



COFFS ORCHID NEWS – OCTOBER, 2021

PUBLICATION OF THE COFFS HARBOUR ORCHID SOCIETY

P.O. Box 801, Coffs Harbour. NSW 2450

Email: chorchidsociety@gmail.com

Web: www.coffsorchidsociety.org.au

SURVEY RESULTS – September 2021

Well, what a *topsy-turvy* year this has been but the results from our recent Survey are showing that we have been able to keep an element of stability and successful outcomes in the way that our Society functions during these difficult times. Our initial brief was to identify any issues which may inhibit our moving forward, and to acknowledge areas which have proven to be popular. Thank you so much to all the Members who participated, especially those who offered some interesting and insightful comments. This is just a brief synopsis – Executive Summary if you will – which indicates that the way we operate is working well, with a few concerns which are mentioned below.

From the responses, it seems that we are certainly fulfilling your needs as an orchid grower, with our selection of Speakers, general information, the Newsletter, Shows, excursions, Workshops, and monthly competitions, plus the opportunity to interact and socialise which often garners even more information. There was a sense that we should have less Administration at the meetings but unfortunately this is a requirement, and we have endeavoured to reduce it as much as possible by referring to the Reports in the Newsletter – and speaking quickly!! Introducing our Guest Speaker after Supper has proved to be very popular.

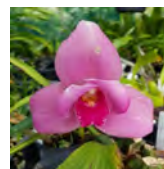
Members were generally happy with the timing of our meetings on a Thursday night although there was also a leaning towards a Saturday afternoon. After consideration, we have decided to continue with our Thursday nights but during the Winter months will start earlier – 6.30pm rather than 7.30pm, which will address some concerns re weather conditions and a reluctance to venture out at this time of the year.

Fees are always a contentious issue and two-thirds of you supported an increase to various degrees, but given that we have tremendous support with our Raffles and other fund-raising events throughout the year, such as the Bunnings Sausage Sizzle, we have decided to maintain the current levels, but new members from next year who do not have email access will be asked to contribute an additional amount for the printing and mailing out of Newsletters.

A full copy of the final Survey results will be attached to the Committee Minutes which are available at each of our General meetings – when we have them ! If anyone has concerns or issues to raise, please do not hesitate to contact one of the Committee members, and we are always interested to hear of new ideas to encourage participation. Thank you again. Carole Davis, President CHOS.

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Brydie

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CHOS COMMITTEE 2021**CONTACT DETAILS**

<u>PRESIDENT:</u>	CAROLE DAVIS	026658 1354
<u>VICE PRESIDENT:</u>	BOB SOUTHWELL	0417 695 834
<u>SECRETARY:</u>	PAIGE SINCLAIR	0427 591 901 paigesinclair@me.com
<u>TREASURER:</u>	BRUCE HALL	0447 742 030
<u>COMMITTEE:</u>	LEONIE EVERITT	0427 146 149
	NEIL McDONALD	0414 342 9 78
	JUDITH WHITING	0438 187 028
<u>NEWSLETTER EDITOR:</u>	BOB SOUTHWELL	0417 695 834 bssouthwell@bigpond.com

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Brekkie and Modern Australian dishes in a light, upscale locale with outdoor tables and lovely views over Coffs Creek. 321 Harbour Drive, Coffs Harbour.
www.shearwaterrestaurant.com.au or Phone 6651 6053.

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Deceased Estates. Ulmarra. 0402 044601

COFFS HARBOUR PRODUCE

Coffs Harbour Produce is at 26 June Street in Coffs. They carry a good range of fertilisers, insecticides and fungicides for orchids, as well as general garden needs. Phone 02 6652 2599.

COFFS COAST MOTORS

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You won't be disappointed .

TINONEE ORCHIDS

Tinonee Orchids carries a wide variety of orchids and orchid growing supplies—coconut fibre, pots, etc. They provide quick delivery of orders. 02 6553 1012

www.tinoneeorchids.com

BRUCE HALL

Bruce provides the raffle prizes for both the Autumn and Spring Shows.

CALENDAR, 2021

7 Oct—Monthly Meeting - Auction

16 Oct – 50th Anniversary Luncheon at Opal Cove Guest Speaker – Jody Cutajar.

POSTPONED—2ND APRIL, 22

4 Nov—AGM/Monthly Meeting
Dick Cooper "Birds"

14Nov—WDOS Workshop.
Woolg Primary School
9am to 3.30pm

4 Dec— Lunch at Green House Tavern. Awards & Presentation

3 Feb, 2022 - TBA

3 Mar, 2022 - TBA

2 Apr, 2022—50th Anniversary Luncheon at Opal Cove Guest Speaker – Jody Cutajar.



3. EVENTS FOR OCTOBER TO DECEMBER, 2021:

We all thought 2020 was a year that we would never want to see repeated but 2021 must be getting close to being as disastrous as last year. Luckily, we were able to hold some restricted monthly meetings early in the year and we had a very successful Autumn Show. Wonderful orchids were on display and sales of raffle tickets, plants and entry donations were all high. We were able to stage a well attended August Meeting at the new venue of the Uniting Church, with a great guest speaker and again amazing orchids on display. In between these events we have had to cancel or postpone due to tighter Covid-19 restrictions or full lockdown. Majority of us are now fully vaccinated, or nearly so, and that light at the end of the tunnel is starting to get brighter once again. Unfortunately we have had to postpone our 50th Anniversary Celebrations because Opal Cove are not opening their restaurant until later in October. In addition, our guest speaker, Jody Cutajar, is currently in total lockdown on the Central Coast. This luncheon has been rescheduled for Saturday, 2nd April, 2022. Our hope is for a successful luncheon that is well attended by our members as we celebrate the "new normal" of 2022.

Now on a more positive note, let us look towards what is on offer for the remainder of 2021.

Monthly Meetings:

The October meeting is still going ahead and is set down for Thursday 7th and will once again be held in the Uniting Church on the corner of Vernon and Gordon Streets, Coffs Harbour. Covid-19 restrictions will apply and all members are asked to sit in the allocated seating and only sit closer together if you live together, etc. All in attendance must wear a mask, use hand sanitiser and sign in using the QR Code, etc. Tables will be set up for the usual monthly flower competition, so bring as many orchids as you can, so we can all enjoy a belated Spring Show. Members are also asked to bring a contribution for supper to be held later in the meeting. The highlight of the meeting will be the annual Plant Auction. Members are asked to donate what they can and deposit these on the tables provided at the front of the meeting room. This is always an opportunity for members to purchase orchids at reasonable prices. This year we will have credit card facilities available in case you make that rash purchase.

The November meeting will include the AGM and an illustrated talk given by our own Australian Bird Expert, Dick Cooper.

AGM and 2022 Committee Nominations:

The AGM (we haven't had one for two years) will take place before the General Monthly Meeting on Thursday, 4th November. This will include the financial reports for 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 and the election of your Committee for 2022. Nominations are now being called for all positions on the Committee (Four Executive and three Committee positions). These nominations will close with the Secretary on the evening of 28th October, 2021. Bruce Hall (Treasurer) and Neil McDonald (Committee) have decided not to stand again for election for 2022. These two members have both given outstanding service for many years and have made a valuable contribution to our Society. Their input and work effort will be sadly missed, however I am hopeful they will continue to contribute to the Society in other ways. They both have no intention of giving up growing orchids. Thank you Bruce and Neil for all that you have done and for the way you continue to share your orchid knowledge.

If you would like to join the Committee, or know of someone who would, then please complete a nomination form. Nomination forms will be available at the October meeting. The success of the CHOS depends on having an active and vibrant committee which looks after the needs of its members.

Christmas Luncheon:

This year we have decided to have a change with our Awards and Christmas Celebration Meeting. Instead of the usual Thursday night dinner we have opted for a Saturday lunch at the Green House Tavern, Coffs Harbour. As monthly competitions have been reduced this year we are not sure as to how many prizes will be awarded. More details in the next newsletter. Lets make it a happy get-together event to celebrate our survival of 2021.

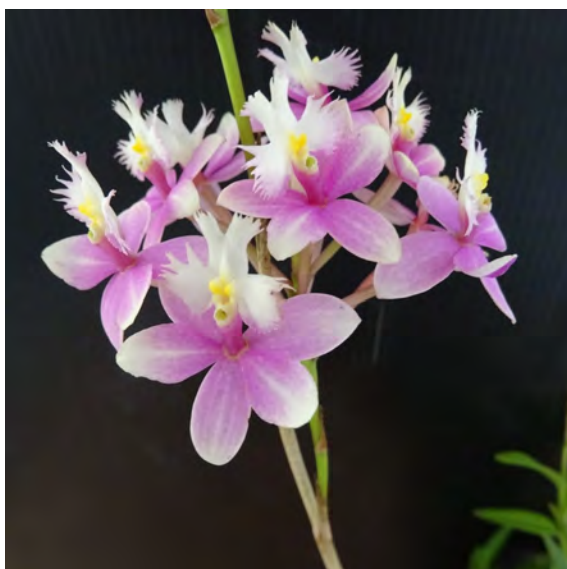
New Growing Plant Competition:

The final judging of the current Sarcophilus Growing Competition will take place at the October meeting. Please bring along your Sarc so you can gain any additional points. Winners and Runner-Ups for this competition will be presented with their prizes at the Christmas Awards Luncheon in December.

We will start a new competition in November and this will run through 2022. This new competition will be based on a hybrid Epidendrum grown by Scott Barrie from Barrita Orchids.

The selected clone is Epidendrum Princess Valley 'Blushing'. Each plant will be sold to members for \$10 each (one plant per member). It is recommended that all members take the opportunity to purchase one of these plants for their collection even if they prefer not to be part in the ongoing competition. There is a maximum of forty (40) plants so get in early to reserve your plant.

Paige will be making a list at next Thursday's meeting and you can pay Paige or Bruce this Thursday or at the November meeting. Get your name on the list so you won't be disappointed. The plant draw will take place during the November meeting. We will provide each member with a Growing Guide to help you successfully grow this Epi.



Epidendrum Princess Valley 'Blushing'.

This is a clone of beautiful, blushed pink. It has medium sized flowers held on excellent spikes.

It is the cross of *Epi. secundum* X *Epi. radicans* (therefore considered a primary hybrid).



AGENDA FOR THURSDAY 7TH OCTOBER MEETING:

Welcome / Covid-19 procedures Judges: Helen Seiver & Gary Suter

Apologies

Minutes of August, 2021, Meeting – as printed in September newsletter

Correspondence - Paige

Finance Report - Bruce

Sponsors Spot – Coffs Coast Motors

Presentation to New Members

Award Presentation—Dick Cooper

Table Talk

Popular Vote

Judging Results of Sarco Comp Plant

Raffle – Judith

General Business – 50th Anniversary Luncheon—new date

- AGM/Committee Nominations (Due by 28/10/21)

- New Plant Growing Competition—Bob

- Other General Business

Supper Break – 15 minutes

Plant Auction—Auctioneer Bruce Hall



The CHOS
Christmas Lunch
4th December 2021
Greenhouse Tavern
12:00 -15:30

We hope to see you there
with your + one! More
details to come, stay
tuned!

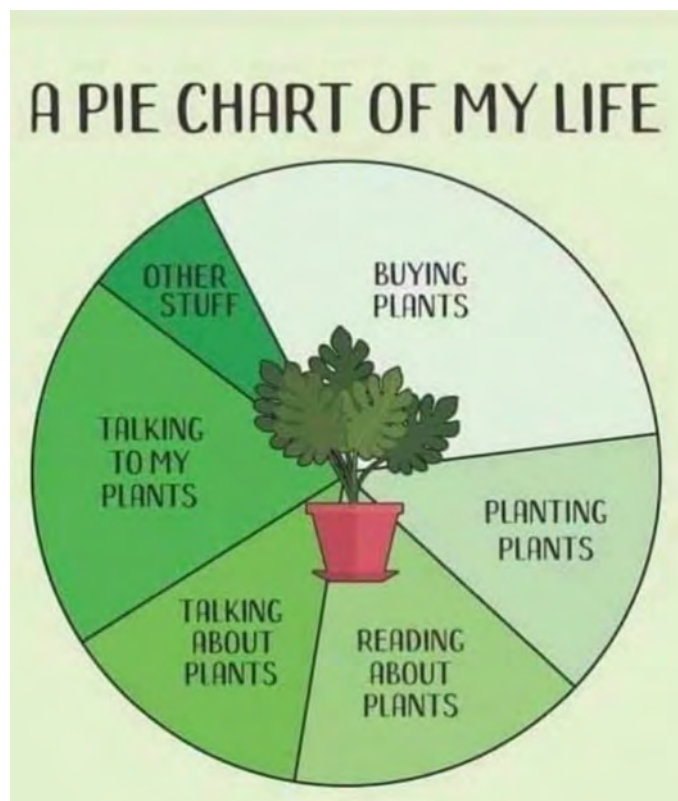


5. COMMITTEE MEETING REPORT, SEPTEMBER, 2021:

The September Committee Meeting was held via Zoom on 7th September, 2021.

Topics discussed included:

- 50th Anniversary Luncheon— Tickets now on sale \$25 per person. Timeline reviewed. Invitations to Sponsors are ready to be send out. Discussion of alternative plans if Covid restrictions prevent the function taking place on 16th October.
- Bunnings Fund Raising Event—Bruce Hall reported a profit of \$1106.48. Well done to all involved in this event.
- The Society has obtained equipment to take credit card payments for all financial transactions.
- Survey results tabled and discussed. A detailed summary will be presented in the October newsletter.
- The Spring Show and September meeting have been cancelled.
- Graham Armstrong has been approved as a new member.
- Next Committee Meeting scheduled for 12th October, 2021.



50TH ANNIVERSARY LUNCHEON AT OPAL COVE HAS BEEN POSTPONED

UNTIL SATURDAY, 2ND APRIL 2022.

TICKETS STILL ON SALE FOR \$25.

GUEST SPEAKER WILL BE JODY CUTAJAR

6. FACEBOOK REPORT: (from Paige Sinclair)

Coffs Harbour Orchid Society Facebook September, 2021

Currently, the society has 171 likes and 194 followers on our Facebook page. This is up by 29 people for the August 2021 period, and from the creation of our Facebook page 108 people or over 500%.

What's in Bloom Facebook Page Sept 2021

Fun Virtual Spring Show 2021

Congratulations to our Grand Champion – Helen Seiver with her *Dendrobium lindleyi*, and to our Reserve Champion – Malcolm Ide with his *Sarcochilus falcatus*. Both excellent examples of well-grown plants.

The total participation in this Fun Virtual Spring Orchid Show was AWESOME! In total there were 139 plants posted on the 'What's in Bloom' Facebook page, with 79 comments and 1,439 reactions. That's a lot of likes, Wow's and Love's!! Let's hope next Autumn, people can see these stunning plants in person. A big thank you to all who participated.



Helen Seiver's Grand Champ Den. lindleyi



Malcolm Ide's Reserve Champ Sarco. falcatus

(Editor: Special thanks to Paige for all her efforts in organising this Virtual Benching.

I am continually amazed at the wide variety of excellent orchids that our members grow)

7. SPONSORS SPOT: Coffs Coast Motors

For Mazda and Honda vehicles, also second-hand vehicles, and ALL your servicing needs. Do your shopping while your car is serviced. Phone: 6652 3122.

211 Pacific Highway, Coffs Harbour. Visit their website – www.coffscostmotors.com.au

They support us so please support them.

8. BARK SUPPLIES FROM CHOS FOR THE SPRING POTTING SEASON:

The Society stocks 40 litre bags of NZ Orchidata Bark selling at \$27 each and 35 litre bags selling at \$26 each. There are four sizes – 6 to 9mm; 9 to 12mm; 12 to 18mm and 18 to 25mm. Contact Bob Southwell on 0417 695 834 or email bssouthwell@bigpond.com. Remember if you desire quality plants then always use quality potting mix. Spring has arrived and it is time to start repotting with the aim being to repot at least 50% of your orchids each year. Remember, in general terms, most orchids should be repotted every two years but some, such as *Phalaenopsis*, respond well to re-potting every year. **Bob is happy to supply bark at anytime but with Covid-19 restrictions in place you will need to organise a contactless method of pick-up and payment.**

ONLY LIMITED AMOUNTS OF 9-12 AND 12-18 mm BARK – BUY NOW IF YOU NEED SUPPLIES

9. CHOS MEMBERS GAINED AN AWARD OF CULTURAL EXCELLENCE (ACE):

Congratulations to Bill and Jenny Lennon for gaining an ACE for their *Dendrochilum tenellum*. This is the highest cultural award given to Australian Orchid Growers.

Bill and Jenny obtained a small piece of this plant from the late Steve Clemesha six years ago.

It is now in a 200mm pot and measures around 800mm across.

To commemorate Steve's memory the plant has been named *Dendrochilum tenellum* 'Steve Clemesha B & J' ACE/AOC (NSW)



***Dendrochilum tenellum* 'Steve Clemesha B & J' ACE/AOC (NSW)**

10. Mediocalcar decoratum and friends :

by Jim Brydie

(This is an extract from the KOS August, 2021 Newsletter and is printed with permission)

In this month's Virtual Benching, you may not have even noticed the little picture of a Mediocalcar sent in by Christine Rethers. It was a picture of a nice little plant, but it was just a small picture among a bevy of other colourful and exotic orchids.

All the specialist Cattleya or Cymbidium growers are probably poo-pooing already, knowing that Mediocalcar are miniature orchids with rather small flowers, but anyone who already grows this little beauty will know what a real delight it is. Yes, the flowers are smallish, but so is the plant. Good size Mediocalcar flowers are about 1cm x 1cm, but perhaps an average plant might have flowers around 0.6 to 0.8 cm. This is a plant grown for mass display, not for the impressive single flower.



I have grown Mediocalcar for many years and currently have three species, but I was surprised to find that I have never previously written about the genus to encourage more growers to see what a little gems they are. Now must be the time.

There are 20 species in the genus Mediocalcar. They are small mat forming epiphytes from Sulawesi, Moluccas, Papua New Guinea, and east to Samoa. The genus is in the Eriinae family so the only relative genus you are ever likely to hear about is Eria. There are 370 Eria species and probably only a dozen of those are fairly widely grown so they aren't common. Many Eria look something like cane type Dendrobiums but others are quite different. The only other Eriinae genus you may come across is Trichotosia and I mention that because I grow Trichotosia velutina and have sold many divisions of it, so I know there are pieces about. It is a curious little pendant orchid with hairy grey/green leaves and attractive small white flowers, but to my eyes it is most attractive as a curiosity foliage plant.

However, our subject here is Mediocalcar. These are small plants with multiple fleshy leaves and a growth habit that branches in many directions. In many cases it tends to grow over itself and has many air roots. In some species the pseudobulbs are spread out, separated by a rather long rhizome, in others, like decoratum, the pseudobulbs are very close together. The flowers are uniquely urn shape, brightly coloured, and produce nectar. It is believed they are pollinated by nectar feeding birds.

They grow as epiphytes but are also found as lithophytes and also on the ground. They frequently grow in and amongst mosses in all habitats. All of the half dozen species I have seen come from PNG although some of those do also occur in other locations. In nature, they grow in mountain forests, generally at higher elevations (800 – 2600 m), which even in the tropics are quite cool overnight. The higher up, the colder. These elevations allow us to grow them without artificial heat in our Sydney shade houses but as Sydney often has wet winters, steps need to be taken to protect these little plants from excessive water with the cold. So what kind of natural habitat does that describe?



The pictures above will give you a fair idea. They do not represent the only habits or the 'required' habitats, but all the 'in nature' pictures I have found so far, do show humid, mossy, moist, relatively shady habitats.

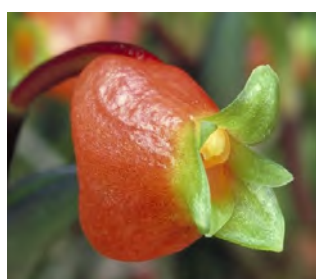
By far the most commonly grown species is *M. decoratum* (right). It grows very compactly, and has delightful little orange and gold flowers. It is quite amenable to culture but grows best mounted or in a shallow terracotta saucer with drain holes drilled in it. It doesn't need a lot of medium to grow in and in fact will decline if you try to grow it in conditions that remain too wet for long at all. I generally grow it in a shallow bed of sphagnum moss in a saucer but that medium is becoming rather hard to come by lately and even if you can get it, it needs replacing in the saucer regularly. I am sure that many other mediums will also be suitable so long as you don't use too much. I also think that whatever you use, a good proportion of non-degradable materials like styrene foam, pebbles, or perlite would be helpful.



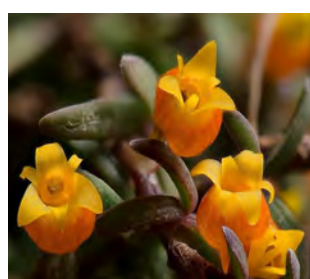
Other species you will see benched or available from time to time are *Mediocallcar bifolium*, *M. pygmaeum*, *M. versteegii* and *M. agathodaemonis*. I have seen all these, but as many orchids were collected in the wild and brought back through import license and quarantine, sometimes I suspect that the labelling of some is questionable. If you check photo images on the internet you can find almost identical flowers under different names and some very different orchids under the same names. Still, while divisions of the rarer types may not be cheap, whatever you end up with is bound to be a delightful, colourful gem so they are worth the investment. How about these for samples: -



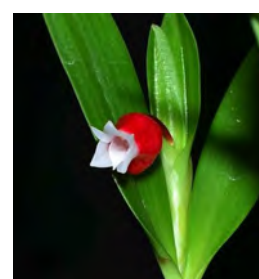
M. agathodaemonis



M. uniflorus



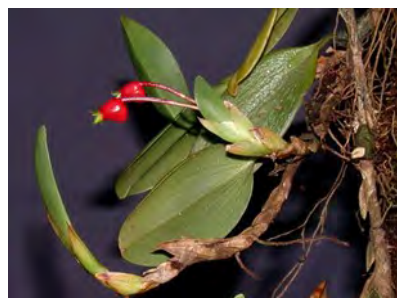
M. pygmaeum



M. versteegii

Now finally, before you start thinking they all grow nice and compact like *decoratum*, I need to show you a couple with longer rhizomes. (the rhizome is the stem/root organ that grows between the pseudobulbs).

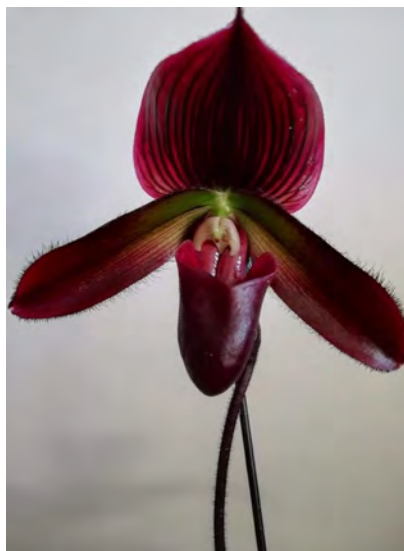
Quite a few species are more commonly found with this growth habit compared to the more compact types. They are scramblers that cover ground in their habitat, making them ideal searchers looking for better territory. Perhaps more light, perhaps more moisture, who knows, but they are explorers and must be given space when you grow them. I grow mine mounted and choose a longer piece of cork. With a rhizome like these, you can see why, but put *Mediocalcar* on your list.



Another *M. agathodaemonis*

(Editor: *Mediocalcar decoratum* grows very well in Coffs Harbour and all members should try a small plant to start with. With minimum care it does not take long to grow into a specimen sized plant)

MORE FINAL SELECTIONS IN THE CHOS VIRTUAL SPRING SHOW, 2021



N & E McDonald—Paph
Hsinying 'Dark Knight'



Carole Davis— Zygo. Debbie
De Mello 'Honolulu Baby'



Helen Seiver NoID
(Cattlianthe Towering Inferno?)



Noelene Jackson— Den.
Yellow Ribbon 'Delight'
X Den. Yuzuki 'Royal'



D & B Cooper—Den. Miyuki



Mal Ide— Cym. Persuasive
Touch 'Dark Eyes Erins Choice'

MORE FINALIST IN THE VIRTUAL SPRING SHOW COMPETITION



Sue Flanders—*Den. kingianum*



Helen Seiver—*Dendrobium Floralia*



This magnificent orchid was grown by Helen Seiver. It is *Dendrobium Amphion Veil* and is a cross between *Den. Tweetie* and *Den. teretifolium*. The species ancestors are *Den. teretifolium* (50%), *Den. fuliginosum* (25%) and *Den. contextum* (25%). *Den. teretifolium* is an Australian native but the other two species have origins in New Guinea so *Den. Amphion Veil* is an exotic Hybrid and not an Aussie Hybrid as many have claimed.

Well done, Helen. It is a credit to your orchid growing skills.

NEED HELP WITH YOUR ORCHIDS?

Help is only as far away as a phone call or a text message or an email. There are many expert orchid growers in the CHOS who are more than willing to help you with any orchid problem you may have. Look up the Advisors List (on the website if you don't have a copy) or ring one of the Committee (listed on page 2 of this newsletter).

DO YOU HAVE ORCHIDS TO SELL? Let the members know through this newsletter and they can then contact you for a private sale. The Society is not asking for any commission and simply offering this as a service following requests from members. Dick Cooper tells us he always has orchids for sale so if you are interested then contact Dick.

It is planned to have two monthly meetings during next year when members can bring along plants for sale. Again no commission to the CHOS. More details next year.