



# The Cymbidium Newsletter

Reg No A0023705W COSV Website: [www.cosv.com.au](http://www.cosv.com.au)

## July/August 2011

### 2011 Meeting Dates

January –  
February 8  
March 8  
April 12  
May 10  
June 14  
July 12  
August 9  
September 13  
October 11  
November 8  
December 13

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  - Assistant Editor/Website Manager: **Geoff Bailey** T: 03 5995 5524
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  - Assistant Registrar: **Glenda Coutts** T: 03 9727 4849
  - Promotions & Sales:, **Peter Sunderland** T: 5998 2535, **Colin Gillespie** T: 03 5998 2402  
**John Forrest** T : 03 5978 6045
- Meetings:** The 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month (except January), Mt Waverley Community Centre, Youth Centre Hall, Miller Crescent, Mount Waverley (Melway 61/D12 and 70/D1). The hall is off Stephenson Road and is next to the Library.  
**Meetings start at 8.00pm. Basket Supper please.**

### \*Last months meeting:

Our main item for the evening was our annual auction, a big thank you to all the members who brought in plants for the auction and a special thank you to all the members who purchased plants, our auction was once again run by Ern Kettle who always does a good job and was ably assisted by Ken West, Terry Poulton, Kevin Brown and our Treasurer Henk Morren, We raised well in excess of \$1000, well done and thanks to everyone. Terry Poulton gave us a very informative talk on how he grows and breeds his cymbidiums.

### \*Cultural talk and main item for the evening:

This month's cultural talk and main item will be combined and led by Terry Poulton and a few of the Committee members who will be bringing in Parents and siblings of Cymbidiums they have crossed over the years, so members can get an insight into how important it is to choose the correct plants to breed with.

### \*Growing Competition:

Please remember to bring in your plants for the growing competition, members who have been supporting this competition we thank you, by all accounts you are all growing your plants very well, we would also like you to bring in any of the last 4 years growing competition plants they do not have to be in flower, below is a list to remind members of which plants we had for our growing competition.

2007 Mericlone – Lunakira Gleam  
2008 Mericlone – Foxfire Veridian 'Stargate'  
2009 Mericlone – Kimberley Splash 'Calypso'

Seedling – Kellys Winter x Khan Flame  
Seedling – Paradisian Pride (Devon Parish x  
Ruby Eyes)  
Seedling – Alvins Star 'Southern Ocean  
x Paradise Star 'White Cloud'

2010 Mericlone – Valley Olympic ‘Pink Perfection’

Seedling – Joans Era ‘No 1’ x Kingwin  
‘South Park’

The plants in this year’s competition are:

Mericlone : Radiant Ruby ‘Aussie Gem’ – dark red miniature

Seedling : Lunar Wall ‘Dural x Uluru ‘Orange Delight’ – standard cymbidium which should produce orange/yellow maybe with a bit of a splash petal.

**\*Plant Commentary:**

As this is a busy time of the year for flowering cymbidiums and depending on the number of plants benched will be giving an extended commentary on the plants brought in for judging this month, this will be led By Ern Kettle and assisted by Stephen Early and Peter Sunderland.

**\*Bus Trip:**

Our bus trip was held on the 17<sup>th</sup> July and by all accounts was very successful, everyone who made the trip have commented that they had a good day, first stop was at Colin and Karen Gillespie, where everyone had the opportunity to see our laboratory and also our Cymbidium Shadehouse and seedling house we had a few first release seedlings for sale, although our property is in the process of being developed there were a few plants to see, after the trek around the property we all tucked into morning tea, Colin gave an impromptu question and answer session and then it was off to Kimberley Orchids, which is always a pleasure to visit, so neat and tidy and a beautiful collection of well grown and flowered cymbidiums, some members spent some of their money on plants that Peter, Joyce and Jenny had to offer, then we were treated to a lovely lunch which was enjoyed by everyone, the day was not done by any means, at 2.30pm it was back on the bus for a trip down the road to Terry Poulton’s place to see how he does things at his new shadehouse and tea was supplied after the very busy day the bus took everyone back to the Hall, a big thank you to everyone who organized the day especially Jenny our Secretary, Kevin Brown and Ern Kettle, along with Kimberley Orchids, Colin and Karen Gillespie and Terry Poulton for allowing members visit their Orchids and being so hospitable. I am sure we will organize a trip like this again in the future.

**\*Virus test kits**

If anyone is still looking for virus test kits these can be purchased from Randall Robinson.

**\* Results for the monthly Competition:**

Apologies I did not have the results to hand when the newsletter was due to be sent, will print results in next month’s newsletter.

**\*Monthly Raffle**

If any member would like to donate anything to our monthly raffle they are more welcome to do so, these funds all contribute to the running of your club.

**\*Advertising in the Newsletter**

Please note that there are no adverts in this month’s newsletter as our advertisers year is up, anyone wishing to advertise kindly speak to the Secretary at the meeting.

**\*20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show Dinner**

Thanks to members who paid for their dinner at the last meeting, as time is running out all tickets that are not paid at the next meeting will be passed onto the next person on the waiting list, please see Karen at the meeting to make payment.

## **\*Basket Supper**

Kindly bring a plate of eats to share after the meeting.

## **\*Cymbidium Orchid Festival (20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show)**

Here is an update of our forthcoming show from Geoff Bailey.

### Show News

1. Please remember that set-up is on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> September commencing at 10:00am. All displays must be completed no later than 5:00pm. This timeline also applies to anyone setting up tables for plant sales.
2. The show closes at 4:00pm on Sunday 11 September. It would be appreciated if all cleaning up could be completed by approximately 5:00pm. Remember that – “more hands make light work”. Thank you.
3. Volunteers for setting-up and pulling-down are still needed. Even if you can only help for a short time your efforts will be greatly appreciated. Please remember that this is the club’s show and not the committee’s show. The committee members have done all the hard work planning the show and will no doubt work hard throughout the duration of the show. This is your chance to lend a hand and support all their efforts.
4. Displays – members are able to use Blutack to secure backdrops to the brick wall (but please make sure you remove all traces of it at the end of the show). Plastic sheets to protect the timber floor will be provided. Members must provide all their own props. Please remember that foliage plants are permissible but plants in flower, other than cymbidiums, are not allowed.
5. A club stand, where members can display plants will be set-up, please ensure that plants are labelled appropriately. All plants should be brought to the venue early on the Friday, certainly no later than 2:00pm. This will allow a great display to be set-up. The club stand will be a major feature of the show and will probably have prime position down the centre of the hall. We need lots of plants to make a real statement.
6. Flyers and posters advertising the show will be available at our next meeting – please take some. We want this show to be the best cymbidium show ever seen in Victoria. Most public libraries, shops and nurseries will happily display posters and flyers. We just need members to take them to them. We only had a couple of members take them last meeting – it would be sad if all the planning and preparation came to nothing because of a lack of effort and support from our members – please don’t let us down. We plan to advertise in over 200 000 local papers but we still definitely need your support.
7. Morning and afternoon teas can be purchased at the restaurant on site. Tea and coffee will be available (free of charge) for all helpers in the main hall.
8. Please remember that the committee has agreed to discount the admission cost for all members. All exhibitors will enjoy free admission.

This show should be a good one, if it is successful, the Hungarian Community Centre could become the permanent home for our show – please make sure this happens!!!

If you have any questions regarding any aspect of the show please contact Geoff Bailey –  
Mob: 0488088138 H:59955524

### **\*More Show News from Julie Forrest:**

The August meeting is the last before our Show on September Saturday & Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> at the Hungarian Community Centre 760 Boronia Rd Wantirna. Set up is Friday 9<sup>th</sup> September from 10:am – 4:pm. Admission \$5.00, conc. \$3.00. If possible it would be wonderful if members who haven't registered to set up a display stand would consider doing so. Registration forms will be available at the next meeting. There will be a club stand as well, so if you do not have enough plants for a display stand consider putting plants on the club stand.

We hope to make this show the best yet but we need the participation of members to make it happen. We need all members to help advertise the show, there will be flyers & posters available at the meeting so please take some to distribute amongst the community.

### **\*Club Badges**

For any member who does not have a club badge these are available to order from Henk at a cost of \$12 each.

### **\*COSV Website**

All members who have access to a computer please make use of our website for all the up to date news, show dates, photographs etc, we thank Geoff Bailey for all his hard work in maintaining the website.

### **\*Cultural Notes for this month:**

Once all the shows are over and flowering complete most of us will be either re-potting some of our plants or potting them on, we have enclosed an article by Brian Milligan on Back bulbs to give you an insight into how and why Brian strikes a back bulb, this article and many more are available on the OSCOV website for which we thank them.

### **\*New Members:**

This month we welcome Peter Vassalo to our club and hope he has a long enjoyable stay amongst orchid friends.

### **\*Dates for your diary**

As we enter the show season there are quite a few shows coming up, I will list a few all the rest are available on the OSCOV website:

**National Cymbidium Orchid Show**  
**Saturday 20 August - 9.00am to 5.00pm**  
**Sunday 21 August 2011 - 9.00am to 4.00-m**  
Noarlunga Leisure Centre  
David Witton Drive  
Noarlunga Centre

**Friday 26th August - Sunday 28th August**  
**OSCOV Show - Melbourne International Orchid Spectacular**  
Springer's Leisure Centre  
Cheltenham Rd., Keysborough (Mel 89 A10)

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## STRIKING BACK-BULBS: ADVICE for NOVICE GROWERS by Brian Milligan



*Cymbidium Without Peer 'Soft Touch' HCC/OSCOV*

For the benefit of novice growers I should explain that a back-bulb is a bulb that has lost all its leaves, hopefully because of age rather than disease. When a cymbidium is repotted, it's desirable to remove these leafless bulbs, preferably by severing the rhizome linking them to the rest of the plant. It's best to use a sterile knife or scissors, but some growers simply twist the connecting rhizome by hand until it breaks. Having removed the back-bulbs, how do you 'strike' them and why? 'Striking' is jargon for encouraging the back-bulb to produce new growth from incipient leaf nodes, which are mostly located near the base of the bulb.

To prepare a back-bulb for 'striking' first remove any old leaf husks, as these may harbour scale and other insect pests. Then cut any residual roots back to their junction with the back-bulb and trim the break if the bulb was removed by twisting. To minimise infection by any of the organisms responsible for rot the cut surfaces should be sealed, either with Steri-Prune® (or similar sealing paste) or by leaving the bulb lying in the shade for a few days for the cut surfaces to form a scab or callus. Alternatively the cut surfaces can be dusted with a fungicide. Leaving the back-bulbs to dry for a few days is the simplest option.

There are many different ways of striking back-bulbs. I've used several different methods, each with a fair measure of success. The simplest method, involving least effort, is simply to bury the back-bulb to two thirds of its depth in the same potting medium that you use for the rest of your collection. If you use a 4-in pot then no attention will be needed for two years except regular watering and the addition of a little slow release fertiliser in spring.

Some back-bulbs strike more rapidly than others. If a leaf growth appears within three months you're doing well, while six months would be average. If there's no sign of growth within twelve months all but the super-optimist should give up (there are always a few back-bulbs each year that fail to strike). Generally, roots do not appear until the leaf growth is several inches tall, and there is no point in applying slow-release fertiliser until this stage is reached. If you're keen, there may be some benefit in applying liquid fertiliser to the foliage at an earlier stage as liquid fertilisers are absorbed by leaves as well as by roots.



*Cymbidium Do Wop 'Woopie' HCC/OSCOV*

In recent years I've struck back-bulbs of my more highly valued cymbidiums using *Sphagnum* moss as the potting medium. This method seems to produce more rapid growth, but that's probably because I place the pots in my heated glass-house during winter. After about a year the moss is removed and replaced with conventional cymbidium mix. A modified version of this method has been used by some growers for many years. The back-bulbs are placed in a plastic bag with a little very wet *Sphagnum* moss and the bag is then sealed and hung in the shade-house. The struck back-bulbs are potted in cymbidium mix when the leaves and roots are a few inches long.

The old back-bulb eventually rots and it should be removed from the new plant as soon as rot is detected. While the bulb is in good condition it provides the plant with nutrients, so it's best to leave it attached as long as possible. However, some growers remove the old back-bulb as soon as the new plant appears able to support itself and then attempt to make it strike a second time. This often works, particularly with large back-bulbs, although the chances of the bulb rotting during its second year are much greater, of course.

So, novice grower, now you know how to increase your cymbidium collection. But be warned - it takes four years on average for the new plant to reach flowering size and if you strike all your back-bulbs you will soon have to move to larger premises!