

'Cymbidium Chatter'

Edition 20 - September 1 2020



Cymbidium Pepper Blaze 'Wraith'
Photograph: Greg Bryant

Welcome to the first edition of Cymbidium Chatter for September 2020. The news on the COVID - 19 virus is slightly more encouraging this week, so all we can do is follow the recommendations delivered by our Chief Medical Officer, Dr Brett Sutton and hope for an easing of instructions once it is safe to do so!

Normally at this time of year all our COSV members would be getting plants ready for our Spring show. All the growers I have spoken to are consistent in saying that the flowering season is approximately a month late. It would seem those dull, cold days of Winter are responsible!

On the question of light and the role it plays in the flowering of Cymbidium orchids, I am often reminded of a talk delivered by Andy Leamon at one of the orchid clubs. Andy spoke of the L.A.W principle - light, air and water. Throughout the talk he stressed that they should be considered in that order ie. with light being the most important factor in delivering the best growing and flowering outcome. I was further reminded of this just this past weekend when potting-on or repotting some of my larger plants, plants that had failed to flower. The plants looked very healthy, the leaves were probably too green and I knew that they hadn't been receiving the optimum light conditions. This prompted me to rethink the placement of all the plants in my collection. Where I had been growing the Cymbidiums was an ideal spot for Coelogynes, a plant of Coelogyne mooreana 'Brockhurst' had thrived in this position. So all the mixed genera orchids I have, are being moved into a slightly lower light level position and the Cymbidiums into a much brighter area, with all the overhead hanging baskets removed. Hopefully the stronger light will reward me with a better flowering outcome next season!

In the top right hand corner of page one I include a photograph of an eye-catching Cymbidium and this week's photograph is no exception. Greg Bryant's Cym Pepper Blaze 'Wraith' has been around for quite sometime but it still performs very well on the show bench and is now also making a name as a parent of highly colored offspring. Keep an eye out for Greg's seedlings and I'm sure you won't be disappointed. The text color used at the top of the page of each Cymbidium Chatter is meant to be as close as possible to the color of the chosen flower, not always an easy task!

Seedlings are tomorrow's champions, so please send me any photographs of any new flowers that you have in your collection!

All contributions, photographs and articles to: grb17@bigpond.com



Cymbidium Gentle Touch 'Bon Bon'



Cymbidium Kimberley Winter 'Jess'



Cymbidium Khanebono 'Jacinta'



Cymbidium Atlantic Carat

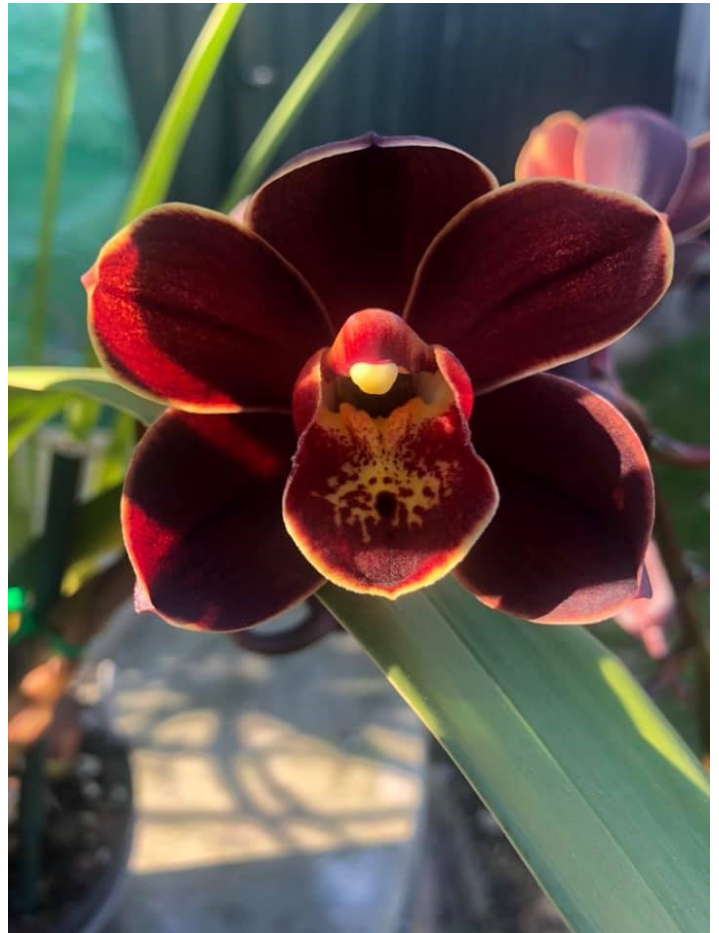
The 3 Amigos, South Australia, are setting a wonderful standard, both in the presentation and the quality of flowers they choose to grow. Over the next three pages I have included some of the plants they currently have in flower. In next week's Cymbidium Chatter I will feature photographs of their display at the Cymbidium Club of South Australia Spring Show. Among their display were many champions, you will be staggered by just how many champions! Well done!



Cymbidium Jacinta's Pride 'Joyous'



Cymbidium Anna Dragon 'Wow'



Left: Cymbidium (Khanebono 'Jacinta' x Fire-tail Showpiece) 'Kirsty' - 1st flowering seedling
Above: Cym Easter Fire x Pacific Sparkle 1st flowering seedling



Introducing some Cymbidium Mem Amelia Earhart x Pacific Sparkle seedlings. This particular cross was made by Andy Easton and distributed through Guest Orchids, South Australia. Cym Mem Amelia Earhart is proving to be a good parent and I don't think Cym Pacific Sparkle is any slouch either. The flower (left above) is certainly of award standard, having excellent shape, a good strong color and a wonderful lip. Hobby growers will need to assess whether they are prepared to grow and show plants that produce long pendulous spikes. I personally think there is a place for this type of Cymbidium!

Do we need any more brown Cymbidiums?

When I worked at Collectors Corner I was often asked "Why do you have so many brown Cymbidium orchids. The Cymbidiums they were referring to were in the main pendulous types, with spikes of varying lengths. Early in the flowering season the browns tended to be popular but as the season wore on and the other colors began to be fewer in numbers, the browns were still being produced in ever increasing numbers and they became quite difficult to sell. They were beautiful examples of pendulous type Cymbidiums, large plants with multiple spikes, often bearing 10+ spikes but there were just too many of them. They didn't appeal to the hobby growers and the 'backyarders' were looking for more vibrant colors.

Color was the key! The color produced by one of the parents, Cym Last Tango 'Geyersland', was on the dull side and it certainly seemed that Cym Last Tango 'Geyersland' had been used by Australian hybridisers on a regular basis. I lost track of the number of different crosses where Cym Last Tango 'Geyersland' was one of the parents. I remember discussing this matter with Kevin Hipkins and he pointed out that he rarely used 'Geyersland', preferring to use a different cultivar of Cym Last Tango. Kevin's decision to use Cym Last Tango 'Royale' with Cym Brook Street, certainly paid dividends, producing a beautiful, dark red intermediate, Cym Street Tango 'Ooh Ah'. Now this was a color that would have sold in bucket loads. Although dark, it was a vibrant color, with a wonderful sheen to the flowers. Color does sell!

Fast forward and we now have more browns being produced but these browns, the ones photographed on the previous two pages, have much more going for them. The shade of brown, chestnut, is much more appealing and the saturation of color, far more intense than we have previously seen. I think the Cym Mem Amelia Earhart seedlings will prove to be very popular with hobbyist and 'backyard' growers alike. My one concern, looking at it from a hobbyist's viewpoint, is how many growers will be prepared to grow and show pendulous Cymbidiums that have very long spikes. They are difficult to transport to meetings and shows and probably even harder to incorporate into a display stand. These doubts aside, I'm sure we will see many of them in the years to come and I'm fairly sure that many will be awarded!

Also of interest was the photograph of Cym (Easter Fire x Pacific Sparkle). This was another first flowering seedling, also hybridised by Andy Easton. I found this flower to be very attractive, a much deeper brown but with a real vibrancy about it. It reminded very much of the flowers produced by Dr Miles Seton, although the shape of this flower was far superior.

Now while Andy Easton professes to cater primarily to commercial growers he is also quick to add that he does produce some crosses that will appeal to the hobby grower. Certainly the flowers seen here, would suggest that it maybe worthwhile watching the offerings made by Guest Orchids, South Australia.

I certainly don't profess to be a hybridiser but my plant of Mem Amelia Earhart 4n impressed me so much, it produced flowers that appeared to have been hand painted, that I was tempted to try a crossing, pairing it with Cym Sarah Jean 'Peach' 4n. Sadly, the plant of Cym Amelia Earhart succumbed to rot but it survived long enough for me to harvest a very healthy seed pod. The seedlings are coming along nicely. I am hoping that flowers in the yellow shades will be produced and that the length of the spikes will be somewhere between the two parents. In my opinion the spikes of this particular Cym Mem Amelia Earhart were too long, the spikes of Cym Sarah Jeah 'Peach' far too short - somewhere in the middle would be just great! I will keep you informed of the seedlings progress, I am not expecting to see any flowers for a couple of years.

Potting Time - potting-on or re-potting

With the promise of warmer days, I don't always believe in promises, now is an excellent time to think about potting-on or re-potting your Cymbidiums. If your plants are anything like mine, you will see that they are starting to generate new growths, this is an ideal time to clean-up your plants and get them into some fresh mix.

Potting-on: if the mix your plants are currently growing in, is in good condition, no signs of the potting components breaking down, all you need to do is pot-on to a slightly larger pot. Adding some fresh mix will encourage fresh root and leaf growth. It is a good idea to add some slow release fertiliser on top of the pot, anything like Osmocote, Multicote etc. I prefer to use a 8 - 9 month slow release fertiliser. Weak liquid fertiliser used at regular intervals will ensure that your plants grow strongly, I usually apply 1/2 strength liquid fertiliser on a weekly basis.

Repotting: this is when you remove all the old growing medium and replace it with fresh mix. A careful examination of the potting mix should indicate if the mix is broken down. You may also decide to divide and clean-up (remove leaf husks, old spikes etc) your plants when re-potting. Avoid the temptation of putting your plant into a much larger pot, a gradual progression in pot size is preferred. Water the freshly potted plant well and place it in a shady position, allowing it to settle down for about a fortnight before resuming your normal watering and fertilising regime. An application of slow release fertiliser can be applied to the top of the pot.

What mix is best?

There is no easy answer to this question and you will find that a vast range of products are used by growers. I make up my own mix, while others prefer to just grow in 100% bark. The mix that I make up is: equal parts of bark nuggets (12-15mm in size) and coarse perlite. To this mix, I add by measure (a large plastic pot) 1/2 a pot of fine coir chip. Photographs of the products I use can be seen below.



Top left to right: Bark nuggets, coarse perlite and coir chip

Left: my measuring pot

Right: the finished mix

NB: if I could get a regular supply of peanut shell I would replace the coir chip with it. I don't fancy a drive to Queensland to get it! I will investigate the availability of marble chip as an alternative.



Surf Coast Orchids

I mentioned in previous Cymbidium Chatter newsletters that Surf Coast Orchids were about to launch their website. In the three pages that follow you can familiarise yourself with their website. I am more than happy to promote any orchid nursery and I wish Jim every success with his venture.

Surf Coast Orchids can be found on The Great Ocean Rd, Bellbrae. Bellbrae is between Torquay and Anglesea, just a short but very picturesque drive from Melbourne.

COSV Members

It is with great anticipation that we are launching our orchid website, that will be a new source for you, for Standard Cymbidiums.

The following screen shot and info gives a quick overview of the features of our website.

Collection: The home page with our favorite mericlones.

Mericlones: Our own mericlones that we continue to develop from seedlings.

Seedlings: The best seedlings for cloning potential, with their parental cross.

Spikes: Our breeding plants flowers.

About: How to grow and re-flower Cymbidiums Month by Month.

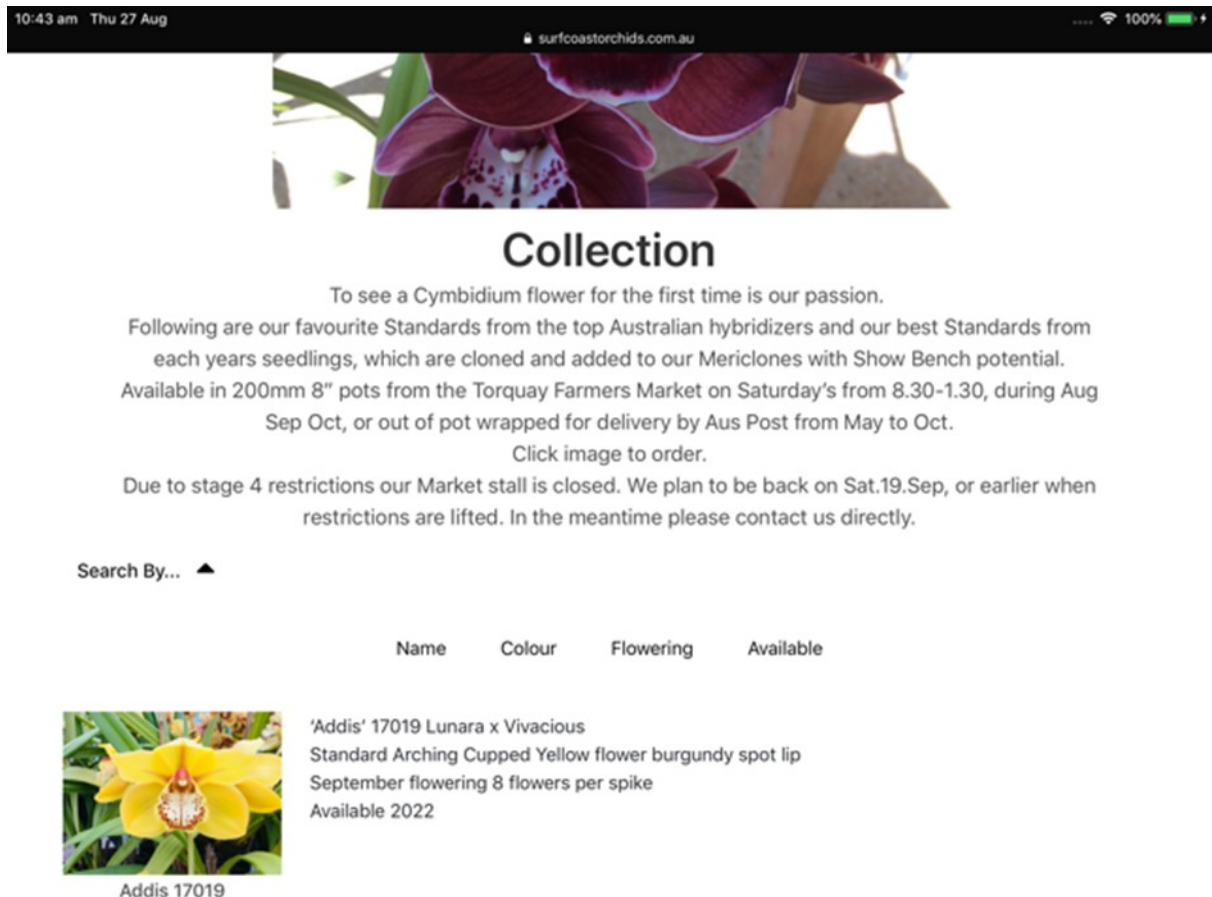
Contact: An easy way to get in touch with us.

Search By: Name, Colour, Flowering, Available drop boxes, to fine tune your selection.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Cheers Jim

www.surfcoastorchids.com.au




10:43 am Thu 27 Aug surfcoastorchids.com.au 100%

Collection

To see a Cymbidium flower for the first time is our passion. Following are our favourite Standards from the top Australian hybridizers and our best Standards from each years seedlings, which are cloned and added to our Mericlones with Show Bench potential. Available in 200mm 8" pots from the Torquay Farmers Market on Saturday's from 8.30-1.30, during Aug Sep Oct, or out of pot wrapped for delivery by Aus Post from May to Oct. Click image to order. Due to stage 4 restrictions our Market stall is closed. We plan to be back on Sat.19.Sep, or earlier when restrictions are lifted. In the meantime please contact us directly.

Search By... ▲

	Name	Colour	Flowering	Available
	'Addis' 17019 Lunara x Vivacious	Standard Arching Cupped Yellow flower burgundy spot lip	September flowering 8 flowers per spike	Available 2022

Addis 17019



Mericlones

To win a prize at your local orchid club show is every orchid collectors dream and a great way to start is with our Cymbidium Mericlones. We specialize in Standards, both upright and arching, with genetic Show Bench potential, in the latest colours. Available in 200mm 8" pots and 150mm 6" pots from the Torquay Farmers Market on Saturday's from 8.30-1.30 during Aug Sep Oct, or out of pot wrapped for delivery by Aus Post from May to Oct.
Click image to order.

Search By... ▲

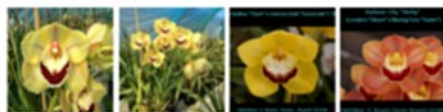
Name	Colour	Flowering	Available
			
			
			
			



20 229152 Buddy x Verity

Orchid Quantity

Name 20 229152 Buddy x Verity
Colour Yellow



Description

20 229152 'Buddy x Verity' (Trace's Bullion x Intense Gold X Harbour City)
Standard Arching Large Cupped Clear Yellow flower striking Burgundy band lip edged white
August 2020 first flowering 10 flowers on spike
Hybridizer Greg Bryant



Spikes

Cut weekly from the Cymbidium Mericlone breeding plants with Show Bench potential, all spikes are boxed as shown ready for delivery by Australia Post. WA and Tas require special quarantine entry.




Flowers available by spike only.

Standards (5-16 flowers per spike) Large Standards (5-13 flowers per spike).

Trade enquiries welcome.

Click image to order.

Search By... ▲

	Name	Colour	Flowering	Available		
	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	
	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	
						

Calendar

We use the following year calendar for our monthly activity, based on Orchids Month by Month by Ralph Handcock and Margaret Smith, which has proven to be a great guide for growing and flowering Cymbidiums. Your growing conditions may require an adjustment.



Growing Seasons

- Nov
Morning watering every 2nd day, daily if +30c. Fertilize fortnightly.
- Dec
Evening watering every 2nd day, daily if +30c. Fertilize fortnightly.
- Jan
Evening watering every 2nd day, daily if +30c. Black leaf tips too much water, brown leaf tips not enough.
- Feb
Evening watering every 2nd day, daily if +30c. Watch for red spider, thrips, scale, leaf fungus. Spray with Mancozeb, White Oil.

The 3 Amigos are going to need a bigger van!

