



January 2017
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Orchid News

**HAPPY
NEW YEAR!
2017**

Next Meeting: 30 January - Jim Cootes talks
'Orchids of the Philippines'



Founded 7th August 1934 An official publication of the Orchid Society of New South Wales.
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Email: secretaryosnsw@yahoo.com.au Web: <http://www.orchidsocietynsw.com.au>
All Correspondence to: The Secretary, PO Box 5396, Chullora NSW 2190
Meeting Venue: Ermington Community Hall, River Road, Ermington NSW 2115

WHAT'S ON AT FUTURE OSNSW MEETING 2017

- **30th January**
Jim Cootes talks 'Orchids of the Philippines'
- **27th February**
Daniel Gieger will show superb photography of miniature orchid species



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This month our meeting will be January 30th and with orchid plants dancing to a different tune I'm hoping our benching will be great.
I trust your Christmas and New Year have been full of cheer and that you are all safe.
Ian and myself are traveling this great country and have managed to see some very nice terrestrial orchids.
We will be in Nth Qld soon and will pick some very nice raffle plants for our meetings.
I hope 2017 brings a good growing season and that you win many prizes. Speaking of prizes please enter your champions into our Affiliated Society Competition, both open and Novice champions. See the website for details and entry form.
<http://www.orchidsocietynew.com.au/PhotoComp.htm>

AVAILABLE ON OSNSW WEBSITE

- Various Powerpoint presentations for members:
<http://www.orchidsocietynew.com.au/MembersInfo.htm>
- Slideshow of selected plants from the Orchid Society of NSW monthly meetings
<http://www.orchidsocietynew.com.au/PhotosMeetings.htm>
- Excel spreadsheet of all NSW Awards from 1944-present
http://www.orchidsocietynew.com.au/Documents/OSNSWdatabase1944_2016.xls
- Elemore Orchids Summer 2017 Catalogue
<http://www.orchidsocietynew.com.au/MembersInfo.htm>

JUDGES ROSTER			
JANUARY, FEBRUARY and MARCH 2017			
	January	February	March
Panel 1	W Chapman W Dhu J'D'Olier D Law	M Aldridge N Gill S Tay	D Brooks P Myszalski J Fulcher
Panel 2	J Allen J Keenan J Robinson	J McAuley P Radford C Scott-Harden	C Polis P D'Olier H Choo C Rethers
Panel 3	D Brooks K Koutsoukis P Anderson	T Beehag T Yee G Fulcher	G Scott-Harden L Bromley B Richens C Bradley
Award Panel	B Britton T Peterson C Bradley	A Cushway L Bromley J Allen	J Keenan W Dhu G Hart

N.B. Reserves and Associate judges for panels will be chosen on the night

OSNSW MANAGEMENT 2017

- President:** Irene Chalmers (imchalmers@optusnet.com.au)
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Peter D'Olier | Geoff Fulcher | Jean Fulcher

MAJOR EVENTS FOR 2017

- 31 March-1 April*
International Orchid Fair Castle Hill
- 8-9 April*
Collectors Plant Fair Hawkesbury Racecourse, Clarendon
- 26-28 May*
Orchids Out West Hawkesbury Racecourse, Clarendon
- 11-13 August*
National Orchid Extravaganza, Dural
- 18-20 August*
St Ives Orchid Fair St Ives Showground
- 6-8 October*
Southern Orchid Spectacular Caringbah

APPEAL FOR ORCHIDS IN FLOWER

Irene and Ian Chalmers and Veronica Clowes will be attending the Japan Grand Prix International Orchid Festival on 11-17 February and would like your help in putting on a display. If you think you might have any flowers you could give them to take along they will be leaving on 8th February so will need them by 7th February at the latest. Please deliver to either Veronica or Ian and Irene Chalmers. Email them for the delivery addresses.



Membership Fees 2017	
• Single Metropolitan Member	\$25.00
• Joint Metropolitan Members (i.e. \$27 membership and \$5 for insurance)	\$32.00
• Single Country and Interstate Member	\$22.00
• Joint Country and Interstate Member (i.e. \$24 membership and \$5 for insurance)	\$29.00
• Associate Member	\$20.00
• Overseas Member	\$32.00
• Affiliated Society	\$62.00
• 11 Posted issues of Orchid News	\$10.00

***Pterostylis* Culture** (By J Stone and Courtesy Blue Mts and Penrith Districts Orchid Society)

Pterostylis are found mainly in Australia, but also in New Zealand, New Guinea and New Caledonia. They are all terrestrial orchids, and are distributed from arid to coastal regions, from tropical to sub-alpine regions. *Pterostylis* species occur naturally in local bushland and grassy areas of suburban and rural properties. Some grow in colonies (the most adaptable to cultivation), others are solitary. All *Pterostylis* are deciduous, dying back to dormant tuberoids and sprouting again after summer or autumn rain. All produce replacement tuberoids every year, colony formers also produce two to five 'daughter' tuberoids each growing season, therefore a fivefold increase is possible.

TEMPERATURE: Popular locally grown colony forming species, such as *Ptst. curta*, *Ptst. pedunculata*, *Ptst. baptistii*, *Ptst. nutans*, and their hybrids, prefer cool to moderate conditions when actively growing (green leaves). When dormant, during warmer months, pots need to be kept cool and drier.

LIGHT and SHADE: These orchids need 25-50% shade when actively growing in cooler months and heavier shade when dormant during hot summer months, to help reduce high temperatures.

HUMIDITY/AIR FLOW: When in active growth *Pterostylis* need moderate humidity with excellent ventilation.

WATERING: Water *Pterostylis curta*, *Ptst. pedunculata*, *Ptst. baptistii*, *Ptst. nutans*, and their hybrids, late February to late spring, or when new shoots appear, till leaves start to yellow. Allow pots to dry out when dormant with just enough water to prevent tuberoids shrivelling. Care should be

taken with the first watering after dormancy; water may drain down the sides and not wet the mix, immerse pot in water if necessary to wet the whole of the mix.

GROWING MEDIA and POTTING: The above mentioned *Pterostylis* prefer to be re-potted annually or bi-annually, December or January, (tuberoids will fill the pot and weaken growth if overcrowded). An open potting mix like seed-raising or propagating mix seems to be OK, or use a recipe from one of the books. Plant dormant tubers with their tops about 3cms from the final level of the media; cover with mix to within 1cm from top of pot. and then water in to settle. Don't over-crowd tuberoids – about 20 to a 150mm pot are enough. Mulching with *Casuarina* needles will help prevent leaf rot from contact with growing media.

FERTILIZER: At the beginning of the growing season, *Pterostylis* respond well to a dose of Seasol, or similar soil conditioners, but avoid using soil wetting agents. Feed with weak solutions of liquid fertilisers such as blood and bone, fish emulsion etc. with each watering when actively growing. Terrestrial orchids have a symbiotic relationship with mycorrhizal fungi so avoid using chemicals.

FLOWERING: *Pterostylis* species and hybrids flower at various times during the year, but the varieties most commonly grown locally, flower winter to spring.

Native orchids are protected plants and should only be collected from the wild when their habitat is threatened and then only by authorised persons.

Reference and Recommended Reading:

Native Orchids of Australia and the Island Territories- David L. Jones: Field Guide to the Orchids of New South Wales and Victoria – Tony Bishop: Cultivation of Australian Native Orchids – Australasian Native Orchid Society Victorian Group Inc.

***Mediocalcar decoratum* Culture** (By J Stone and Courtesy Blue Mts and Penrith Districts Orchid Society)

A miniature, creeping, mat forming, epiphytic (grows on trees), or lithophytic (grows on rocks), orchid species, from New Guinea. *Mediocalcar decoratum* grows at 900 to 2500 metres, in cool, humid, buoyant shady forests.

LIGHT and SHADE: Needs to be grown in an airy, cool, humid, shady area out of direct sunlight. About 50-70% shade is ideal in summer with more light in winter and spring to induce better flowering.

AIR MOVEMENT: *Mediocalcar decoratum* appreciate good air movement all year round; as this helps to keep them cool in warmer months, and prevents rots and fungi when weather is cold and wet.

TEMPERATURE: They will tolerate short periods of high temperatures, but prefer temperatures of 5°C - 25°C. Cool nights are beneficial in warmer months. Misting, or fogging around plants, or watering under growing areas, can help to lower the temperature on hot days. Watering or misting, late in the day or early evening, in the hottest weather, will also help to relieve heat stress, but don't water plants directly in the hottest part of the day as this may 'cook' them.

HUMIDITY/AIR FLOW: This species needs high humidity and good air movement all year. In warm months, good air circulation and good air movement all year. In warm months, good air circulation and humidity is essential to prevent heat stress.

Maintain humidity by damping under benches, or fogging, or light fine misting rather than wetting plants or potting media.

WATERING: Should be regular throughout the year, with media just drying before each watering, which needs to be frequent and in the evening during warmer months, but reduced during cooler months when morning watering is best.

GROWING MEDIA and POTTING: Because of the rambling nature of these plants, some people prefer to grow them on tree fern or cork mounts; however mounted plants may need to be misted or watered more than once every day, especially in warm weather. Shallow pots are perhaps better for our local growing condition. It is important that the growing media retain some moisture, but must be free draining; suitable media include small/medium grades of treated bark, sphagnum moss, and perlite, or combinations of these materials. Re-potting is best done in spring or autumn to avoid the stress of climate extremes.

FERTILIZER: Feed weakly weekly using liquid fertiliser at quarter to half strength during active growth which can be for most of the year.

FLOWERS/RACEMES: These attractive, succulent orchid species, cover themselves with tiny red/yellow "bells" or "balls" during autumn/winter.

A Strange Calochilus?????

by Jim Brydie (Courtesy Ku-Ring-Gai Orchid Society Bulletin)

While searching through the 'web' for something else the other day I came across an amazing picture of something I had never seen before. That is a picture of a mutant *Calochilus* that was clearly petaloid in the same way that we have seen in a variety of other orchid genera over the years. *Calochilus* is a genus of terrestrial, tuberoid species most of which are endemic to Australia but with some species occurring in New Zealand, PNG and New Caledonia. Depending on which expert you consult, there are either a dozen or so species in total of 27 or about 30. I suspect that there is probably some debate to come, over which name applies to which official specimens.

Calochilus are known as the 'beardies' which you will understand is a perfect name as soon as you ever see one. When I first moved into our new home at Hornsby about 40 years ago, my wife and I used to bush walk regularly, as the house borders on major areas of bushland which are now preserved as a National Park. *Calochilus* were one of the first treasures we found in the bush no more than 100 yards from our side fence. I haven't seen one recently, but then again I haven't really gone looking for some time either. I think the species near our home was *Calochilus roberstonii* but I wasn't into checking species at the time so I can't be sure. That species occurs in all states so it is a possibility.

David Jones' magnificent book 'A Complete Guide to Native Orchids of Australia' gives a terrific insight into the genus, including the following extracts: "... they grown in forested habitats, shrub land and heathland, mostly in well drained soil ... in temperate regions, flowering plants have a fully grown, thick, channelled leaf, usually three sided with a red base ... The labellum, which can be flat or curved in profiles is the largest part of the flower and in most species is covered in colourful calli, plates and coarse hairs, imparting the impression of a beard ... The short column often has spots that resemble eyes (sham eyes) and a colourful frontal ridge ... the genus are related to the sun orchids (Thelymitra) ... but do not close at night ... The flowers usually last only a few days ... many species are self pollinating but some are pollinated by wasps ... They are very difficult to grow."

The essence of the last note is please look, see and enjoy, don't try to dig them up and grow them.

The photos give you a look at what some of the species of *Calochilus* that occur in NSW look like. The eyes are more prominent in some species than others obviously, but on those where they stand out like *paludosus*, don't they make the flower looks like a little bearded 'bushie' with a long nose? Amazing.

And then at the left is this mutant species they found in Tasmania. You can see that it is a *Calochilus* all right but with the petals looking like lips, it is hard to tell which species it is.

But what an amazing flower? It looks like some kind of bird of prey in flight. If this was a commercially available orchid it would be sold out overnight.

(Photos courtesy of WWW)



roberstonii



paludosus



campestris



platytilus?



Orchids in the Foothills

21st Australian Orchid Conference
18-22 July 2018

The Committee invites your Expression of Interest in attending the conference.
Please proceed to the website to fill in the form. Thank you.

<http://www.aoc2018.orchidsocietynsw.com.au/expressions.php>