

# Cymbidium Chatter



*Cym. Yellow River 'Fleurijn', a Dutch cut flower selection from the 1990s.*

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## Latest News

Welcome to the August issue of *Cymbidium Chatter* for 2022. This issue features a new section where readers can list plants that they are looking for. I had been thinking about adding it for a while, but didn't want it to be just my wish list! A request from a reader finally prompted it, so please take a look and contact John if you can help out.

August 26<sup>th</sup> through 28<sup>th</sup> is the Melbourne Orchid Spectacular (aka the OSCOV Show), which is being held again in person after a gap of two years (a virtual show was held last year and is available to view online at <https://sites.google.com/view/oscov-virtual-show-2021/home>). Details and a list of vendors can be found on the OSCOV website (<https://oscov.asn.au/>) and I would encourage anyone who is in Melbourne at the time to please go along and support the show and the vendors.

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Early in July the COSV held its annual plant auction, which successfully raised almost \$1000 for the society. A number of plants were exhibited as well and a few are shown here.



A specimen plant of *Cym. erythraeum* var. *flavum* 'Paradise'.



*Cym. Wyong Fury*. This plant won best seedling at the 2019 Dural Show (which was cancelled in 2020 & 2021).



## Plant Profile: Vogelsang and Progeny

*Cym. devonianum* has had a significant influence on the breeding of intermediate and miniature Cyms. One of its more significant hybrids has been the primary hybrid *Cym. Vogelsang* (*devonianum* X *insigne*). Registered in 1928, it is one of the earliest *devonianum* hybrids and is the most prolific *devonianum* hybrid to date.

The extent of its legacy is mostly due to Andy Easton, who, along with Norman Porter, suggested that the diploid 'Eastbourne' be sent to Australia to be treated with colchicine by Nick Zurcher (who used to operate a lab in South Australia and also worked with Paphs). 'Eastbourne' originated from the 1960s remake of the grex by McBeans and its 4n conversion has been used to produce a long line of offspring, although the focus has since moved onto other *devonianum* lines.



*Cym. Vogelsang* 'Eastbourne' 4n. The interaction of the two species involved produces the intricate spotting on the labellum.

The 1980s and 1990s saw many Vogelsang hybrids produced by Andy Easton at Geyserland Orchids, along with Norman Porter producing several of his own. Little was done with it during the 2000s, but there was a resurgence in the 2010s, with plenty of crosses made by Ezi-Gro Orchids, Loren Batchman and George Hatfield.

The most prolific of the Vogelsang offspring was Cherry Village (*Cym. parishii* var. *sanderiae* 'Emma Menninger' X *Vogelsang* 'Eastbourne' 4n), registered in 1993 and predominantly used by [Mukoyama Orchids](#) in Japan to produce dozens of descendants, the majority of which were for the Japanese and Chinese markets. Andy Easton worked solely with Cherry Brandy (Cabernet X Cherry Village, reg. 2004) and its offspring Devon Cherry (Devon Railway X Cherry Brandy, reg. 2004), producing several compact, arching to pendulous grexes for the hobbyist market. Many of these reinforced the *devonianum* influence by crossing between different *devonianum* lines.



From left to right: *Cym. Devon Cherry* 'New Horizon', *Cym. Stan Laurel* 'Mini Marvel' and *Cym. (Devon Cherry X Janis Elaine Hoenig)* #1. Photos courtesy of Andy Easton.

Norman's Porter cross of Vogel's Magic (Tethys X Vogelsang, reg. 1994) is probably his most well-known Vogelsang hybrid. Despite being a triploid (3n), it has produced twelve registered progeny, including Pierre Pujol's Mini-Me (featured in Issues 32 & 36). The first of these was a backcross to Vogelsang by Ezi-Gro Orchids (Darch Magnetism, reg. 2009), after which several other hybridisers used it in their own crosses.

One hypothesis put forward for the long gap between the registration of Vogel's Magic in 1994 and the first hybrid in 2009 is that it wasn't until hexaploid (6n) mutations began to appear in the clones that fertility was restored. This would certainly explain Cym. Magic Chocolate (the hybrid with *Cym. erythraeum* registered in 2012), which is the only cross to list Vogel's Magic as the pollen parent. If correct, then most of the Vogel's Magic offspring will unfortunately be sterile pentaploids (5n) – the



*Cym. Red Planet 'New Horizon' 4n.*  
Photo courtesy of Andy Easton.

result of 6n x 4n crosses. Vogel's Magic is still seen in Australia on occasion, although I would be wary of the accumulated mutations from multiple clonal generations.

Another line Australian readers may be familiar with is that of *Cym. Red Planet* (reg. 1997) and its progeny. Andy Easton used it to make *Cym. Square Dancer* (Red Planet X Last Tango, reg. 2005) and *Cym. Noni Poland* (George Formby X Red Planet, reg. 2012), whilst Paradisian Nurseries registered the triploid cross with *devonianum* as *Cym. Paradisian Planet* in 2015.



*Cym. Paradisian Planet 'Black Lip' exhibited at the COSV meeting in November 2018.*



*Cym. Noni Poland 'Salinas'.  
Photo courtesy of Andy Easton.*



*Cym. John McCormack 'Gold as Gold'.  
Photo courtesy of Andy Easton.*



*Cym. Simone Friend.  
Photo courtesy of Andy Easton.*

Cym. Noni Poland has been used to make several further hybrids – John McCormack (X Devon Parish, reg. 2017), Simone Friend (X Bermagui, reg. 2018) and Agnes Sorel (X Finger of Suspicion, reg. 2019).

Finally, seedlings of Cym. Jean Terberg (Gone West X Vogelsang, reg. 2020) have been exhibited in Australia in the past five years. This grex appears to have been made by both Hatfield Orchids and Andy Easton using different Gone West clones paired with Vogelsang 'Eastbourne'. The grex has shown variation in the intensity of colour, but most examples seen by the author have the blooms down in the foliage.



*Two examples of Cym. Jean Terberg exhibited at COSV meetings between 2017 and 2019.*

## Plant Profile: Amaroo

Cym. Amaroo is a recent standard hybrid from the stables of John Gate, a hybridiser in New South Wales. Registered in 2019, it is the cross of Khanebono 'Jacinta' X Joanstar 'Sensuous'. John made the cross in the hopes of producing show bench plants, given the qualities of the parents.



*Cym. Khanebono 'Jacinta'.*



*Cym. Joanstar 'Sensuous'. Photo courtesy of Nado Lenkic.*

John had seen some promising results from George Serhan's crosses with 'Jacinta', which gave him the idea to use it in some of his own. He describes it as "a good plant [with a good] growth habit; the spikes are good length with flowers well-arranged and in good numbers, with classic shape."

John made the cross in 2014 (JG1406) and sent the pod to Moss Bray – who operates Sims Orchids in Adelaide – the following year. In 2019, upon seeing a photo of one of Terry Poulton's seedlings, he decided to register the cross as Cym. Amaroo – an Aboriginal word meaning "beautiful".

Since then, John has seen other appealing Amaroo seedlings, including one owned by John Moon of 3 Amigos Orchids (shown right). Given the success of the grex, John has made many further crosses using Khanebono 'Jacinta' – 15 as pod parent and 9 as pollen parent in total to date.

He has also made several crosses with Joanstar 'Sensuous', commenting that "It is a very pretty, attractive flower... I have a liking for any colour with a soft blush pink lip. I am hoping that the blush lip will dominate in some progeny."



*Cym. Amaroo 'June', which was champion seedling at a West Lakes Spring show in 2019.  
Photo courtesy of John Moon.*

The grex has produced a range of pastel pinks varying in intensity between the two parents. The blushed labellum of Joanstar has mostly dominated over the spotted lip of Khanebono, with few spots exhibited in the progeny.



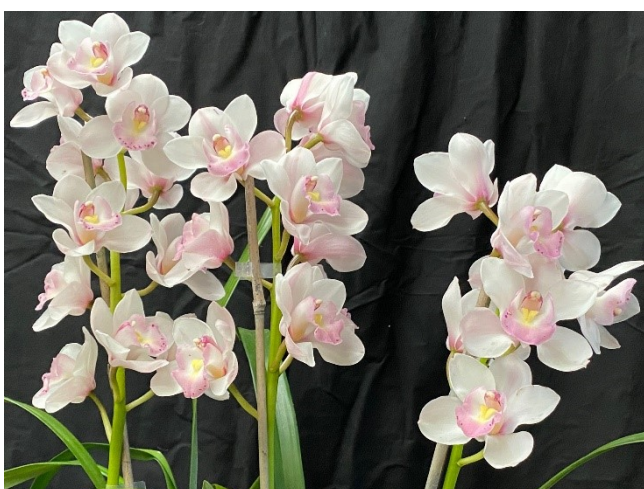
*Cym. Amaroo 'Tee Pee' HCC/OSCOV.  
Photo courtesy of Terry Poulton.*



*Cym. Amaroo group AQ/OSCOV.  
Photo courtesy of Terry Poulton.*

Terry Poulton exhibited several seedlings of the grex that he had grown to flowering last year and was successful in having one awarded a HCC, whilst the group was awarded an AQ.

The grex is currently popular, with unflowered seedlings fetching \$50 to \$60 at a Cymbidium auction in Adelaide earlier this year and up to \$70 on eBay for unflowered plants in spike.



*A pastel example of Cym. Amaroo.  
Photo courtesy of Terry Poulton.*



*A seedling shown at a COSV meeting in 2021. It is the only one the author has seen with a strongly marked lip.*

## An Orchid Miscellany by Rob Allan

I purchased my first cymbidium orchid in 1978 from Syd Monkhouse's Adelaide Orchids in South Australia. I think it was Cym. Lustrous Betty. I had caught the orchid bug off my then-girlfriend's parents and have been unable to shake it ever since.

Growing and building up an orchid collection in 1970s-1990s Adelaide was an amazing experience, as there was a wealth of orchid nurseries in and around the city from which to purchase plants – such as Adelaide Orchids, Valley Orchids, Mick Ryan Orchids, Johnstone's Orchids, Guest Orchids, Jansma Orchids, Harry Lambert Orchids, and Simon Lenkic Orchids. It was wonderful to be able to build up my first collection with plants from all of those sources. I even managed to win a few prizes in the lower divisions at the Royal Adelaide Show in 1984, 1985 plus 1986 and joined the Orchid Club of South Australia. I remember one Andy Easton giving a talk to the Club during this time.

I started my first amateur cymbidium hybridising efforts in 1983, with mixed success in terms of pods that went through to harvesting. Those that did all went to Pauline McLean's lab north of Adelaide.



*Cym. Ifritah 'Abela'*

However, my success rate in bringing seedlings to flowering size is poor, to say the least. A few seedlings here and there made it through, but the results were pretty dismal in general, and the best took many years to flower.

During the 1976-1984 period I completed a BA, BA (Hons) and a PhD, and took on some demonstrating, tutoring and lecturing opportunities at both Flinders and Adelaide universities, until obtaining a job at the then CSIRO Division of Atmospheric Research in Melbourne in January 1990. This resulted in the first major move for my cymbidium collection, with the bulk taken over to Melbourne by my father in his trailer attached to the family car. The remainder stayed at the family home in Adelaide under the custodianship of my poor mother.

In Melbourne I also had access to some good orchid nurseries, notably Graylane Orchids, Clive Halls' Mt Beenak Orchids plus Julian Coker's Atlantis Orchids, and Andre Cleghorn's Flora Laboratories of for plant tissue culture needs. I even purchased some plants from Ezi-Gro Orchids in Western Australia. My collection had now grown steadily to the extent that by the end of the decade I had some 600 or so cymbidiums at all stages of growth.



Change was in the wind again, in that at the end of 1999 I was asked to apply for a Research Scientist's position at the Hadley Centre at the U.K. Meteorological Office (Met Office) following about 8 years remote collaboration with senior researchers based there. We moved to the U.K. in mid-2000, and rented for the first 3 or so years, until we had the funds and a chance to purchase a property following the relocation of the whole Met Office some 150 miles from near Reading in Berkshire to Exeter in Devon in southwestern U.K. So, I could now think about re-establishing my collection.

With a visit back to Australia in 2004 to clean up my best orchids and get a phytosanitary certificate for them, plus the help of Andre Cleghorn in Melbourne and the late Brian Rittershausen of Burnham Nurseries in the U.K. kindly providing access to their airport agents at both ends to aid shipping of the plants, I could now bring some plants to the U.K. Still, I had to do a 'Desert Island Discs' and could only pick out a sample of my best plants.

It probably cost me more in shipping than the plants were worth, but I now had my best 50 cymbidiums, and two glasshouses to put them in during the U.K. winter months. Nevertheless, it took a while to get used to growing my cymbidiums in Devon (in Okehampton adjacent to Dartmoor with an average of 1.5 metres of rain per year), with losses mainly to rot being the most prevalent problem.

It was now that I began making my first RHS registrations, with cymbidiums I named Ifritah and Iridium in 2004 plus Hot Wired and Fire Watch in 2006. The Ifritahs were the best of these, a crossing of Cym. Touchstone 'Tetra Mahogany' 4N with Cym. York Meredith 'Isma' 4N (see the best seedling, Cym. Ifritah 'Abela'). Once again, over many years, all eventually succumbed to rot.



*The only surviving Cym. Fire Watch seedling*

The only Cym. Fire Watch (my Cym. Coalfire 'New Horizon' 4N X Cym. Bud March 'Sandra' 4N) seedling to survive produced a large, but very disappointing flower overall (see picture), to the extent that I didn't even name it, and it won't cross with anything. I have ended up with 2 pieces of it which weathered all rots, though I wish it had been other plants that had survived.



*Cym. Bald Baroness 'Anita'*

One seedling that I registered as late as 2019, though the crossing was made back in 1993, was Cym. Bald Baroness (*Cym. parishii* var. *sanderiae* 'Emma Menninger' 4N X Cym. Ruby Eyes 'Red Baron' 4N) (see picture). It flowered several times off unfortunately diminishing plant growth and, despite my best efforts, I lost the plant to rot in 2020 – not sure if I can claim the loss to COVID – though crossing onto it several times with successive flowerings probably didn't help. To top things off, the package of flasks of the only seedlings made using it, which were cultured by Pakkret Floriculture, were lost somewhere in transit from Thailand to the U.K. in 2021.

In the U.K. prior to Brexit, I regularly acquired cymbidium plants, from Burnham Nurseries in Devon and a few from the Eric Young Foundation in Jersey, and later from Bert Ruiter in the Netherlands and several online nurseries in Europe. These now form the backbone of my collection, and much of my hybridising has centred on using these plants. Results have been mixed, with several pods sent to the labs of Orchid Alchemy and the Writhlington School Orchid Project failing to produce viable seed. I am more hopeful for two recent crossings, *Cym. Vingtaine de Samares* X *Cym. dayanum* var. *angustifolium* plus *Cym. Vingtaine de Samares* X *Cym. i'ansonii*, with both pods having seed sown by Orchid Alchemy. This lab has also recently reported good seed from my cross of *Cym. bicolor* X *Cym. canaliculatum*.

Back in Adelaide in Australia, my mother was now unable to look after the few less impressive cymbidiums I had left there, so my younger brother took them on. Amongst them were several plants of crossings with *Cym. madidum* that were all of garbage bin size (carrying the propensity of the species for massive foliage), so were never in line to be taken to the U.K. However, despite its size, the one plant that I would still like to have in my U.K. collection is the red cymbidium seedling *Cym. Mad Magic 'Mephistopheles'* (see picture).



*Cym. Mad Magic 'Mephistopheles'*

I have made several new additions to my cymbidium collection of late, most notably several warmer climate species that I grow inside the house – *Cym. bicolor*, *Cym. sinense* and *Cym. dayanum* var. *angustifolium*, plus *goeringii* growing outside. All but the latter have been crossed with pollen from Australian species and primary hybrids made available to me by colleagues in Australia, notably Joshua White, Gary Sweikert, and Ken Russell plus from some hybrids via Graham Morris and Nado Lenkic, as well as from Bert Ruiter in the Netherlands – I am very grateful to all of them. Pods from crossings of *Cym. Tethys 'Black Magic'* X *Cym. dayanum* var. *angustifolium* and *Cym. sinense* X *Cym. canaliculatum*, made more than 5-6 months ago, are all looking promising.

My latest RHS registration is of an Andy Easton seedling (*Cym. Rhode Island Red 4N* X *Cym. Red Sox 4N*) that I was given pollen from by Bert Ruiter during a visit to his nursery in March 2019. Wanting to cross it with another of Bert's plants that I had purchased, *Cym. Red Parish 4N*, I registered the crossing as *Cym. Red Shift* in 2021. I have three very strong and developing seedlings of *Cym. Red Parish 4N* X *Cym. Red Shift 4N* that were all that came from the pod sent to a lab in the Netherlands.



*Cym. Red Shift #1. Photo courtesy of Andy Easton.*

On the growing front, my latest bane has been single night late frosts in April this year and last, when I had taken my plants out of the glasshouse believing winter was over. I got caught on both occasions, with some severe plant damage and losses. The worst this year was the reduction of a multi-bulbed plant with several new shoots of Cym. Kuranda to one just shoot, which has subsequently rotted.

Finally, a new phase in my orchid growing is taking shape in that we are moving from the U.K. to the island of Corfu in Greece. By October, I hope that the move will be completed, and I can look to building my collection up again in a more cymbidium-friendly Mediterranean environment. In addition, importing plants from nurseries across the EU will once again be a viable option.

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## Controlling Scale in Small Collections

Most growers are no doubt familiar with the pest that is scale insects. There are hundreds of scale species, but the one I have encountered is Boisduval scale. If left unchecked, it will cause serious damage to your plants. The mature female insects settle on the leaves and create a hard shell above them as they prepare to lay eggs, which hatch in 5 to 7 days.



*Scale insects typically congregate in the middle "V" of leaves, but love to hide under the leaf husks on pseudobulbs.*

Large scale collections need to institute pest control, such as spraying paraffinic oil through overhead sprayers on a regular basis (which conveniently controls mites, aphids, and other sap-sucking insects too). For the home grower, however, manual controls are more likely to be required.

A common technique – and one I use – is the application of isopropyl alcohol (IPA). First, ensure that any dead leaf husks are removed. Then moisten a piece of paper towelling and wipe the affected leaves. This usually removes the bulk of the scale insects (as well as dust and dirt that has accumulated), leaving just a few stubborn ones. To remove those, as well as the ones around the pseudobulb, you can dip a cotton tip (available from chemists or supermarkets) in IPA and then rub the scale insects off. The size of cotton tip provides some access in and around the neck of the bulb, although won't reach everything. It is important to remove as many insects as you can, as the next step – pest oil – will not be effective on the mature insects.

After removing all the visible scale, spray the plant with a paraffinic oil or basic pest oil (I use Yates Pest Oil, which is just a petroleum oil with UV inhibitors). Ensure that the oil gets into the neck of the bulb and any tight spaces where scale insects may hide. The benefit of an oil like this is that the insects cannot build up a resistance to it, but you do need to be careful not to apply it too often nor in hot, sunny conditions.

Check the plant and repeat the scale removal and spraying process on a weekly basis, as you will find that some of the eggs and immature scale insects probably survived the initial pass. It will probably take three or four passes to eradicate a scale infestation on a plant and care will need to be taken to ensure they do not reappear from neighbouring plants.

## Plants Wanted

John Gate is seeking a division or backbulb of **Cym. Blazing Fury 'Ruby'**. If you have a piece available to share, please contact John on 0405 114 591.

The editor, Joshua White, is also looking for several species and older hybrids – in particular, **Cym. i'ansonii**, Disney Girl, Early Bird 'Pacific' and Sleeping Beauty 'Golden Queen'. Please email me at [jwhite88@gmail.com](mailto:jwhite88@gmail.com) if you can help!

## Acknowledgements and Contributions

I hope you have enjoyed this issue. If you have any feedback or would like to contribute (whether it be just one or two photos, an idea for an article, or to volunteer for an interview), please get in touch! I can be reached at [jwhite88@gmail.com](mailto:jwhite88@gmail.com).

Previous issues are available at <https://www.cosv.com.au/publications-and-resources>. All material is copyright © the original owners and used with permission. Thanks to all those who have contributed to this issue, including Rob Allan, Andy Easton, John Gate, Nado Lenkic, John Moon and Terry Poulton.

The next issue is planned for October 2022.