ctt. Fire Gem	E&Y Jonker
Reed-Stemmed Cattleya		
1st	Epi. Unknown	B. Truloff
2nd	Epi. Topaz Special 'Elegante' HCC/AOC	C&D Noy
3rd	Epi. Topaz Rose x <i>Epi. flexuosum</i>	N&L Pointon
Dendrobium		
1st	Den. Gladstone Twist	N&L Smith
2nd	Den. Tangerine Dream x <i>tangerinum</i>	B. Stuart
3rd	Den. C.K.Ai 'OKI'	B. Truloff
Oncidiinea		
1st	Onc. Twinkle Chian-Tzy 'Yearning'	E&Y Jonker
2nd	Odontocidium Catatante 'Kilauea Karma'	B. Heath
3rd	Onc. Twinkle Yellow	B. Stuart
Paphiopedilum & Phragmipedium		
1st	Paph. Neridah 'Rudak'	C&D Noy
2nd	Paph. Busby 'Oriana' x Personality 'Chequers'	C&D Noy
3rd	Paph. Peter Pernar x <i>sukhakulii</i>	C&D Noy

Vandaceous		
1st	Nlra. Tango Fire	N&L Smith
2nd	V. Petite Bouquet 'Violet Gems'	C&D Noy
3rd	V. Kulwadee Fragrance x Kasem's Delight	C&D Noy
Any Other Genera		
1st	Fdk. After Hours 'SVO Heaven Scent' x Ctsm. Orchidglade 'JTM' (Registered as Fdk. Kataleya Marcus)	J&K Howard
2nd	Zygo. Debbie De Mellow 'Honolulu Bay'	B. Heath
3rd	Clowesia Rebecca Northen	C&D Noy
Species - Monopodial		
1st	<i>Rhy. gigantea</i> 'Pink'	N&L Pointon
2nd	<i>Rhy. gigantea</i>	C. Rowland
3rd	<i>Rhy. gigantea</i>	N&L Pointon
Species - Sympodial		
1st	<i>Bulb. lindleyanum</i>	V. Reid
2nd	<i>Paph. christensonianum</i>	N&L Pointon
3rd	<i>Coel. tenella</i>	C&D Noy

Section Winners at the Meeting

		
Bc. Topaz Galaxy 'Interstellar' M. Harris	<i>Angraecum eburneum</i> M. Harris	Cym. Mary Green 'Green Gables' M. Harris
		
<i>Den. aemulum</i> C&D Noy	Rth. Dal's Emperor 'Bat' B. Truloff	Rlc. Agatha Lim 'Zoey' B. Truloff

		
Lc. Chief Sea 'Allura' (Not RHS Registered) J&K Howard	Ctt. Night Sky 'Waxy' K. Brackin	Epi. Unknown B. Truloff
		
Den. Gladstone Twist N&L Smith	Onc. Twinkle Chian-Tzy 'Yearning' E&Y Jonker	Paph. Neridah 'Rudak' C&D Noy
		
Nlra. Tango Fire N&L Smith	Fdk. After Hours 'SVO Heaven Scent' x Ctsm. Orchidglade 'JTM' (Registered as Fdk. Kataleya Marcus) J&K Howard	<i>Rhy. gigantea</i> 'Pink' N&L Pointon

		
<i>Bulb. lindleyanum</i> <i>V. Reid</i>		

Please note: All bold letters and words indicate the correct spelling and registered name of the orchid. Mieke Harris and Katie Brackin undertake this search after every meeting to assist you with your plant's correct name. ***Please update your label.***

Photos from the Meeting



Creating Microclimates in Your Garden and Shade House

Last meeting, our guest speaker was Lynda Rapkins who is an expert grower and orchid judge. Her topic was Microclimates – Creating Environments to Grow Different Genera of Orchids. It was very informative with plenty of examples on what to look for, ideas of how to create various microclimates and, also how to remember them using laminated charts. Lynda provided two factsheets for our use. They were (1) a chart of what orchids go good together, and (2) a chart for key requirements for popular orchid genera. Both charts are below and will also be sent out separately for you to print a copy for yourself.

As we often have several different orchid genera growing in our garden or in our shade house, and those genera require different sets of conditions, we look to see how to achieve these sets of conditions using microclimates to meet their cultural needs to grow well. For example, depending on the light requirements, you may hang some orchids high in the shade house as they require bright light, for those that require medium light levels then sit them on the bench, and for those requiring low light levels, position them under the bench. But before we go further, here is a definition of microclimate.

A microclimate in a shade house is a small, local set of atmospheric conditions—such as temperature, humidity, and airflow—that differs significantly from the surrounding open environment due to the presence of shade cloth and plant density.

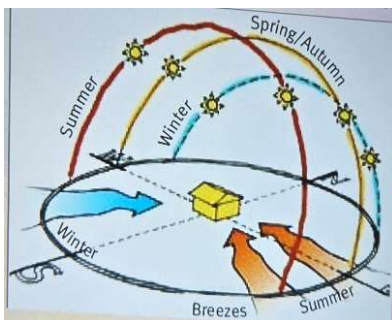
Key Factors:

- **Temperature:** Shade cloth blocks direct sunlight, making the interior cooler than the outside air on hot days.
- **Humidity:** Plants and moist potting medium inside trap moisture, raising the relative humidity levels compared to the open yard.
- **Airflow:** Walls and roofs slow down the wind, creating calmer air pockets that reduce rapid plant drying.
- **Light Quality:** The shadecloth filters sunlight, changing the amount and type of light hitting the plants.

Main Benefits

- Protects our precious orchids from harsh sun and heat stress.
- Reduces water loss from leaves and potting medium.
- Creates a stable, comfortable space for growing different orchids.

Firstly, we need to know where the sunlight falls, the direction of the cold winter winds, the direction of the summer breezes to create microclimates for our orchids.



Secondly, we must observe our environment. Lynda stated that observation is your most powerful weapon. You already have microclimates in your garden, yard and shade house.

Do you know where the sunny warm parts of your orchid growing area are?

The coolest shaded areas are?

Do you have a cool breezeway between houses?

Are there some stagnant corners?

Are there some spots in your growing area where pots dry out quickly?

Where pots stay wet for longer? (Use mixes that dry out or hold water)

Are there some spots that get the blazing midday sun?

Some spots that never get the sun?

Lynda said that you will need to use that knowledge to your advantage. You can choose plants that match the spot. In addition, you can create microclimates that will suit different orchids once you know the orchid's requirements. Some examples are:

For Phalaenopsis:

Low light – your hand held 30cm above the plant should not cast a shadow at midday

Allow to almost dry out before watering again

Never stand the plant in a tray of water

Provide some humidity

For Vanda:

High light -Very bright filtered light but not direct sunlight in the middle of the day

Require strong air movement

Daily watering in active growth season

Require protection from cold drafts and temperature drops below 10 degrees C.

High humidity – above 60%.

Some strategies:

Temperature & Light Intensity:

- Shade cloth selection for Cattleya is recommended for 65%. However, that may change depending on how much shade is in your garden. 50% may be sufficient or you may need more shade if the shade house is in a very hot area.
- In very hot weather, you may need to add an extra layer of shade cloth. Sometimes I add another layer of 50% shadecloth over the 70% shadecloth to increase shade level to 85% to protect my shade loving slipper orchids or Paphiopedilums.
- Misting systems under the benches in hot weather
- Cover parts of the shade house in winter with clear plastic sheeting to protect from the cold dry westerly winds.

Ideal Light Levels

	<u>Foot Candles</u>	<u>Shade factor</u>
- Phalaenopsis	1000-1200	85%
- Paphiopedilum	1200-1500	75%
- Bulbophyllum	1500-2000	75%
- Catasetinae	2500-4000	65%
- Cattleya	2500-3500	65%
- Dendrobium	2500-3500	65%
- Oncidium	2500-3500	65%
- Zygopetalum	2500-3500	65%
- Cymbidium	3500-5000	55%
- Vanda	4000-5500	55%

Fred Clarke Sunset Valley Orchids 2022

Air flow:

- Use oscillating fans in the ceiling area or under the benches
- Hang plants up in the breeze
- Hang bistro/cafe blinds down the side of your house to protect from cold westerly winds and pull up on sunny days
- Polycarbonate sheeting on the roof keeps out cold rain. Remember cold and wet spells disaster for orchids.

Humidity:

- Changes to watering frequency
- Some may require gravel trays under the pot
- Water or mist more often on very hot days
- Water the floor of your house
- Put containers/trays of water under the benches
- Use gravel or astroturf to cover your floor

Laminated Charts: A great idea

- Another is writing some basic info on your label e.g. type of grower: hot, warm, cool, cold; dry winter rest; deciduous.



What orchids grow good together?

Genus	Foot Candles	Temperatures	
		High	Low
Phalaenopsis	1000-1200	24 - 30	20 - 22
Paphiopedilum	1200-1500	24 - 26	16 - 20
Bulbophyllum	1500-2000	24 - 26	16 - 20
Catasetinae	2500-4000	24 - 30	13 - 18
Cattleya	2500-3500	24 - 30	12 - 18
Dendrobium	2500-3500	24 - 30	10 - 18
Oncidium	2500-3500	24 - 30	12 - 18
Zygopetalum	2500-3500	21 - 26	7 - 12
Cymbidiums	3500-5000	21 - 26	4 - 10
Vanda	4000-5000	28 - 34	22 - 25

Fred Clarke, Sunset Valley Orchids, 2022

Phalaenopsis	indirect light	humid	Almost dry out between waterings	
Paphiopedilums	75% shade	humid	Well drained, but never dry out	Warm
Bulbophyllums	Moderate light	85% humidity	Moist, well drained	Warm
Catasetum	Good light	Good air movement	Deciduous. Winter dry, Summer plenty of water and fertiliser	Winter, keep under cover
Cattleyas	Good light	Good air movement, some humidity	Good drainage, almost dry out between waterings	Warm
Dendrobium – hardcane (bigibbum /Cooktown types)	Good light	Good air movement to avoid fungal infections, Humid in growing season	Dryish in Winter, fertilise heavily when growing in Spring/ summer but almost dry out between waterings.	Winter, keep under cover
Dendrobium – soft canes, Indian Dens (aphyllum, primulinum, superbum, loddigesii and their hybrids)	Good light	Good air movement	Deciduous. Winter – dryish, Summer – plenty of water and fertiliser	Winter, keep under cover
Oncidium Alliance	good light	good air movement	Moist but not wet	
Phragmipediums	good light		Summer- roots always moist . Stand in a shallow saucer of water	Winter, no saucer of water
Tolumnia	Good light	Good air movement, mature plants don't need humidity	Daily water, dry out quickly. Mount or basket	
Cymbidium	Good/strong light	Good air movement	Moist, fertilise heavily while in growing phase	Most need cool nights in summer to flower in winter
Vanda types	Strong light	High humidity	Daily water	Warm

Members News

Barbara Humphries is on the mend. She is unable to drive for 8 weeks which is very frustrating. We hope the healing goes well and you will soon be back in the driver's seat.

Sales of Coelogyne Section Dendrochilum orchids proved very popular with members at the recent Growers Group workshop. We look forward to seeing them in flower next year. The Toffee Squares that Belinda Stuart made to share was also very popular. Members asked for the recipe and here it is.

Cheryl Truloff has had an accident at home and is in hospital awaiting surgery. We wish her well and a speedy recovery.

Toffee Squares

Ingredients

200g butter

1 cup brown Sugar

200g Choc bits (can use dark chocolate if preferred)

1 packet Original Premium Crispbread Squares or Salada Biscuits

Method

Preheat oven to 170C. Line two slice trays with foil and spray lightly with cooking oil spray. Lay the biscuits closely together on the trays in a single layer.

Melt together sugar and butter heat until foamy.

Divide mixture between the 2 trays and pour over biscuits spreading quickly before the toffee thickens.

Bake for 10 minutes.

Remove from the oven and sprinkle half the choc bits over each tray immediately while still hot.

Let the chocolate melt for a minute or two before spreading evenly over the biscuits.

Allow to cool and place in the fridge to set. Once set, break into pieces and store in an airtight container in the fridge.



Travel the World Through Orchids

Last meeting, Mieke Harris benched a large *Angraecum eburneum* in the novice monopodial section. We do not usually see *Angraecum* orchids at our meetings or shows so I thought we might explore more about this genus. *Angraecum eburneum* is a very popular orchid.

There is a very famous *Angraecum* known as *Angraecum sesquipedale* and I have seen some stunning examples of this orchid at a recent Brisbane orchid society meeting and at last year's AOC Conference in Woolgoolga.

The Genus *Angraecum*

Angraecum, commonly known as the comet orchid, is a large genus of approximately 220 to 223 species. These monopodial orchids are celebrated for their striking, star-shaped flowers and fascinating evolutionary adaptations.

Key Characteristics

- **Appearance:** The flowers are typically waxy, long-lasting, and star shaped. They range in colour from pure white and ivory to pale green or yellow.
- **Nectar Spurs:** A defining feature of the genus is a long, narrow tubular nectar spur extending from the back of the flower lip.
- **Fragrance:** Most species emit a strong, sweet fragrance exclusively at night to attract nocturnal pollinators like hawk moths.
- **Growth Habit:** They are primarily epiphytes (growing on trees) or lithophytes (growing on rocks), featuring thick, leathery leaves arranged in two alternating rows.

The geographic distribution for this genus is Madagascar and its surrounding Indian Ocean islands, which house over 125 unique species. However, member species are distributed across:

- Tropical and Sub-Saharan Africa
- The Mascarene Islands
- Seychelles and Comoros
- A single outlier species (*Angraecum zeylanicum*) native to Sri Lanka.

Famous Species

- ***Angraecum sesquipedale* (Darwin's Orchid):** The most famous member. Charles Darwin famously predicted that a moth with an 11-inch (30 cm) long proboscis must exist to pollinate its exceptionally deep nectar spur. His prediction was verified decades later with the discovery of the *Xanthopan morganii praedicta* hawk moth.
- ***Angraecum eburneum*:** A robust, large-growing species known for its upside-down (non-resupinate) flowers with prominent white lips.
- ***Angraecum leonis*:** A compact species highly prized by collectors for its beautiful, fan-shaped, flattened leaves.

General Cultural Guidelines

Because they span a massive ecological diversity—from hot coastal lowlands to cool montane cloud forests—care depends heavily on the specific species. However, general orchid care tips according to the American Orchid Society include:

- **Light:** Medium to bright indirect light; avoid harsh, direct midday sun.
- **Watering:** Water frequently during active growth but allow the roots to dry out fully between waterings. They dislike stale, soggy conditions.
- **Potting:** Best grown in open, coarse bark mixtures inside pots or slat baskets to ensure high aeration.

Specific Cultural Conditions for Angraecum eburneum

Angcm. eburneum (commonly known as the Ivory-coloured Angraecum) is a robust, magnificent species. Unlike some of its finicky smaller cousins, it is a rewarding and vigorous grower if given the right conditions. However, it eventually grows quite large, so it requires adequate space to thrive.

Light

Provide bright, indirect light.

- It can tolerate mild morning and late afternoon sun, but harsh, midday rays will scorch its heavy leaves.
- Aim for light levels like what you would give a *Cattleya*.

Temperature

This is a warm-growing tropical orchid native to low elevations in Madagascar and nearby islands.

- Daytime: Ideally between 21°C and 30°C.
- Nighttime: Preferring a slight drop down to 15°C to 18°C.
- Winter Warning: Protect the plant from cold draughts. Bring it fully indoors if night temperatures consistently drop below 10°C (50°F), as cold and wet conditions can cause rapid basal rot.

Watering

Angraecum eburneum appreciates a frequent wet-to-dry cycle.

- Water thoroughly when the potting medium is almost dry, roughly every 5 to 7 days depending on your home environment.
- Never let the plant sit inside a tray of standing water.
- Crucial Tip: Avoid getting water trapped in the crown or the leaf joints. Stagnant water sitting in the centre of monopodial orchids easily promotes devastating crown rot. Water early in the day so it dries before evening.

Humidity & Air Movement

- Humidity: It prefers high humidity between 60% and 80%.
- Air Flow: Strong, continuous air movement is vital. Stagnant air combined with high humidity invites fungal and bacterial leaf spot infections.

Potting & Medium

Because it grows massive and top-heavy, a heavy clay pot or an open wooden slat basket is ideal to prevent it from tipping over.

- Use a very coarse, chunkier epiphyte mix. A blend of large bark pieces, charcoal, and perlite or pumice provides excellent drainage and allows the large aerial roots to breathe.
- Root Sensitivity: *Angraecum* species dislike having their roots disturbed. Only repot every 2 to 3 years when the medium completely breaks down. When you must repot, do it in early spring when active new root tips are emerging, so it recovers quickly.

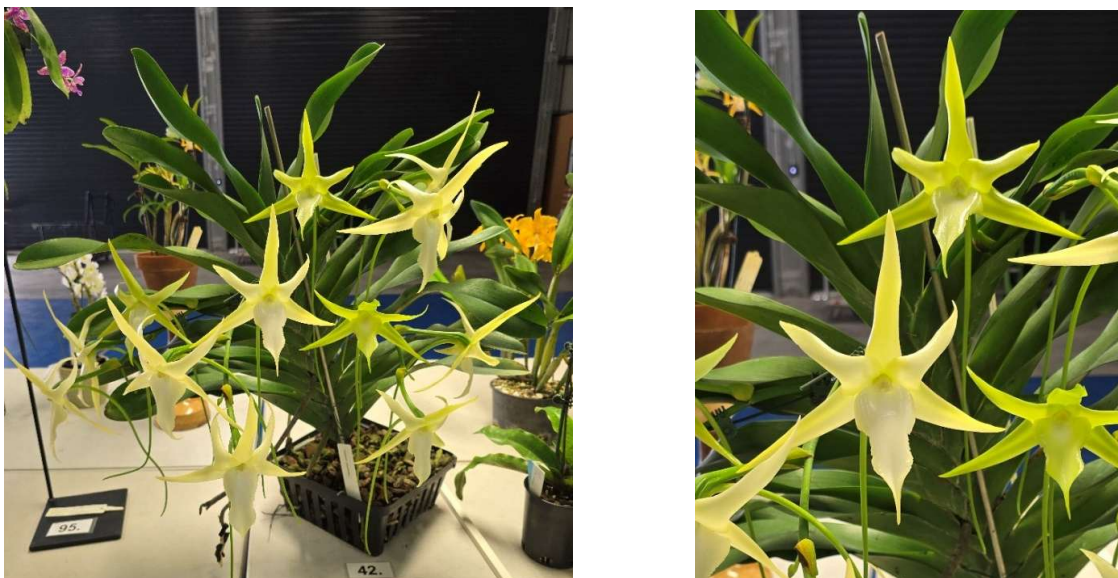
Fertiliser

- Use a balanced liquid orchid fertiliser (like a 20-20-20 formula) diluted to half-strength.
- Feed every two weeks during active growth in spring and summer.
- Reduce feeding to once a month or stop entirely during the dark winter months when growth slows down, as unused fertilizer will build up and burn the roots.

Photos of Mieke's *Angraecum eburneum*



Photos of *Angraecum sesquipedale* from a recent orchid society meeting in Brisbane



Aussie Orchids in Bloom

In bloom now: *Dendrobium aemulum*

At the last meeting, orchid judge Mathew Irwin chose an Australian native – *Dendrobium aemulum* – from the bench to talk about this orchid. Just in case you didn't know, Mat is also the President of the Native Orchid Society of Toowoomba (NOSTI) hence his strong interest in native orchids.

Dendrobium aemulum is in full flower now. A bush walk in open forest around the coastal areas where ironbark and brushbox trees can be found is where these orchids can be seen. They are in bloom here in South-East Queensland and in New South Wales.

“Old Angus called it the Ironbark Orchid. For fifty years, he had watched the gnarled Dendrobium aemulum cling to the rough, dark bark of the ironbark eucalyptus tree outside his kitchen window. Every September, just as the Australian winter gave way to spring, the orchid performed its annual magic trick.

From seemingly dead, dry pseudobulbs, thin spikes pushed skyward. Within days, they burst into explosion of pale, feathery white blossoms. The tiny star-shaped flowers looked like a cloud of forest fairies resting on the rugged tree. They filled the morning air with a heavy, sweet fragrance, attracting wild native bees that buzzed happily through the canopy.

Angus never watered it. He never fertilized it. The orchid thrived on pure resilience, drinking only the morning mist and the occasional passing rainstorm, proving that true beauty often blooms in the harshest places.”

Care requirements for *Den. aemulum* in shade houses in Ipswich region:

Grow on cork or rough hardwood blocks.

Provide bright filtered light. They love morning sun but need protection from harsh afternoon heat.

Water heavily during summer growth. Reduce watering significantly in winter to a light misting.

Maintain high air movement. This is critical to prevent root rot and mimic their natural treetop habitat.

Keep in cool-to-warm conditions. They are hardy and tolerate light winter frosts down to 2°C.

