



THE MONTHLY BULLETIN OF THE KU-RING-GAI ORCHID SOCIETY INC.

(Established in 1947)
A.B.N. 92 531 295 125

March 2022 Volume 63 No. 3
Annual Membership : **\$15 single, \$18 family**

Patrons - Pauline and Trevor Onslow

President : Dennys Angove 043 88 77 689
Secretary : Jenny Richardson (Culture Classes)
Treasurer : Lina Huang
Vice President : tba
Editor (Hon volunteer) Jim Brydie
Society mail to - PO box 1501 Lane Cove, NSW, 1595

Committee Jessie Koh (Membership Secretary / Social Events)
Committee Herb Schoch (Community outreach and Liaison)
Committee : Chris Wilson (Library and Reference Sources)
Committee : Lee Payne (Sales table and Sponsorship)
Committee : James Clugston
web site (active link) : <http://kuringgaiorchidsociety.org.au>
Society email : kuringgaiorchidsociety@gmail.com

Next Meeting : Mon 21st March

Venue : *The West Lindfield Community Hall, corner of Bradfield Rd and Moore Avenue, West Lindfield.*

Covid Restrictions – Advance registration is no longer required but attendees must still be double vaccinated.
Your vaccination certificate will be checked (unless it was previously checked and registered upon attending a meeting).

Please be considerate to those managing this process. Also, if you aren't feeling well on the night, please stay home. It may turn out to be nothing but think of your friends if it isn't.

A face mask is no longer mandatory but is strongly recommended where 1.5 M spacing can't be maintained!!
We know it is uncomfortable but please have a mask with you and comply.

As for last month, we will have a **full orchid benching (no limit on benching numbers)**, the **sales table** will be operating for small quantities of pots etc, **plus sales of members spare plants**. Also, there will be a **normal monthly raffle**, and the **library** will be operating. There can be no culture class while the 1.5 m distancing applies.

The hall is open from 6.30pm. Please try and get there early to help set up tables and chairs. No benching before 7pm no matter what. PLEASE give the set up team time to get tables, benching class dividers, and class cards in place. When benching, if you aren't sure where your orchid should go, ask for help from one of the committee at the front door check in or at the front table and they will guide you to an experienced member who can help.

The meeting commences at 8pm and starts with the usual meeting formalities while the judges review the benched orchids. Once judging is complete and winners announced, we will break for supper.

The Supper Break – Presently, it is still impractical **to allow sharing** of supper supplies, so **'supper' basically remains a "bring our own"** (except for the hot water which we will have available). No cups/mugs/tea/coffee/milk/sugar/stirrers will be provided. You may bring your own edibles, just no sharing please.

After the supper break – There will be a Plant Doctors session. We will rearrange the seating to accommodate two Plant Doctor panels, one at each end of the hall and there will be several experienced and knowledgeable 'doctors' on each panel. If you have an orchid you are worried about and you are not sure what to do next, bring it along for the experts to assess and provide practical advice. See if they can diagnose your plant's problem and prescribe something or perhaps 'order more detailed tests'. There are no limits on the number of plants you may bring in to be assessed but if there are large numbers 'in the waiting room', the doctors reserve the right to prioritise which 'patients' they see.

Best of the Evening Orchids from last meeting (more on each inside)



Novice – Bc. Mem. Vida Lee 'Limelight'



Vandachostylis Pine Rivers 'Wasana'



Habenaria medusae

The opinions and recommendations published in this bulletin are those of the authors of the various items. The Ku-Ring-Gai Orchid Society Inc disclaims responsibility for any losses or damages that may be attributed to the use or misuse of any material or any opinion published in this bulletin. The bulletin and its content are protected by copyright and no part of them may be reproduced or re-used without the permission of the author.

Society News (if anyone has a news item, please phone Jim on 9476 3383, or email at jimbrydie@aussiebroadband.com.au)

President Dennys' Desk – So, we are finally off and running again. We had 42 people turn up at our AGM, with 4 unable to attend and 5 arriving without pre-registration. It was good that we had the room since it would have been difficult if we had gone over 48. So, we are still revising the next evolution of our COVID plan bearing in mind we still must also satisfy the KMC's (i.e., Council) rules, which are also evolving. We will let you know what the new rules are before the next meeting.

Rules are necessary to reduce the personal COVID risk of members to the lowest level possible.

New KOS Committee - Our new committee is in place until our next AGM in October, and I thank Garrie Bromley for facilitating a smooth transition. You can see the names of the people of our new committee on the front page of the bulletin, but I would like to draw your attention to our new member James Clugston who also was nominated and appointed to the committee from the floor of the AGM. Welcome aboard James, I look forward to the meeting of minds with you.

Name Badges May I also remind all members to please wear your name badges at every meeting. It is a big aid to social communication. People tend to be shy at making contact when they don't know the other party's name. Put your badge in the car now so you don't forget it, **and wear it when you get there.**

Growing Competition - Our growing competition has been the strangest on record. We had our first review last meeting judged by Christine Rethers and Trevor Onslow. We only had 5 plants turn up out of the many sold. There will be another review in 3 or 4 months. By mistake all 5 were put into the open class when in fact one should have been judged as a novice entry. I extend my apologies to Ann Dimond for this error which was caused by too much extra written material placed over the table class divider by me. Your entry was novel and showed a creative flair. I found the root structure very interesting. Even though I had a close look at it, it did not trigger a mental flash to correct the mistake at the time. I put it down to a senior moment. Well done Ann and I hope there will be some more novice benchings at the next review.

Misplaced Books - Many of you will be aware that Chris Wilson has been doing an audit on our library books. Chris has reported that some titles cannot be located. I remember this happened to me a few years back when I found one that I had misplaced and managed to return it at that time. Given the weird 2 years we have just gone through I would be grateful if you could check your bookshelves and if you have any of the following titles can you please return them as able – no fines, just a thank you.

Orchids for the Australian Garden by *Keith Irvine*

Dendrobium and its Relatives by *Lavarack, Grey, Stocker*

The Orchidaceae of German New Guinea by *A.O.F. Schlecter*

Growing Phalaenopsis at Home by *James Neal*

The Cattleyas and their Relatives Volumes i, ii, iv and v. by *Withner*

Blue Gum Walk, Hornsby – Chris Wilson is still hoping to lead this walk when the weather allows, and flowers become available. So, stay tuned, it can be a very rewarding experience.

Membership renewal – It is time to renew. You can pay online or obtain a form from Jessie Koh and pay in cash. We need to have members paid up by the end of March for formal reporting purposes. At the end of March, I will be reviewing the Bulletin subscription list.

Member's welfare – please remember, if you need to speak to someone immediately then you are most welcome to contact me at any time, 24/7 on 043 88 77 689.

Other items

1. AGM – We finally got to hold the AGM that didn't seem destined to be but let's take that as a sign that a calmer more ordered future is just before us. Welcome back to nearly all the old committee but it was sad to see that Fred Gorginian stood down. Let's hope he can see his way clear to rejoin our admin for another spell some time.

However, to replace Fred, a new Member James Clugston put his hand up and joined the committee. A hearty welcome James. I think you just beat my record as I was talked into joining the committee a couple of months after joining the club. I never regretted it for a moment and learned just so much. I hope you find it the same. Its wonderful to have you on board and I look forward to meeting you.

2. Membership Fees – **If I could put this notice in neon and dangle tinsel on it, I would.**

We need your membership payments NOW. Come on slackers, payment details were in last month's bulletin so. I surely don't need to keep reprinting them. IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHETHER OR NOT YOU HAVE ALREADY PAID, CONTACT THE CLUB EMAIL TO ASK. (at - kuringgaiorchidsociety@gmail.com)

Upcoming events: (please check at source for any last minute changes)

9-10 April - Collectors' Plant Fair, Hawkesbury Race Club, Clarendon

10 April - MWOS Auction, Cromer community Centre, catalogue expected mid March

27 – 29 May - Orchids Out West, Hawkesbury Race Club, 1 Racecourse Rd, Clarendon

25-26 June - Mingara Orchid Fair, Mingara Recreation Club, Tumbi Umbi

19-21 Aug - St Ives Orchid Show, St Ives Showground, Mona Vale Rd, St Ives

31 Aug - 4 Sep - 22nd AOC Conference & Show Logan Metro Sports & Events Centre, Crestmead, QLD

BOE Open Hybrid - Vandachostylis Pine Rivers 'Wasana' grown by Garrie and Lesley Bromley

Garrie has had this one for ages now and I moon over that colour every time I see it. I think this time is about the tallest spike he has grown but it's always gorgeous.

Pine Rivers is an intergeneric hybrid between what used to be 3 genera but since *Ascocentrum* was changed to become *Vanda* it is just 2 – *Rhynchostylis* and *Vanda*. The lovely blue comes from both *Rhynchostylis coelestis* with its small blue tipped flowers and the big *Vanda coerulea*, but not all Pine River cultivars are blue. In fact, it comes in white, red, pink, blue and all shades in between.

Wasana is about the best blue. It has been awarded a number of times and received an AM of 83.4 in NSW in 2016. It is a warm growing monopodial grower, medium size, with a great display of generally about 4 cm diameter flowers.

Vanda coerulea gives it a little cool tolerance but the rest of the genes are all from warm to at least warmish growers. New growers shouldn't be tempted to rush into acquiring gorgeous orchids like this. As the Bromley's show, it is certainly 'growable' but you need experience and the right facilities to do it.

Congratulations Garrie and Lesley, thank you for sharing all the beauty you grow so well. It's wonderful.



BOE Open Species – Habenaria medusa grown by John Chang



John is really starting to show us the way with some of these amazing Asian terrestrial species, and I believe there are also some stunning hybrids we aren't quite into just yet. These will eventually be very popular among all growers. They are 'growable' and John is one of the pioneers working out for us how it needs to be done.

I grew this species myself and flowered a couple as well but through lack of experience I killed the whole batch in one season. I was as mortified as the medusae.

The majority of the really attractive terrestrials like the *Habenaria rhodocheila* complex and this medusae, are all strictly seasonal growers, something like Australia's *Pterostylis greenhoods* but not really the same as many *Habenarias* are from monsoon country.

Their growth cycle means that they have a short sharp growing, flowering and fruiting season followed by a long dormant phase as underground tubers. This rest period can be about 6 months and during this period orchids like *Habenaria rhodocheila* and *Hab. medusa* MUST be kept dry. If they are wet while asleep the tubers may rot away and then the plant is dead.

John is more adventurous than I but we communicate in our learning process and I am sure we will both reach excellence in growing them at some future point. In the meantime, he is growing several species and at least one hybrid very well.

This year even I managed to flower a tiny plant of *Habenaria carnea* even if it did only have 3 flowers. Also, some years back I bought a flask of *Habenaria xanthocheila* (a yellow species in the *rhodocheila* complex) and my last remaining plant has finally got a growth on it over 15cm tall. I am hoping if I get it through to it's winter rest and grow it well again next year I might even see some flowers.

In the meantime, who am I to tell you all about *Habenaria* when we have a perfectly qualified writer and grower in John? How about it John? Can you tell us the tale of medusa the god and medusae the orchid in a coming month? But even if you can't bring yourself to do it, congratulations on this one, its great and I am sorry I missed it.

Speeding Driver - A Highway patrolman pulled alongside a speeding car on the freeway. Glancing at the car, he was astounded to see that the blonde behind the wheel was knitting!

Realizing that she was oblivious to his flashing lights and siren, the trooper cranked down his window, turned on his bullhorn and yelled, "PULL OVER!"

"NO!" the blonde yelled back, "IT'S A SCARF!"

Peristerchilus Memoria Iris Pendle

- by David Knight, and by the courtesy of ANOS Newcastle ❄️

Many orchid enthusiasts are aware of this beautiful small flowering hybrid, but few have it in their collection.

Peristerchilus Memoria Iris Pendle was made by Col Fitzsimmons about 8 or 9 years ago and named after Iris Pendle, a respected member of the orchid community.

Col made the hybrid using *Peristerchilus Olive Grace* (*Peristeranthus hillii* x *Sarcochilus falcatus*) and crossing is back onto *Sarcochilus falcatus*. I believe Col used the 'purple labellum' variety.

Peristeranthus hillii is a small flowered species that grows from northern NSW up to southeastern Queensland, while *Sarcochilus falcatus* is more widespread from northeast Queensland rain forest, extending down to Victoria.

As with many hybrid orchids, plants can exhibit differing traits from that of their parents.

Where some are more monopodial, like the *Peristeranthus hillii* with few side growths, others are more compact with many side shoots forming quite a dense plant.

(Jim Brydie: the pictures at the right are from the internet. At the left is a picture of a *hillii* at the Iluka Reserve in northern NSW, Right and the flower below are from the ANOS Qld website and that plant is from southern Qld)

On mature plants, flowers are carried on racemes over 200mm long and generally open slightly cupped to around 12mm to 14mm. The colour with purple spotting or blotches in some cases is quite strong.

Another pleasing characteristic of this orchid is on warm days in the shade house the perfume is amazing. Not a lot of hybrids are scented.

The culture for this orchid is reasonably easy, bush house conditions are ideal. I grow this plant and those of its parentage in either a mesh pot or a gutter guard sock. Good air movement is desirable, as it is with nearly all native orchids. My plant is kept moist and fed regularly (*weakly x weekly*).

Overall, a very rewarding little orchid.



close up of Perist. hillii



Prschs. Mem. Iris pendle

Sarc. falcatus

Peristeranthus hillii

❄️ article and pictures not for reproduction without the author's permission.

Sarcochilus falcatus and some of its hybrids - by Jim Brydie

I think David Knight's Peristerchilus Memoria Iris Pendle has to be the best intergeneric Sarcochilus hybrid made so far. And it isn't a cross with a Phalaenopsis with their big flamboyant flowers, or a Rhychostylis with their dense ponytails of brightly coloured flowers, or for that matter, a cross even using any non-Australian genus. Who would have guessed that a cross using a Peristeranthus, a virtually unknown and ignored little species, would produce such beauty and such vigour. Well of course its breeder certainly did, but I must admit that I wouldn't have been one to snap up seedlings of the cross at an orchid fair in anticipation of such success.

In his article David told you about the Peristeranthus parent species (*Perths. hillii*) but it seems to me that another big factor in its success is the backcross of the parent Olive Grace to the species Sarcochilus falcatus. This gives Memoria Iris Pendle two doses of falcatus in its parentage and thus 75% of the genetic makeup. David's article was written for the ANOS Newcastle newsletter so he didn't expand too much on the falcatus parent, perhaps knowing that ANOS members would all be fully aware of that species and its many contributions to its hybrids, however, since our society is a slightly wider ranging general orchid society, I thought it would be useful to give our members a sort of follow on article, backgrounding Sarc. falcatus as well as talking a little about some of its characteristics and some of the famous hybrids to which it has contributed. So, ...



Sarcochilus falcatus is an Australian species found all along most of the lower mid-east coast of Australia, mostly in mountainous areas. It grows pretty much exclusively as an epiphyte, and it is one of the Sarcochilus species that very much prefers to be grown on a mount rather than in a pot.

It's distribution ranges from Mt. Finnigan on Cape York in Queensland (just short of Cooktown), all the way down through NSW and to the NE corner of Victoria (map image from the Australian National Botanic Gardens article on Sarc. falcatus).

It's common name is the orange blossom orchid because of the similarity of its flowers in shape and perfume to those of the orange tree. They are slightly cuppy, white, and generally about 2.5 – 3 cm diameter. Inflorescences can carry up to 14 flowers but that would be unusual and 7 to 10 is more common.

Most plants grow attached to a tree trunk and grow out and downward. They are usually found in shady, cool, moist, areas.

In a paper from the ANBG they say - "*it favours situations of high humidity and air movement, particularly those where breezes, mists, clouds and drizzly weather are frequent. It is confined to mountains and ranges in the tropics, but further south is found in both lowland and mountainous forests.*"

Like all Vandaceous orchids the stems are monopodial (growing ever longer from a single point), but over time a strong plant will branch near the base to create a cluster of stems.

The flower is usually white with yellow in the lip but there are many variations. Some have purple or red lines in the lip and these have often been selected in breeding in an attempt to gain colours in the hybrids.

** there is an excellent and full article on the species by Gerry Walsh (the Rocklily man) on his website - <http://therocklilyman.com/other-species/sarcochilus/sarcochilus-falcatus/>

Falcatus Hybrids – For obvious reasons, most of our Sarcochilus breeding lines are based around the easiest to grow species such as Sarc. hartmannii. Our subject, Sarc. falcatus, has been tried in primary hybrids with most of the other common and showy flowered types, and has produced some excellent results, but as it is white like hartmannii, and it has this predilection for growing as a mounted plant, it is probably fair to say that the lovely falcatus has been regarded as being on the 'B' team as a parent.

However, in the case of Peristochilus Memoria Iris Pendle, the predilection for growing on a mount was hardly an issue because the other species in the mix, Peristeranthus hillii, feels exactly the same way.

In Mem. Iris Pendle, falcatus was able to provide genes for broader leaves, large better shape flowers, and a nice tight clustered growth habit. And now that David has explained to us how to grow it on either a mount or a gutterguard pocket, culture doesn't seem so difficult.

Anyway, getting back to the broader topic of falcatus hybrids, I found the following interesting insights and history in older articles from two greatly respected orchid hybrid pioneers. :

The Ira Butler Story (See KOS bulletin Sept 2010 for the story) – Ira Butler was one of the pioneers of Australian native orchid breeding in the second half of the 20th century but this small extract relates only to his exploration of hybridising within the genus Sarcochilus.– (extract) "... Ira then began to look around for an orchid group in which work on hybridisation had not yet been undertaken, but which had some promise of attractive results. He picked the



genus *Sarcochilus*. The target for (his) hybridisation program was to produce hardy plants, easy to cultivate, with larger flowers of different colours.

His first attempt was to cross *Sarc. hartmannii* with *Sarc. olivaceus* (=Canary). He had many difficulties working out satisfactory methods of culture and many seedlings were lost. (JB: the use of the asymbiotic agar based flasking system was not widespread in those times). Finally, in 1962 his *Sarc. Canary* flowered, a beautiful yellow flower with the 'ginger' perfume of *Sarc. olivaceus*. The racemes were upright and showed none of the clumping often seen in *Sarco hartmannii*. The second cross to flower was *Sarc. Fitzhart* (*Sarc. fitzgeraldii* x *Sarc. hartmannii*). The coloured centre of *Sarc. fitzgeraldii* was dominant, the plants were vigorous and the flower presentation considerably improved.



Sarc Canary



S. olivaceus

(JB: the cross of *falcatus* and *olivaceus* was later registered by G. Hicks in 1994 as *Sarc. Cyclone* but I am unable to find a picture)

Other hybrids also followed; *Sarc. falcatus* x *Sarc. ceciliae* (=Sarc. Phyllis), *Sarc. hartmannii* x *Sarc. falcatus* (=Sarc. Melba), *Sarc. hillii* x *Sarc. hartmannii* (=Sarc. Minuet), *Sarc. ceciliae* x *Sarc. hartmannii* (=Sarc. Lois), and *Sarc. hartmannii* x *Sarc. australis* (=Sarc. Southern Cross). JB: note, the *Sarc hillii* reference above is not *Peristeranthus hillii*



Sarc. Lois

Of all the crosses, he was most pleased with *Sarc. Lois* because of its large flowers and the variety of colours.

Neville Roper – in an analysis Neville did of the features he had observed passing from species to hybrid (see KOS bulletin June 2009), Neville reported that he found that where *falcatus* was the pod parent, there had been some tendency to shorter racemes and slightly less filled in flowers, but he also noted that in the primary hybrid between *falcatus* and *hartmannii* (*Sarc Melba*), which grows vigorously and flowers off small plants, although it had long elegant racemes of white flowers with wonderfully contrasting red spots in the centre, some clones displayed rather sequential flowering (ie opening from the bottom first, and the bottom finishing by the time the top flowers opened).



Sarc. Melba (N. Roper)



Sarc. George Colthup



Judith

Just the same, *Melba* proved to be a highly successful hybrid and produced some famous name second generations still seen today. i.e. *Sarc. George Colthup*, *Sarc. Judith*, and *Sarc. Melody*.

The top picture of *Judith* is the cultivar 'Cheryl', the cultivar below is 'Highclere', and there are many other variations in pinkish tones.



Growing *Sarcochilus falcatus* (based on extracts from Gerry Walsh's article as referred above)

Sarc. falcatus is very much an epiphyte. It is often found on substantial tree limbs and trunks and thus it doesn't take overly kindly to being potted in a pot the way many grow *hartmannii*.

Gerry tells us: "One place where you won't see *S. falcatus* grow is on outer twigs of host trees, which is exactly where most other *Sarcanthinae* epiphytes seem to make a bee-line for. I have rarely seen it grow on branches thinner than about garden hose thickness, but even this dimension is rare. There is no doubt that *S. falcatus* will choose limbs of arm thickness or thicker nearly all the time. It really does prefer the major limbs and the main trunk of its host."

I also loved Gerry's down to earth discussion on growing *falcatus* –

"I grow *S. falcatus* on cork these days. Either virgin Portuguese or that Second-Cut Portuguese. Use a piece around 400 mm long minimum but no wider than about 75mm. Nothing looks as awkward as a *S. falcatus* plant on a small square mount . . . correction: there is one thing . . . and that's a *S. falcatus* imprisoned in a pot. I don't care whether it grows all right or not – it looks ridiculous and ugly – on a par with Volkswagens painted 'burnt orange' or lime green business shirts."

"Also very good are Ironbark totems like the ones you buy at the nursery for your indoor plants. These will break down in seven or eight years which is not a bad life span I suppose. I've gone off strips of hardwood timber and old fence palings. They eventually rot or get the usual borer in them. But they are cheap and readily available. I have seen *S. falcatus* grow really well when tied to a sock of plastic 'Gutterguard' filled up with coconut fibre. It just doesn't look natural to my eyes but good results are certainly to be had."

JB: As to the practical use of gutterguard as opposed to the artistic effect, only each eye can judge. I see his point, but I didn't mind the visual effect of the gutterguard mounts in David Knight's article on *Peristerchilus Memoria Iris Pendle* and the gutterguard structure does have a slight cultural advantage for those who just don't provide sufficient

water for mounted plants. Maybe if you are trying mounted orchids for the first time, a gutterguard tube might be a good learning step toward a cork mount.

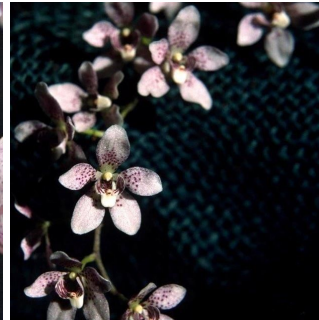
And to finish, here are a couple of pictures of primary hybrids of *Sarc. falcatus* that I think have obvious merit and I am sure have been used as parents themselves but that must be another story. Unfortunately, I couldn't find any pictures for a couple that might have tweaked your interest but that is probably because they are hybrids made a good time back. One was the cross with *Rhinerrhiza divitiflora*, a species with many, many yellow and red spidery flowers that are quite short lived. It's cross to *Sarc. falcatus* makes *Rhinerchilus Orange Stars* which would, I imagine, produce similar but slighter fuller flowers that age at least a little better than the spidery parent but I haven't seen it. The other was the cross to *Sarc. hirticalcar*, which has very small yellow and red flowers and has been used to introduce yellow colours to *hartmannii* hybrids. The name of that cross is *Sarc. Falcalcar* but once again no pictures. But anyway, I hope you enjoy and get a few ideas from these last few.



Verolice (=falc x fitzgeraldii)



Sun Spot (=falc x fitzchart)



Susan (=falc.x weinthallii)



Peristerchilus Olive Grace

Encyclia adenocaula (used to be *Epi* or *Encyclia nemorale*)

This is an orchid I bought about 49 years ago from an orchid nursery over at Dural called Bob Deane's. That was back in my early days as a learner grower and Bob had fairly recently moved over to Dural from his original home in Beecroft. He and his dad built a nice new place on acreage at Dural and had a huge glasshouse and a massive but slightly ramshackle shaded area of benches.

Bob grew a whole lot of experimental hybrids between what were at that time called the rupicolous *Laelias* (now *Cattleyas*) and also using the stunning red *Sophronitis coccinea*. BUT, he also had an amazing collection of bits and pieces of miscellaneous orchid species I had never heard of before. Every chance I got (every few weeks or so) I would drop by over at the Dural nursery and wander up and down the aisles to see what new weird little thing happened to be in flower. Of course I did manage to buy a few odds and ends every now and then as well, as all good newbie orchid growers do.



At that time I was a bit entranced by the bright reds and yellows of many of the rupicolous *Laelia/Sophronitis* crosses and also many of the more odd-ball species in the *Laeliinae* family. One of the orchids I bought from Bob was one labelled *Epidendrum nemorale*, a species that has had a few name changes over the years but its correct name now is *Enc. adenocaula*.

Enc. Adenocaula is one of that group of *Encyclias* with prominent, large, onion like bulbs topped by a pair of large fleshy leaves. It is an epiphyte from the east side of Mexico toward the Carribean, in oak and pine forests. It is native to areas with a VERY distinct dry winter rest from late autumn to late spring. It has a metre long spike with a wonderful head of large, long lasting amethyst pink flowers. The flower stems and the upper part of the inflorescence is covered in a fine bumpy, warty surface that gives it the species name 'adenocaula'. **Psbs of Jim's adencocaula**



The genus *Encyclia* is still being refined and sorted by the taxonomists, with many old '*Epidendrum*' and then '*Encyclia*' species being shifted around to newly defined genera such as *Prosthechea*, *Alamania*, *Anacheilium*, *Coilostylis*, *Hormidium*, and others. I am afraid the sorting out is still proceeding and I haven't followed the ins and outs very well. However, it does seem to me that *Adenocaula* is very much an *Encyclia* at present and so are the few others in which I have been interested in relatively recent years. These types with big onion like pseudobulbs are a

group I have found attractive. Species of that type that I have grown and admired are *Encyclia adenocaula*, *alata* (especially the *alba* variety), and *cordigera* (the darker flowered form is called variety *rosea* but more often labelled *Enc. atropurpureum*), and *randii*. I also grew *Enc. tampense* of that group for a while but this one comes from further north into Florida in the USA and is a warm moist grower, and at least to me, less attractive.

I am a little confused about the *Encyclia alata* variety *alba* that I have growing because I haven't flowered it just yet although it is growing quite well. Frank Hofbauer grew and flowered it beautifully and his 'alba' was a lovely green



flowered orchid, much like the picture below of *Encyclia alboxanthina*. The species name *alata* recognises the large wing like flaps either side of the column, which are actually part of the lip.

-- *Enc. cordigera* var. *rosea* --

-- *Enc. randii* --



Unfortunately though, it now seems that not all *alata* have such distinctive 'wings' as you see in the lovely brown and yellow flowered one pictured left. In some cases, the wings are more folded across the column, although I am not totally sure about that because these species distinctions seem to change every few years. Perhaps the ones where the wings fold across the column will turn out to be another species altogether.

I go to all this detail because if you are thinking of buying one of these species to try them out, please don't be too upset when your flowers don't look like the examples I show here. For instance, ordinary cultivars of *Encyclia cordigera* look rather plain and I wouldn't bother growing one. And, as I said, there are

Enc. alata

Enc. alboxanthina

alatas, and then there are good *alatas*, and I am not sure Franks 'alata' really was *alata* even if it was magnificent.

My guess is that if you are buying line bred seedlings of these types you are more likely to get quality flowers, but the disadvantage is that some of these 'seedlings' may take a number of years to grow big enough to flower. If you can be patient though, the best ones can be stunners. Perhaps it's worth seeking someone with a good one that you like and getting in line for a division when it becomes available.

BOE Novice - Brassocattleya Mem. Vida Lee 'Limelight' grown by Fred Gorginian



This cultivar got a mention in last year's March article on spotted lip *Cattleya* hybrids originating from *Brassavola nodosa* so I won't go into all that again, but isn't the contrast between the green and the purple lip stunning?

Fred has grown his beautifully and certainly has the skills. Much to the relief of other novices there, I suspect Fred won't be in the novice section much longer. But don't worry about it Fred, I think you will be dominating Open class in no time at all.

Mem. *Vida Lee* is a complicated mix of 11 species but the top two are *Cattleya bicolor* (right) and *Brassavola nodosa* (below).

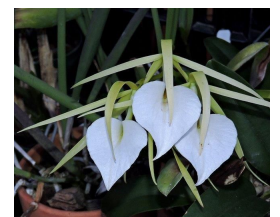


Catt. Bicolor has a tall skinny pseudobulb. It is a 'cluster Catt.' with a head of up to 10 flowers, each about 8 cm

wide. It comes in various colours but mostly with brown tone tepals and a contrasting bright pink/magenta lip. For those who may not have come across the term 'tepals' previously, it means sepals and petals other than the lip. In most orchid flowers, the sepals (the outer segment whorl of the flower) are basically petal like and the term tepal is a way of referring to those like sepals and petals. The term is use regularly in most serious orchid books and articles.

The other parent - *Brassavola nodosa* has narrow green tepals with a white lip. In breeding, the other parent dominates for colour, but *nodosa* affects the shape by narrowing the tepals and often broadening the end of the lip to a more spade shape.

If you compare the shapes of those two parents, *Vida Lee* is pretty much what you might have expected but it sure is attractive to me.



Nicely done Fred. I wish I could grow 'Catts' that well.