

Epiphyllum and Hoya Society



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Editorial

This is a final issue for the year. - And what a wonderful year for our Society.

- We have had 4 issues of our magazine and I trust it is improving.

- We have had a Show.

- And we have new members.

It is the new members that are important. With an increase in membership we are learning and growing. Everyone has different ideas..

Let's look forward to next year and more new members and many more great flowers.

Have a very happy and safe Christmas.

Merv Keighley
Editor



RAFFLE RESULTS

The raffle was drawn on 20 November.

1st prize: Mrs Maureen Irving

2nd prize: Mrs Henderson

3rd prize: Mrs Diane Comber

Congratulations to the winners. It is great to see an enthusiastic member gain the first prize!

SHADEHOUSE BLUES (or Beware of Chemical Misuse)

To set the scene:

At the height of last year's flowering of Epiphyllums one of our members, on viewing our shadehouse, made the brilliant suggestion of using raised shelving for some of our Epis to enable flowers to be seen more easily.

The idea took seed, germinated slowly and was put into action when Roy made the necessary shelving in August/September, creosoted the completed shelves and started putting them in place. Considering most of the Epis were stacked four deep, to place the shelving in position was no mean task and one that involved repositioning large quantities of Epis.

It may not surprise you to know that, although I had started repotting, pruning and generally tidying the plants in March, many had not been given their annual dose of love at this stage. Therefore I took the opportunity to tidy up whilst they were being relocated.

Horror of horrors - one calm day in late September, when we had almost completed the installation of the new shelving, I went into the shadehouse to discover one of our precious Epis was looking really sick. Visually a disaster - it had a grim looking black stem where just a few days before was a healthy looking plant. During the subsequent days further visits to the shadehouse showed that more plants were going black, the black appearing almost overnight. Panic set in - phone calls to fellow growers made me realise that the problem was ~~p~~ours alone and action was needed smartly to ascertain the cause of the problem.

At this point Mike Oates, Curator of the Botanical Gardens came to the rescue in offering to give a sample of the offending material to their analyst for his opinion. A tense ten days followed as more plants circumbed to the ugly looking blackness. But the results from Mike Oates caused relief when he was able to assure me that the problem was not viral but due to an overdosing of Diazinon prills.

Initially on hearing the results of the analyst I put the problem down to an over-enthusiasm with the sprinkling of Diazinon that I put into each pot as I re-potted the Epis. It was only when I started destroying the Epiphyllums that were badly blackened and dying that I realised the ones that had suffered had not in fact been repotted. On close examination of three of the plants I noted all of them had badly deformed roots and concluded that the damage had been caused, not by over-dosing of the Diazinon but instead by misuse of the chemical.

In each case where damage had occurred I had used a method which I had employed for a number of years - that is inserting a round instrument into the soil and so made a hole in which to place some Diazinon prills in order to deter root mealy bug. Obviously on this occasion I had damaged new root growth as I made the holes. The highly potent Diazinon immediately burnt the tender broken root and within a short time caused the blackening of the stems.

I thank Mike Oates and his staff for their assistance in isolating the problem. I have learned from this situation and hope that hearing my losses may help you to avoid such a similar problem. For me the moral is to have greater respect for such lethal chemicals as Diazinon and not to misuse them. No more looking for short cuts for me, only use Diazinon when repotting, and then use sparingly.

Jane L. Griffith.



THE SHOW

On the weekend of 7/8 November a show was held in conjunction with the Wellington and Hutt Valley Branch of the Cactus & Succulent Society, and the Hutt Valley Horticultural Society.

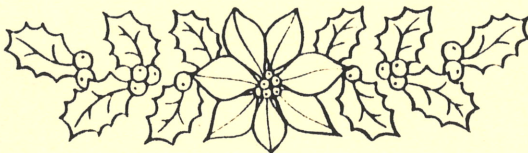
The Horticultural Hall in Lower Hutt was crammed full of tables crammed full of plants.

What a wonderful setting for our display which had pride and joy of the place right in the centre of the hall.

Although the season is late this year some superb blooms were open and shown. Various plants of epiphyllums, hoyas, rhipsalis, aporophyllum and rhipsalidopsis were displayed.

A continual stream of interested people viewed the display and at least 2 new members have joined as a result.

Thanks to all the members who contributed - plants, time and manning the display.



DO I PRUNE??? - A KIND CUT

By Jacqueline Smith

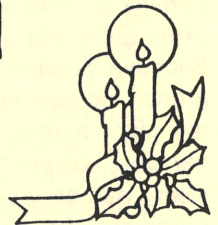
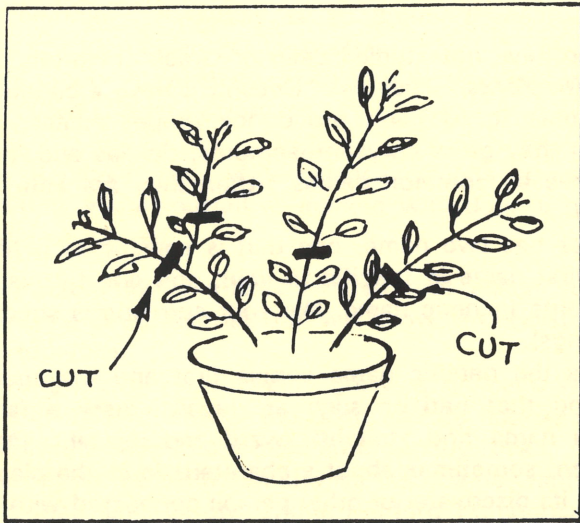
At our October meeting we had a question and answer session. Dianne had brought in her *Hoya centrostemma multiflora* or Shooting Star as it is more usually known. The query was "Does it need pruning and if it does will you do it?" Well, it was very healthy looking, nice lush leaves, a few buds, but it was looking leggy. It is a Hoya that doesn't retain its peduncles for repeat flowering and only flowers on the current growth. So, yes, we do prune it and I did. The plant will thrive but I am not sure about Diannel

The reason for the pruning :- is to stimulate new growth. There are growth nodes at the juncture of every leaf where it meets the branch. These are held dormant by the controlling bud at the branch terminal. By removing this top end bud a large number along the remaining branch are stimulated into growing.

Now the best time for pruning: - is around June/July/August when the plant is fully dormant or better late than never, just when the new growth has started. Too late and you will possibly lose a year's growth and the plant could suffer from shock as the sap rising will cause excessive bleeding.

And now the correct way to prune: use very sharp and very clean secateurs. Clean so no infection is introduced to the cut and very sharp, preferably scissor action type, so no bruising occurs with subsequent tissue damage. I have not found the need to dust cuts with sulphur as being a latex bearing plant the cut seals over very quickly. But if you wish to do so no harm will come of it. Cut just above chosen leaf juncture, reduce plant by up to 1/2 or 2/3 so long as its not cut off at soil level it will actually do very well.

After pruning, keep plant in a warm spot out of draughts. Keep water down to a minimum until new growth starts to show then start feeding weekly as normal. You will have a nice bushy plant. So be brave. Occasionally a plant sulks but not usually for very long. And finally, all those bits you pruned out. Use them as cuttings to start off new plants either as gifts or for selling. Don't forget to name and date cuttings and in this way we spread ourselves around and grow. And, yes all and any Hoya can and will benefit from pruning.

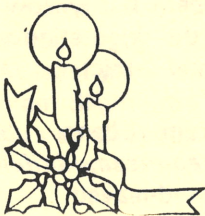


IS THIS YOU?

Are you an active member
the kind who would be missed
Or are you just contented
that your name is on the list.
Do you attend functions
and mingle with the flock
Or do you usually stay away
and criticise and knock.
Do you take an active part
to make things work along

Or are you satisfied to be
the kind to just belong.
Do you really push the cause
And really make things tick
Or leave the work load to the few
And talk about the click.
Think this over member
for you know right from wrong
Are you an active member
Or do you just belong.

ANON



MAKING SENSE OF PLANT NAMES

By Penelope Luckens.

Many people who have not studied Latin or Greek are often petrified by the use of Latin for plants. They ask "Doesn't it have a common name?" "I'll never remember it. I can't pronounce proper names, they're so complicated." Yet they grow chrysanthemums, dahlias and fuchsias and think of the names as common names, when they are actually generic names.

Each plant species has two names, one that is specific to it (the species name, like your first name is specific to you), and one that is shared by closely related plants (generic name, like your surname is shared by your parents, and siblings).

With plant names the generic name comes first and the specific name second, something that nations such as Japan where a family name precedes a given name find straightforward and logical. Plant names convey information, sometimes about a characteristic of the plant itself, at other times about its discoverer or other person connected with it.

Because English is derived distantly in part from Latin and Greek, often French or German, our knowledge of English may help us to understand the plant names eg *fragrans* fragrant, *aromatica* aromatic, *foetida* foetid or stinking, *rotundifolia* round leaved (rotund foliage).

Many names commemorate people: *Dahlia* from Andreas Dahl a Swedish botanist who was a pupil of Linnaeus, *Fuchsia* from Leonard Fuchs a German professor of medicine and botanical author, *Tillandsia* from Elias Tillands who catalogued the plants in an area of Finland, and was a friend of Linnaeus, *Vriesia*, from Dr W.H. de Vriese a botanist of Amsterdam. *Hoya* from Thomas Hoy, gardener to the Duke of Northumberland at the end of the 18th century, *Pitcairnia* for Dr William Pitcairn a London physician.

Some people had both a genus and a species named after them. *Plumeria* the frangipani is named for the French botanist and explorer Charles Plumier who explored the West Indies. A common species of *Bromelia* (named after Olaf Bromel a Swedish botanist) is *B. plumieri* found from Mexico and the West Indies to Ecuador and Brazil.

Specific names are often descriptive, and colour is an attribute frequently referred to.

Candida and *alba* or *albida* are white, with *candida* usually being shiny or glossy white and *albida* or *alba* being a dull white. (*Aechmea candida* with white petals and snow white berries, *Tillandsia albida* white leaves).

Tillandsia cyanea has dark blue flowers while *T. crocata* has yellow or orange flowers - *crocata* is saffron coloured (saffron is the dried stigma of the *Crocus sativus* plant used as a yellow dye for food and fabric).

Carnosa is flesh coloured (*Hoya carnosa*).

There are several names indicating shades of red, from *rubens*, *rubra*, *rosea*, *sanguineus* (blood red), *cardinalis*, to *purpureo-rosea*, *rubrifolius* (from Latin) and *erythrophyllus* (from Greek) both mean red-leaved.

Argentea is silver, white *nigra* is glossy black, *nigrescens* is becoming black, and *nigricans* is blackish on swarthy, *tricolor* is three coloured and *concolor* one coloured. *Australis* is southern, *borealis* is northern, *orientalis* is eastern and *occidentalis* is western.

Recurvata means recurved while *erecta* or *stricta* is upright and *prostrata* is prostrate, *retroflexa* is bent backwards.

Pruinosa means like hoarfrost, while *paleacea* means covered in chaff, *maculata* and *punctata* are spotted or marked with dots or glands, while *punctulata* is minutely dotted.

Streptocarpus or *streptocarpa* means twisted fruit and if you have had seed pods (fruit) on a *Streptocarpus* you will know how twisted they are.

Scalaris means ladderlike.

Saxicida is growing on rocks, *cacticola* growing on cacti when used in specific names. In descriptions of the plant and its habitat the adjective saxicolous or saxatile means that it lives on or among rocks.

The person who names the plant can choose the one he wants (as long as nobody has used that name before) and in the form he chooses as long as it is within the rules set down in the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature and the International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants. If a plant is named after an area it was found and this is later shown not to be the area where it originated, the name still holds. Thus the Rose-of-Sharon was thought to be native to Syria and was named *Hybiscus Syriacus* but is probably native to east Asia.

Specific names do not start with a capital letter even when they are names of people although this was not so some years ago as many older books indicate eg *Tillandsia lindenii* and *T. baileyi* were once written as *Tillandsia Lindenii* and *T. Baileyi*.

Many reference books on specific groups of plants will have information on the meaning of the names, either as a note under each species or genus, or in a glossary or list somewhere in the volume. Otherwise try reference volumes such as L.H. Bailey "Manual of Cultivated Plants" or "The Royal Horticultural Society Dictionary of Gardening". Expand your knowledge gradually as you expand your plant collection.

With descriptive specific names, knowing the meaning of the name may help you to link it to the plant and remember it. Spelling can be important as *ferax* is fertile, but *ferox* is wild and *fallax* is false, *orbatus* is deprived of, and *ornatus* is decorated, *inflatus* is swollen, *infractus* is broken, *vermicularis* is wormshaped, *vermiculatus* is vermilion. *Incinatus* is hooked, *undulatus* is wavy, *ungulatus* is hoof-shaped, *albidus* off white, *algidus* cold, *amarus* bitter tasting, *amoenus* pleasant, *arrectus* steep, *erectus* erect, *irrigus* well watered, *aridus* dry. So take care when writing labels. At least plant names make more sense than Ted Short (who is 2m tall) and Pam Slight who weighs 90Kg! At least you don't have to name a plant from a small seedling.

Meeting Report for Saturday 13 June 1992

BROMELIADS by Morris Tarr

The Story of the Bromeliad starts in 1493, when Christopher Columbus, on his voyage to the New World, discovered the pineapple growing on the island of Guadeloupe in the West Indies. It was even then, a cultivated crop.

So delicious was this fruit to the palate of the explorers that Columbus brought it back to Queen Isabella, and soon the demand for it became wide spread.

In 1535 the first known picture of the Pineapple (Ananas) appeared in the "Universal History of India" published in Spain.

Although the edible pineapple is the best known of the great family of Bromeliad plants, most of them are highly decorative and have been popular on the Continent for over a century.

About 2000 species have been identified so far. Bromeliads are mostly epiphytic, living on trees or shrubs, but many are terrestrial, growing on the ground, or saxicolous, clinging to rocks.

They are commonly called "parasitos", in Spanish speaking countries, but Bromeliads are not parasites. Although many of them live on trees, they derive no sustenance from their hosts. With one exception (a lone Pitcairnia species found in West Africa) all bromeliads are native to the tropical, and sub tropical regions of the Americas.

Their altitude range, from sea level to over 14,000 feet, extends from the southern part of the United States to approximately 500 miles short of the southern tip of Argentina.

They vary in size from 1 inch to 35 feet or more in height. They may grow as a single large specimen, or form great mats, sometimes covering acres.

They are found in a variety of growing situations, on top of rocks, on bleak mountainsides, on tree branches, in dark corners of jungle floors, on sands along the ocean, among the scrubby growth of the inland plains of Brazil, or on cacti in deserts.

Some cannot exist without frequent rains, a few have not had moisture, other than fog, for the best part of their lives. Some are adapted to cold, others thrive in the mists of the cloud forest, but most live in warm, and humid habitats, such as the protected areas in open forests, or along riverbanks.

The greatest number of ornamental species is found in the rain forest of eastern Brazil, where conditions seem to reach the optimum for Bromeliads.

It is here the best known species are to be found. The Family - Bromeliaceae (Pineapple family) - 2000 species.

Sub Family - Pitcairnioideae

Has 13 genera, which in turn subdivides into about 700 species. This sub family contains the oldest and most primitive forms to be found in the entire Family Bromeliaceae, those being , *Dyckia*, *Hechtia*, and *Pitcairnia*. Seeds produced in dry capsules or Pods.

Sub Family - Tillandsioideae

Consists of about 50 percent of all known Bromeliads. 6 genera make up this sub family. *Tillandsia* with the most species , about 500, and next *Vriesea*, with over 250 species. Other members of this sub family known in horticulture are in the genera, *Guzmania*,

Catopsis, *Glomeropitcairnia*, and *Mezobromelia*. Seeds produced in hard capsules or pods, taking 6 to 12 months to open.

Sub family - Bromelioideae

Has 26 genera and over 500 species, and therefore the greatest range of plant forms. Some of the more popular being *Aechmea*, *Billbergia*, *Ananas*, *Neoregelia*, *Bromelia*, *Cryptanthus*, *Orthophytum*, *Nidularium*, *Canistrum*, and *Quesnelia*. Seeds are encased in berry like fruit.



*The kiss of the sun for pardon
The song of the birds for mirth
You are nearer God's heart in
the garden
Than anywhere else on Earth.*

Meeting Report

TILLANDSIA

The genus *Tillandsia* named after the Swedish botanist **Elias Tillands** (1640 to 1693) was established in the year 1753 by **Carolus Linnaeus**.

Tillandsias are members of the sub family *Tillandsioideae* and of all the *bromeliad* family comprise the largest number of species, and cover the widest range of territory. Identified species presently number in excess of five hundred. New varieties are being discovered each year.

They are found throughout South America, from Argentina to Venezuela and Colombia; in Central America from Panama to Mexico and the West Indies.

They are perhaps the most fascinating group in the entire plant kingdom, and are regarded by many as the aristocrats of the bromeliad world, with their great variation in shape, size, leaf formation and general adaptability in their native habitat.

Practically all *Tillandsias* are epiphytes or "air plants" and take in moisture and nutrients through their leaves. They have a relatively small root system, sufficient to secure them to their support. Some are terrestrial while others are saxicolous. They vary in size from 6cm to about 4m in height, and may be found in all sorts of locations in the wild, from sea level to high altitudes, growing in sand, on rocks, cliff-faces, tree trunks and branches, and on desert cacti.

Those that grow in the hot, dry regions, can have greyish, green or reddish foliage, and are covered with a silvery scale that resembles "star-dust". These are commonly referred to as the "silver" or "grey" *Tillandsias*.

The soft, green leaf species live high in the tree tops, in the cool of humid rain forests, or semi-open woods.

Reproduction is by seed and offsets, or pups as they are called, and in most cases can be detached with a sharp knife when about two-thirds the size of the parent plant. They may then be attached to a piece of bark or driftwood, or in some cases potted up in a coarse, well aerated mix.

The seeds have a fuzzy cottony attachment on their coat called a COMA. This parachute like apparatus allows the seed to float on air currents for long distances, thereby allowing them to maintain their habitats high in the trees, on cliffs, etc. It also allows them to rapidly colonize new habitat sites.

Tillandsia Grandis - large form - flower stalk up to 15 feet - blooms when 35 years old.

Tillandsia Viridiflora - small form which is now a separate species.



Tillandsia cyanea

Dear Fellow Epiphyte Lovers

This is our last newsletter for this year - a year which has seen our Society become more firmly established and a year in which we have welcomed some new members. It has been good to get to know each other more over the year and learn more about our favourite plants. It has been great also to welcome overseas Societies with whom we are exchanging newsletters and sharing our hobby together. Maybe 1993 will give us the opportunity to meet with folk in Australia, America or Britain. On behalf of our Society I extend a warm welcome to overseas readers who might be planning a holiday in New Zealand. Do contact us before you complete your plans for your holiday to enable us to offer you hospitality during your visit to our beautiful city and wonderful country.

What a great time of the year it is for us - early summer when we see fruits (or should I say flowers!) of all our labours coming to fruition as buds on our Epiphyllums grow day by day and we eagerly await the flowers opening. I am writing this letter just three days before our Annual Show and am so aware of the fact that our longer than normal winter has caused the Epiphyllums to be flowering later than expected. Last year you may recall we had an abundance of flowers for display at the Show. Alas this will not be the case this year as we all seem to be noting that flowering is between two and four weeks behind schedule. But thinking philosophically about the situation it means that the Show will be different from last year but I'm sure it will be just as interesting to members of the public.

I do hope that your Epiphytes are all growing well and that you will find it a good year for flowering of both Epiphyllums and Hoyas. At this stage I believe that we have fewer buds on our Epis but time will tell whether this is in fact the case. We did do some vigorous pruning during the cooler months and there is good growth on most plants. Hopefully this means that 1993 will be an excellent flowering year for us - the year when we look forward to seeing Epiphyte growers from around the country joining us for the Biennial Convention in November.

In the meantime enjoy your plants and Roy joins me in wishing you all a peaceful and joyous Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

*Jane L. Griffith
President*



