

# Epiphyllum and Hoya Society



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Full Member . . . . . \$10.00 1 January-31 December

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(ie Wife, Husband, Child) \$5.00

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## Editorial

I think we are now established -

The weather all around the country does not indicate that spring is close - (Wonder how close), but we can look forward to a further year of wonderful flowers.

The indication with my epis is that there will be an abundance of flowers this year. I have some seedling epis showing first bud.

This time next year we will be counting down to the Epiphyllum & Hoya Convention here in Wellington. Pencil in November 1993 on your calendar now. It promises to be great!

Don't forget the next newsletter. I still require notes, articles, letters (large or small).

Till next time, enjoy our hobby.

**Merv Keighley**  
Editor



## BOOK REVIEW

**ZYGOCACTUS (SCHLUMBERGERA)** (A comprehensive and Practical Guide For the Weekend Gardener) by Mark E.Cobia)

Roy and I discovered this 1992 publication in a general bookshop in Rockhampton and having purchased their only copy we scoured the bookshops of Melbourne in vain in search of further copies to bring back to New Zealand. This is beautifully presented book of 58 high quality glossy pages with superb coloured photographs.

Mark Cobia has received the assistance of B.L.Cobia Inc. (the leading hybridizer and producer of Zygocactus in the Unites States), the University of Massachusetts and Brindley's Nurseries in New South Wales and therefore the text has good quality cultural notes and is up to date, showing new hybrids which have been developed in Australia and the United States of America.

I would thoroughly recommend this book to you and thank Mark Cobia for writing the book and so helping to fill a void in literature on Schlumbergeras. My only criticisms relate to the title of the book and the number of typographical errors in the text. I would have preferred the title **Schlumbergera (Zygocactus)**, and thus using the internationally recognised botanical name for these plants. Reference to "weekend gardeners" in the sub-title is unfortunate as the book is of value to specialists and general plant enthusiasts alike.

Jane L. Griffith

The Book is available in New Zealand from:-

Randy Horwood Ltd

PO Box 100/055

North Shore Mail Centre

Glenfield

Auckland



The cost is \$22.45 which includes postage and GST.

Christmas Flame (Gold Fantasy)



## CEROPEGIAS

Last year several of our members, including my wife and myself, who attended the Auckland Epiphyllum and Hoya Society Convention, went on a bus trip to visit local gardens, and collections.

At our first stop, we encountered an extremely large glass house, mainly for the propagation of Cacti and Succulents, and three smaller glass houses, one for seedlings, and one of the others, to our great delight and wonderment, full of *ceropegias*, and nearly all for sale. These were grown and looked after by an elderly gentleman and his wife. As hardly any of our members have *ceropegias* in their collections, this was indeed a great treat, and when at last we had to drag ourselves away, we were thoroughly loaded down with our new acquisitions.

Since then I have made another trip to Auckland and acquired a few more plants from the same people. Recently I started to wonder about some of the names of these *Ceropegias*, as they did not sound botanical. This sent me delving (once again) into all the books I could find on *ceropegias*, and as I have stated once before, there are not very many. But that excellent book by R. Allen Dyer called "*Ceroppia, Brachystelma, and Riocreuxia in Southern Africa*", provided the answer and the mistakes. For instance-

*C. hawgarthii* should have been *C. haygarthii*

*C. barkley* should have been *C. barklyi* *C. stenantho* should have been *C. stenantha*

*C. monteroy* should have been *C. monteiroae*

The latter one, *C. monteiroae* is a very old name for the plant now called *C. sandersonii*.

So the moral of this story is, do not take for granted a name that you may find on any newly acquired plant. And to the grower, he should take more care to get the right name for his plant, especially if he is going to sell it.

by Morris Tarr

## Our President Writes -

*Dear Fellow Epiphyte Lovers*

*As I write this letter winter is really upon us in the true Wellington fashion - wet with driving northerly winds so I have not ventured out to the shadehouse to see how the Epiphyllums are surviving. Last time I viewed them Futon had four beautiful flowers pretending it was summer and several other plants had buds on.*

*The activity this morning has involved repotting some Ceropegias into hanging pots with circular frames to allow the plants to trail round them. Disappointingly two or three of the plants had Mealy Bugs and so the paintbrush and Methylated Spirits were put to good use and one plant was given a total immersion in warm water. A somewhat desperate measure for a plant that appeared to have collected the Mealy Bug of the entire neighbourhood on its roots and stems. Time will tell whether Ceropegia Monteroy survives its midwinter dip!*

*Since the last Newsletter Roy and I have spent a holiday in Northern Queensland and whilst enjoying the Tropical temperatures took time out to go and see Liddell's Nursery near Cairns. What a wonderful array of Hoyas the Liddell's have in their shadehouse. Being winter there were only a few flowers out but we could appreciate how magnificent their display must be in the height of the flowering season. Although it was winter the temperature was 27 C which made it abundantly clear to us that Tropical Hoyas have no chance of surviving in the southern part of the North Island in winter. In our minds we were set to move over to Cairns and enjoy such warm winter temperatures. That is until Iris Liddell mentioned to us that most days she had companions in the shadehouse as she is working although she does not always see the poisonous snakes as they enjoy the shady parts of the nursery! Suddenly the attraction of Tropical Queensland went!! I am perfectly happy to have two feline companions as I work even if one believes she is descended from the monkey family.*

*I do hope that you have had plenty of flowers on your Schlumbergeras and your Rhipsalidopolis are showing signs of budding. Enjoy the quieter time of winter before the onslaught of more work in the shadehouse in Spring.*

Kind Regards  
Jane L. Griffith  
President



# THE FLOWER DEVELOPMENT IN RHIPSALIDOPSIS

BRITTON & ROSE

By Elmar Bachthaler

Translated from K.U.A.S. 9/42/91 by Herman A. Kortink.

Rhpsalidopsis has a relatively small natural habitat in the higher mountain ranges near the coast in Eastern Brazil probably a little above about 1000 metres. The most notable habitats are in the State of Minas Geraes Parana and Santa Catarina where they grow in the trees in the mountain areas mostly in collections of humus in trees and crevices in rocks. The plants grow into small bushes which have their own particular growth habit of developing the overhanging branches with the botanical name of *Phyllocladien*. These have the function of the flowering outside leaves and are equipped on the front face with more or less brown bristled arouses from where these *Phyllocladien* under inductive conditions will form buds and eventually flower.

The genus *Rhpsalidopsis* consists of 2 species and a hybrid who in habitat separate themselves as follows. The most well known species is *Rh. Gaertneri* (Regel) Lingren, the Eastercactus as it is known in Europe. It has proportionally large longish epilittical mostly grey leafy surfaces and scarlet red flowers which have when fully developed a diameter of about 6 to 8cm, quite large.

The second species *Rh. Rosea* (Lagerheim) Britton & Rose. It also goes by the common name Whitsunday Cactus. It is in reality much smaller, 3 by 5 sides and flat forming or epilittical green or redtinted along the edges of the phyllocladien and light rose coloured flowers and when fully open have at the most a diameter of 3.5cm. The third species was created by A. Graeser from Nurnberg, Germany, in the early thirties, by crossing *Rh. Gaertneri* with *Rh. Rosea* and has an identical chromosome count ( $2N=22$ ) make up. As a species hybrid in its own right it was named *Rh. x Graeseri* (Werderman) Moran. Its Phyllocladien and flowers are intermediate between its parents and are the second largest of the three. The colour of the flower of this F1 hybrid are sealwaxred and after self pollination and subsequent intercrossing a number of hybrid species were created with large flowers and a variety of colours. The best of these were selected worthy of further culture and were offered to the hobby and the trade. The sorts "**Frulingszauber**" and "**Ostergruz**" ( in England Spring Dazzler and Paleface) and also "**Electra**" have with their special free flowering habit, found special popularity.



Further crossings and for a part backcrossings with the original species has given us in a number of years a whole row of interesting sorts. These flowers are larger and the colours are a definite improvement which in the collectors description are called "new doubles".

Rhipsalidopsis are spring flowerers and in their native habitat (south of the equator) flower in the months of October-November. From that we must conclude that for all species budforming will only start in cooler temperatures. This has been proven with research in both species and also for their hybrids.

So it is now known that for flowerbuilding *Rh. Gaertneri* requires temperatures of about 10 to 15 degrees C. These temperatures are a optimum, by temperatures of 10 degrees C. flowerbuilding will start regardless of the length of day but with temperatures of 15 degrees C. short days with about 8 to 12 hours of light is required. Lower temperatures for all species and hybrids under 8 degrees C neither hinders or promotes flowerbuilding but frequently will cause the dropping of the phyllocladien (bristle carrying flowering leaves). Temperatures of over 15 degrees will retard the flowering-building quite often, especially with long days (with more than 12 hours of light).

Under optimum conditions the plants must have at least 50 days and for maximum flower effect possibly more. For outstanding phyllocadien and flowers, plants probably should be kept cool for about 70 to 80 days, at the same time low light of about 1.000 lux should be provided proportionally, frequently on wintry days.

At the end of the cool period temperatures should be accelerated from 15 to 18/20 degrees C. normally at the end of March (Europe) September (Southern).

The flower development through the correct combination of temperature and light conditions should be reached after about 50 days. *Rh. Gaertneri var Tiburtii* has a similar flower reaction as the species, however the cool period for budforming and flowerbuilding is somewhat shorter. Also *Rh. Rosea* reacts to the flower development in a similar fashion although the workable temperature reach is somewhat lower and the lead up time should be longer than *Rh. Gaertneri*. Optimum would be about 10 degrees c under short day and light availability in winter months. In that case of the cool treatment must be between 90 to 100 days.



If the temperature is consistently from 18 to 20 degrees C under long day conditions, the flower buds would be, for the first named species, fully open after about 50 days. *Rh. Graeseri*, with regard to the flowering reaction is most of the time intermediate, the clone selections seem to be in the temperature range of *Rh. Rosea*, so are the researched hybrids for the flower development. Temperatures of 10 to 12 degrees C and short day conditions are the most advisable and for good flower effect, a cool period of 60 to 70 days is required. Also a proportionally relative low illumination of about 1.000 lux should be provided. After optimum cool conditions speed up conditions again from 18 to 20 degrees C with long days for the flower development. This should be reached after about 50 days.

The remaining applies for all species and hybrids that after the cool period and by low light intensity the temperatures should not go above 20 degrees C as the development of the flowers will be severely hindered and most will be dropped in the bud stage. For many years *Rh. Species* and hybrids were grafted onto fast growing grafting stocks like *Pereskia aculeata* and *Eriocereus justbertii*. Today Rhipsalidops are rarely grafted anymore as they grow quite well without problems on their own roots and produce flowering size plants in a shorter time than grafted ones and under favourable conditions *Rh gaertneri* and *Rh. Graeseri* flower in their first year.



With *Rh. Rosea* this is however only possible in two years. It should be pointed out that this species is somewhat more exact and needs a little more size than the first named.

The flowerbuilding takes place in the first instance on more mature standing phyllocladien in Autumn. By withholding most of the water normally given, hardened up, the reduced temperatures and the drier conditions will discourage the development of new leaves and therefore allow the present standing phyllocladien to fully ripen.

Further cool temperatures, possibly around 10 to 12 degrees C especially during the night and the natural short days in the following winter months will encourage good bud development. With the increasing temperatures in March and the longer days in April-March a rich and steady display of flowers can be assured.

*Rh. Gaertneri* and *Rh. x Graeseri* make quite an impression with their colourful buds and after full development the colours and the size of the flowers. *Rh. Rosea* is known for its flower richness and sheer numbers and the pleasant scent.

In bringing this to a close and in the framework of reorganising nomenclature of what the suggested changes are in the cactus systematic, in the subtribe Rhipsalidinae Rhipsalidopsis to abolish as a genus and therefore to rename this cactus *Hatiora Gaertneri* (Regel) Barthloth Comb. Nov. *Hatiora Rosea* (Lagerheim) Barthloth Com. Nov. and *Hatiora x Graesneri* (Werdermann) Barthloth Com. Nov.



DEATH OF MAUD BROWN OF LEVIN 23 JULY 1992

Maud was a member of the Cacti & Succulent Society for many years and an enthusiastic member of the Epi & Hoya Society since its foundation.

Although unable to attend meetings because of ill health, Maud was always keen to obtain cuttings and information from our meetings.

Members of the Wellington Epi and Hoya Society send condolences to Maud's family and to Majorie Hunt who will miss her long-time friend.



*The Convention Committee runs a sales table at each meeting, especially to raise funds for the convention.*

*Myra Tarr is the "boss" of the table and is doing a fantastic job two arms etc.*

*Myra needs things to sell!!! Anythings. Bring them in to the meetings Myra.*

# DISCHIDIAS

By Morris Tarr

At one of our recent Society meetings, after having listened to an interesting talk on Hoyas by Jean Young, she passed around to each of us, a small cutting of an unnamed Dischidia, which I took home and potted up in my little propagator and by now should be well rooted.

As most of our members, including myself, had never heard of Dischidias, I decided, being curious as usual, that I had better get out all the books, newsletters, and magazines I could lay my hands on and here again I found the same problem as with Ceropegias and Hoyas, (not much to go by) and find out all about these plants called "Dischidias".

Dischidias are found mainly in the monsoon and rain forest, from Australia, through Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Indo China to India.

They are Epiphytes and are grown without any compost or at the most only on a moss-covered branch, or tree fern. On a lot of these plants, ants play a big part in their culture. They build their nests under the leaves and pull in leaf litter, which, when broken down, helps to feed with nutrients the roots which grow from the leaf to the host plant or tree.

Some dischidias are so similar to Hoyas that the only way to tell the difference is when they flower. Dischidia flowers are generally a lot smaller, and are urn shaped.

In their native habitats many of these plants are valued for their medicinal properties, whether it be the roots, stems, or leaves, which are either boiled, chewed, or applied straight onto wounds, or as a poultice, squeezed to make juice and applied to boils, chewed to relieve coughs, and as a stimulant. And many other uses, from treating gonorrhoea, to allaying the pain of wounds from spines of certain fish. Home growers can cultivate these plants much the same as they would Hoyas. Some of the species names that I have been able to find in books are:-

*D. acuminata*, *D. benghalensis*, *D. gaudichaudii*,  
*D. imbricata*, *D. merillii*, *D. nummularia*, *D. orbicularis*,  
*D. pectinoides*, *D. platyphylla*, *D. purpurea*,  
*D. rafflesiana*, *D. singularis*, *D. vidalii*.





*Dischidia rafflesiana*

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PROGRAMME:

- September 12 : Dick Kohlschreiber Slides  
(South Bay Epy Society, California)
- September 21 : Committee Meeting
- October 10 : Problems - Questions and Answers  
(Free For All)
- November 7 : Hutt Valley Horticultural Show
- November 14 : Collections Crawl - Hutt Valley
- December 12 : AGM and Christmas Party
- January 9 : You Tell Us!





