



COFFS ORCHID NEWS NOV 2025 PUBLICATION OF THE COFFS HARBOUR ORCHID SOCIETY

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EDITORIAL: PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

As I reflect on my first year as your President, I feel we have had a very successful year. Lots of new faces have joined the Society that shares our collective appreciation and love of orchids. A couple of Novice growers have now graduated to our "Open" class. Well done!

Three of our Trainee Judges recently graduated to Associate Judges. Congratulations and bravo to Kerrie Gosling, Matt Connell and Moya Tucker. As a reminder, anyone else interested in becoming an Orchid Judge, the cost is \$50 and commitment to one Zoom meeting a month and 10 or so face-to-face meetings.

We hosted two successful orchid shows, one show made a nice profit and the other a small loss, only because we spent \$400.00 on two pop-up shade structures. We held one Bunnings BBQ, which earned us \$1,700.00 to fund the Society's display at the AOC Conference and Show, which was held at the beginning of October 2025, where we were placed first in our class, Large Floor Display. Well done to the Display Team. You are all legends, and please, if we ever get an opportunity to do this all again, remind me just how much work and effort we all put in.

Our Society loaned \$8,000.00 to the Woolgoolga District Orchid Society as seed money for them to host the AOC Conference. After the very successful event ended, they returned not only the original \$8,000.00 but also paid us another \$4000.00 on top. Thank you, WDOS! Ideas will be sought on how the Society spends some of that money. One idea that has been discussed is to upgrade our current website to a more user-friendly and modern looking site. If you have any other ideas, please talk to one of our Committee members.

At the last monthly meeting, we raised nearly \$900.00 at our annual plant auction. Many of our members bought very nice orchids for a fraction of what they were worth. And it was a fun evening.

During November we will deflask 14 different genera to grow on as welcome and raffle plants. If you are interested in taking part then please let me know ASAP.

As I look to the future, we have another exciting calendar of proposed events. Member's plant sale nights, deflasking workshop, plant auction, a talk from Neutrog about orchid fertilizers, Christmas in July, Tony Blewitt, a renowned Australian Native Orchid expert, will give us a talk on growing these plants and sell his plants on the night. A number of our members will speak on different topics, and at the recent AOC Conference I convinced Paul Smith to chat to us about the creation of flasks. We hope to hear from Paul in August, before the Deflasking Workshop in September.

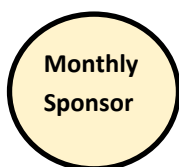
And as a reminder of the 80/20 rule, or as I like to think of it as 80% of the work is done by 20% of the people, or 2 out of 8 people put their hands up to help the Society for things like setting up the tables and chairs for the meetings, helping at the shows and BBQ's, tidying up after the meetings and other essential duties. I ask that we make this more equitable by using this Proverb instead: "Many hands make light work". Finally I would like to sincerely thank the ladies and gentlemen who serve on your Committee.

You all do a fantastic job and are a really fun team to work with. THANK YOU!

Paige

CHOS COMMITTEE 2024-2025**CONTACT DETAILS**

PRESIDENT: PAIGE SINCLAIR 0427 591 901 paigesinclair@me.com
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 BOB SOUTHWELL 0417 695 834 bssouthwell@bigpond.com
NEWSLETTER EDITOR: BOB SOUTHWELL (See Above)

SPONSORS**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 MAZDA

For new Mazda vehicles, also second-hand vehicles and ALL your servicing needs. Ring for an appointment 02 6652 3122 or visit 211 Pacific Highway, Coffs Harbour
 You won't be disappointed .

DARK STAR ORCHIDS
 0416 195832 or (02) 65644088.

Hans and Sue run a small nursery west of Bowraville. They specialise in rare, unusual and hard to find species of many orchids particularly Bulbophyllums, Stanhopeas, Coelogyne and lots of other genera. Check out the website.
www.darkstarorchids.com.au

email darkstarorchids@skymesh.com.au

BRUCE HALL

Bruce provides raffle prizes for Autumn and Spring Shows.

OFFICEWORKS

Officeworks carries an excellent range covering all stationery needs, computers/monitors/printers, and associated technology. They sell a wide range of smart phones and watches, plus furniture and workspace solutions.

If you are looking for low prices on everyday essentials, it's all there at Home Base, Coffs Harbour. Phone 66 919100 or check out the full range at officeworks.com.au.

ROSELLA ORCHIDS

Spring and Autumn Show Sponsor: Located in South Grafton and can supply a wide range of orchids but specialises in Cattleya and Vanda genera. They also stock a large range of hardware and accessories for orchid growers. Nursery is closed to the general public except by appointment.

CALENDAR, 2025-26

- 30 Oct—Visit to Rosella Orchids, South Grafton
- 30 Oct—Nominations close for 2026 CHOS Committee
- 6 Nov—AGM/SOS My Orchid
- 29 Nov—Awards Presentation and Luncheon at Coffs Surf Club
- 5 Feb—NEUTROG as Guest Speaker
Members Plant Sales
- 5 Mar Australian Native Orchids—Tony Blewitt
Orchid Grow Comp Draw
- 2 Apr Bulbophyllums
- Rhonda Smith
- 25-26 Apr CHOS Autumn Show
- 7 May— Tips and Tricks
- 4 June— Growing Vandaceous Orchids—Bruce Hall
Members Plant Sales

Note: The Committee meets on Tuesday following the Monthly Meeting.

**CHOS BANK DETAILS**

BSB No: 533-000

ACCOUNT No: 32817199

CHOS COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

The following is a summary from the CHOS September Committee Meeting conducted on 21st October 2025 at "The Workshop".

- ◆ Meeting commenced at 10.30am. All Committee members were present.
- ◆ October Monthly meeting went well and included a very successful plant auction which raised \$895 for the Society. Thanks to Bruce Hall for his efforts as the Auctioneer.
- ◆ Neville Andeson and Jennifer Lock presented CHOS with a cheque for \$12,000 for repayment of an \$8000 loan plus interest. Received by President Paige and much appreciated by all present at the meeting. Thanks to WDOS.
- ◆ Members watched a slide show of the winning entries at the AOC Conference which was compiled by Rhonda Smith. Thanks to Rhonda for use of her PowerPoint program.
- ◆ Review of CHOS Spring Show—Additional catering is required especially for members involved in activities where they cannot leave to obtain refreshments (such as Plant Sales area). Catering to be extended during future shows. Concern also expressed about the number of sale tickets not filled out correctly. Decided to run an education session prior to the 2026 Autumn Show. Lots of positive comments received following the Spring Show.
- ◆ Fourteen flasks have been purchased with the plan being to deflask and grow plants to maturity for use as raffle and welcome plants. Deflasking workshops to take place during November. Paige to contact those members who expressed an interest in taking part in these two workshops.
- ◆ Plant Growing Competition for 2026—seeking suitable plants priced at \$15 each. Paige to contact Brian Lyttle of 'Lyttle Orchid Clones' based in Adelaide and Paul Smith (Ipswich?) to see if they have any suitable plants for sale (need 40 identical plants).
- ◆ Awards Presentation Luncheon— Saturday 29th November at Coffs Harbour Surf Club Function Room from 12 noon to 2.30pm. Cost to members (and partners) will be \$20 each (Society will subsidise the remaining cost of meal plus one free drink). Members are asked to bring one flowering orchid for a Popular Vote contest. If you wish to attend the Annual Presentation then please add your name to the list at the November meeting or contact Paige or Kerrie.
- ◆ \$8000.00 to be placed in a twelve months fixed deposit with BCU.
- ◆ Paige to investigate upgrading the Society website with an allocated budget of \$4000.00.
- ◆ New Members approved. Welcome to Jane Adams, Edwina Baird, Nicki Riley, Aleisha and Mark Williams.
- ◆ Rosella Nursery excursion will take place on Thursday 30th October. Twenty two members have indicated a wish to attend on the day.
- ◆ Greenhouse visit to the opening of Paige's new orchid house during November. Date to be confirmed. The Society to provide afternoon tea.
- ◆ AGM—Agenda tabled and approved.
- ◆ Assets Register to be compiled at the November Committee Meeting.
- ◆ Kerrie to complete a Botanic Gardens Booking Schedule for 2027. Consideration to be given to altering our Show dates. Kerrie also to open new orders for Society T-Shirts during 2026.
- ◆ Next Committee Meeting will be held at 'The Workshop' on Tuesday 11th Nov 2025 at 10.30am.



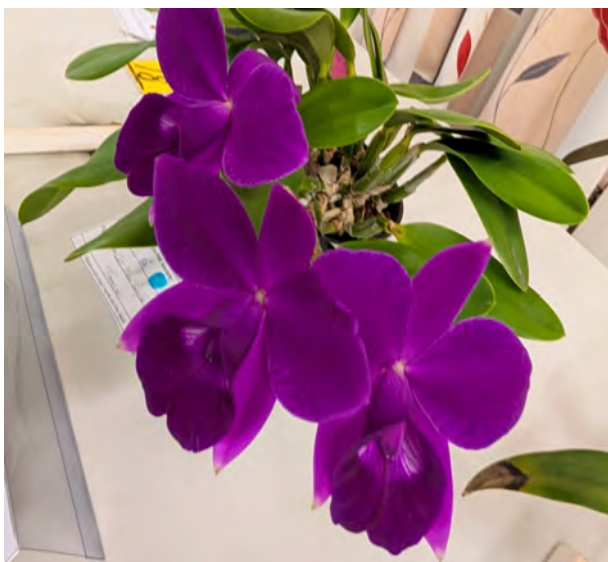
**Popular Vote at the CHOS
October Meeting was
awarded to *Phalaenopsis
NoID* grown and benched
by *Kim Winders*
Congratulations!**



ORCHIDS BENCHED AT THE CHOS OCTOBER MEETING



**Bruce Hall benched the above two winning *Cymbidiums*. On
the Left *Cym. NoID* and on the Right *Cym. madidum***



***Cattleya* Mini Purple 'Tamami'
was benched by Helen Seiver**



**Lc. Secret Love was benched by
Sue Flanders.**

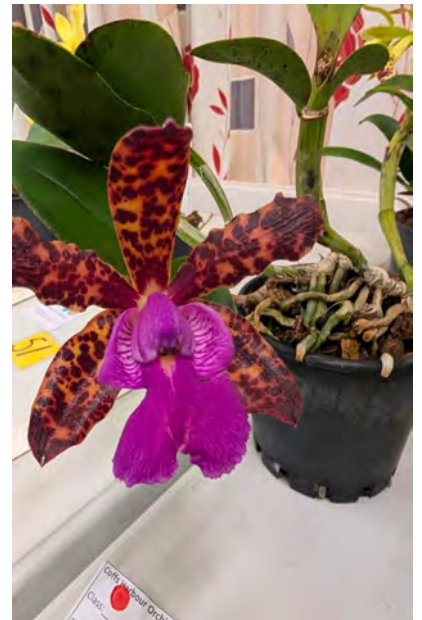
MORE ORCHIDS BENCHED AT THE CHOS OCTOBER MEETING



Rth. Momilani Jewel was benched by Gordon and Joy Griffiths



Peter Gough was the owner of this impressive Paph. Toby Ho



C. schilleriana X C. aclandiae Kathleen was benched by Helen Seiver



Paph. delenatii was grown and benched by Peter Gough



Dendrobium densiflorum was grown and benched by Matt Connell



This Non-Exhibition Paphiopedilium was benched by Peter Gough

MORE ORCHIDS BENCHED AT THE CHOS OCTOBER MEETING



Bifrenaria harrisoniae
benched by Joy and
Gordon Griffiths



***Phalaenopsis* NoID**
was benched by Bruce
Hall



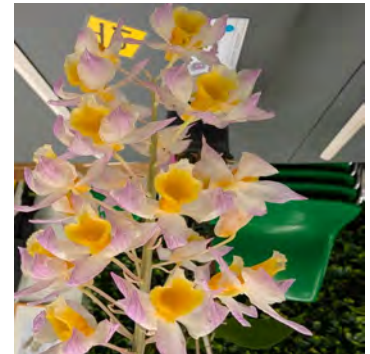
Matt Connell benched
this *Dendrobium*
Spring Show



***Phalaenopsis* Bright
Peacock** was grown by
Joy and Gordon Griffiths



***Phalaenopsis* Black-
ball** was benched by
Sue Flanders



***Dendrobium* Mousmee**
was grown by Bruce
Hall

Photographs by Gordon Griffiths



29 NOVEMBER 12:00 -2:30PM

**\$20.00 PER HEAD, ONE FREE DRINK, WINE
BEER OR SOFT DRINK**

SURF CLUB FUNCTION ROOM

PLEASE BRING A FLOWERING ORCHID

PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE 2025 AOC CONFERENCE AT WOOLGOOLGA



**Grand
Champion/Best
in Show went to
Dendrobium
Medallist
'Blackstone'
benched by Paul
Smith.
Well done!**



**Best Species
Specimen was
awarded to
Dendrobium
strilatum
'Ruffles'
benched by
Keith Scott.**



Coffs Harbour Orchid Society won the Champion Large Display at the AOC Show. Congratulations!

CHAMPION ORCHIDS FROM THE MACLEAY VALLEY ORCHID SOCIETY SPRING SHOW



Grand Champion benched by Moya Tucker. *Phalaenopsis* Taisuco Fire Bird



Reserve Champion benched by Bill and Jenny Lennon. *Dendrobium* Adele Fortecue "Rosamand"



Champion Show Specimen *Sarcophilus hartmanii* was grown by Phena Price

BITS AND PIECES

- Kiwi Potting Bark is available from Paige Sinclair at \$50 per 50L bag.
New supplies have now been received. Potting time is about to commence.
Contact Paige to secure your requirements.



- CHOS **Annual General Meeting and Monthly Meeting** will be held on Thursday **6th November** starting at 7.00pm.

Bring your Tolumnia Hybrid for it's next judging in this years Growing Competition.

It would be greatly appreciated if you would bring a contribution for members supper.

Judges for this meeting: BOB SOUTHWELL AND FRANK PAPPALARDO

Assistance from members to clean up after the meeting would be greatly appreciated

- Dates to put on your calendar:

Visit to Rosella Orchids at South Grafton— Thursday 30t—Car Pool.

CHOS AGM and election of 2026 Committee—Thursday 6th November.

24th World Orchid Conference. 26 to 29 March 2026 at Dresden, Germany.

- Following the November AGM, the General Monthly Meeting will feature a session called 'SOS My Orchid Plant'. This will provide members with the opportunity to identify what is wrong with their orchids and perhaps be provided with a solution to correct the problem. If you have a diseased orchid that you are battling with then please bring the plant (or a leaf) along to the meeting . It would be best if it was enclosed in a plastic bag to protect other orchids in the show room. Perhaps you have a cultural problem in your greenhouse that you would like advice on how to improve the growth of your orchids. Please seek advice at the November help session.
- 2025-2026 Membership fees for the CHOS are due on the 1st November and should be paid within three months of that date. Fees have been set at \$15 per member and \$20 per couple plus \$5 for each additional family member. Junior members (under 18 years old) are \$5 per person.
- ANNUAL AWARDS AND PRESENTATION LUNCHEON will be held this year on Saturday 29th November at the Coffs Surf Club Private Meeting Room. The subsidised cost to members and their spouse/partner will be \$20 per person. Remaining meal costs will be subsidised by the CHOS. A two course alternate-drop menu will be in place and the Society will provide one drink per person. Add your name to the list at the November meeting. This is a great opportunity for all CHOS members to get together to celebrate another amazing orchid year. The luncheon commences at 12 noon.
- Congratulations to Woolgoolga District Orchid Society on the excellent AOC Conference they conducted over the long weekend in October. The show was amazing and the vendor outlets were extraordinary. The conference speakers were of a high standard and well received by all participants. Well done to the Conference Committee led by Neville and Jennifer and to the large number of red-shirted WDOS members who worked tirelessly to make the conference such a success.
- Paige Sinclair has had a new 15 metre long greenhouse constructed at her house in Jean Street, Coffs Harbour. Paige plans on holding a gala opening during November and all CHOS members are invited to the celebration. The date of the opening will be announced shortly.



FEATURE ARTICLE: OSMOCOTE DOWN UNDER

by Clive Halls of Mt Beenak Orchids

[Reprinted from THE NEMOS (Northeast Melb Orchid Society) NEWS/KOV BULLETIN and with the permission of Clive Halls]

You don't always have to follow the rules to get good results with fertilisers, as we have discovered with our *Odontoglossums* and *Masdevallias* at Mount Beenak Orchids.

Growing orchids in sphagnum moss has always presented a problem when it comes to the application of fertilisers. Most liquid fertilisers, when applied at quarter strength, don't present a problem, provided you do it on a weekly basis – easier said than done! However, slow-release fertiliser, such as Osmocote®, applied to the top of the pot causes moss breakdown and green slime. Because the moss remains wet for such a long time, it retains so much nutrient released by the fertiliser that it fails to achieve the desired results - most orchids, especially the fine-rooted epiphytes such as *Odontoglossums*, *Oncidiums* and *Masdevallias*, need only small amounts of fertiliser.

One day, while re-potting about a hundred *Zygopetalum* seedlings in *Sphagnum* moss, it occurred to me to put the slow-release fertiliser in the bottom of the pot, rather than on the top. After covering the drainage holes with some hammer-milled moss, I added a few grains of 8-9 month Osmocote Plus® to half the plants. The remainder received only quarter-strength Manutec® liquid fertiliser once each week. In about four weeks, the foliage of the Osmocote-fed plants was definitely greener than that of the others. After eight weeks, the plants were not only greener but also taller and more robust. After twelve weeks, they were nearly double the size of their deprived mates and also stronger and greener. The root systems of both groups were then examined. While both groups had white, strong, healthy roots, those in the Osmocote-fed group had Osmocote pellets adhering to their roots, yet no signs of burning or deterioration in any way.

As this experiment had worked so well, I decided to repeat it using some *Odontoglossum* alliance and *Masdevallia* seedlings. Both of these groups of orchids tend to lose their roots if over-fed, and I have previously found that slow-release fertilisers are unsuitable, even using bark-based potting media. Enough mix, consisting of hammer-milled moss (80%) and polystyrene chips (20%), was placed in 50 mm tubes to cover the drainage holes and then a little Osmocote slow-release fertiliser was added, as before. Single-growth *Odontoglossum* alliance seedlings and *Masdevallias* of 3-4 leaves (both about six months old) were then planted in the tubes, using the same mix. Similar results to those obtained with the *Zygopetalums* were obtained, although (as expected) growth was not as pronounced with these generally less vigorous plant groups. When the plants were nearly a year old, we changed their potting mix to fine bark (Bio Gro Mini Nuggets), again adding Osmocote to the bottom of the pots. Excellent results were again obtained, the Osmocote-fed plants being well advanced over the control group. Many of the *Masdevallias* had begun to flower - indeed, some had even flowered while in their original 50 mm tubes! It seems important to use 8-9 month release Osmocote, because we lost a few plants when we used 5-6 month Osmocote, and the roots of those that survived didn't appear to be as strong as the others. There are many types of Osmocote, let alone all the other types of resin-coated fertilisers, but Osmocote is a good brand and widely available, so I have stuck with it. I use two types, each with a different N:P:K ratio. For young plants I recommend Osmocote-Plus, 8-9 month, 16 + 3.5 + 10 + 1.2, and for flowering-sized plants I use Osmocote-Plus, 8-9 months, High K 9 + 4.8 + 15 + Trace Elements. The latter may be hard to get but we have it for sale at our nursery. The rate of application is difficult to calculate for small pots. For 150 mm and larger pots, it's OK to follow the directions on the container but these instructions don't mention little tubes or pots. I use a pinch of fertiliser (about 10 pellets) in 50 mm pots, a little more in 65 mm pots and two pinches in 80 mm pots – although this is not a particularly precise measurement, the amount doesn't seem to make a great deal of difference overall.

I've been using the above system of fertilising now for two complete seasons and have entered the third season with continuing positive results. Our plants are better than ever, with excellent leaf colour and good flowering. Our masdevallias now show much less leaf spotting and drop fewer leaves than before. The odontoglossums show less leaf tip dieback and have stronger spikes that produce more flowers.

With flowering-sized cymbidiums and Zygotetalums, we use High K Osmocote but add it to the top of the pot in the same way as we have for many years. We still use a liquid fertiliser (at quarter strength) during the warmer months, as well as a fish-based or seaweed-based fertiliser a few times each year because of the unique trace elements that these organic fertilisers contain.

Just because the above system works well for me doesn't necessarily mean it will work as well for you. Try a few plants first, and see how they respond. If you're happy with the results, try a few more – don't treat all your orchids unless and until you're totally convinced that the system works for you.

-- Mount Beenak Orchids

JOKES PAGE:

The Talking Dog - (an old one but a good laugh) - A guy is driving around the back woods of Montana in the USA, and he sees a sign in front of a broken-down shanty-style house: 'Talking Dog For Sale'. He rings the bell and the owner appears & tells him the dog is in the backyard. The guy goes into the backyard and sees a nice-looking Labrador retriever sitting there. 'You talk?' he asks. 'Yep,' the Labrador replies.

After the guy recovers from the shock of hearing a dog talk, he says 'So, what's your story?'

The Labrador looks up and says, 'Well, I discovered that I could talk when I was pretty young I wanted to help the government, so I told the CIA. In no time at all they had me jetting from country to country, sitting in rooms with spies and world leaders, because no one figured a dog would be eavesdropping.'

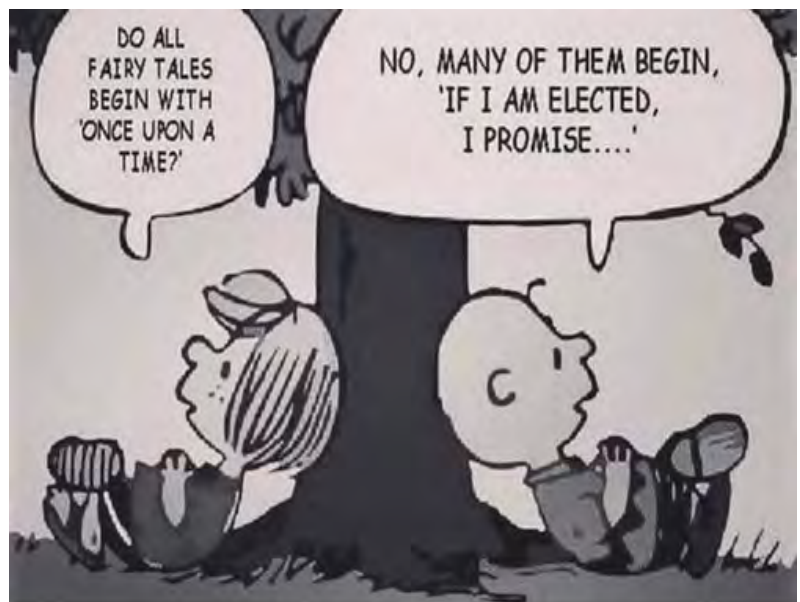
'I was one of their most valuable spies for eight years running... But, the jetting around really tired me out, and I knew I wasn't getting any younger so I decided to settle down. I signed up for a job at the airport to do some undercover security, wandering near suspicious characters and listening in. I uncovered some incredible dealings and was awarded a batch of medals. I got married, had a mess of puppies, and now I'm just retired.'

The guy is amazed. He goes back into the house and asks the owner how much he wants for the dog.

'Ten dollars,' the guy says. -- 'Ten dollars? This dog is amazing! Why on earth are you selling him so cheap?'

'Because he's a damn liar. He never did any of that stuff he goes on and on about'

I haven't lost
all my marbles yet...
but there is definitely
a small hole in the
bag somewhere.



ORCHID CULTURAL CALENDAR FOR OCT-NOV FOR COFFS HARBOUR

ORCHID GROUP	WATER REQUIREMENTS	FERTILIZER REQUIREMENTS	DISEASE AND PEST CONTROL	OTHER COMMENTS
AUSTRALIAN NATIVES	Water plants regularly and make sure they remain moist	Fertilize weekly using a low Nitrogen fertilizer at half strength	Monitor for pests, etc. Spray for diseases and pests on a regular basis	Repot after flowering. Shallower pots are best. Divide plants if required
BULBOPHYLLUMS	Water every three days. Keep evenly moist	Fertilize every two weeks using half strength fertilizer	Spray with a fungicide such as Mancozeb to protect new growth	Don't over fertilize or plants will become "soft"
CYMBIDIUMS	Increase watering as air temperature rises	Fertilize with half strength high Nitrogen fertilizer every two weeks	Inspect plants for scale infections. Preventative spray with Yates Anti-Rot	Try to finish repotting by end of October
HARD CANES	Light watering in early October. Increase amount of water as new growths appear in November	Fertilize weekly using a low Nitrogen fertilizer at half strength	Monitor and treat as required. Apply fungicides monthly	Clean up plants. Remove dead flower stems, etc. New growths will start from pseudobulbs in November
ONCIDIUM ALLIANCE	Water each week. Let mix almost dry out before next watering	Half strength fertilizer each week	Check for pests. Spray monthly with Mancozeb fungicide	Mounted plants will need watering more frequently
PAPHIOPEDILUMS	Water twice weekly	Half strength fertilizer each week	Check for pests. Spray monthly with Mancozeb fungicide	Commence Repotting program
PHALAENOPSIS	Water once or twice weekly as required	Half strength fertilizer each week. Use slow release fertilizer when re-potting	Make regular checks for pests and diseases	Continue to stake emerging spikes. Repot those plants with spent flowers.
VANDACEOUS	Water daily including exposed roots, keep water from the plant crown.	Weekly with low Nitrogen/high PK at half strength.	Check for chewing insects and other pests. Check for fungal infections and treat as required	Increase levels of heat and humidity, provide good air circulation

GENERAL: Majority of growers try to repot at least half their collection each year. September, October and November are ideal times for repotting. Add slow release fertilizer to the potting mix plus Bug Killa systemic insecticide.