



WELLINGTON

EPIFLORA

Produced by the Vol 3 No 1
Wellington Epiphyllum & Hoya Society



Editorial:

This issue has not been an easy one to prepare, partly because of time pressures on us and partly because copy has been slow to come in.

The display at the recent Hutt Show caused a lot of interest and we hope will bring in new members.

Among periodicals received recently is the January newsletter from the Eugene Hoya Society. We were sorry to learn from it that Margie Stone has been ill since her return to the States. The February meeting of the Eugene Society was to be held at her home and she was to talk about her Australia -New Zealand trip. On the front of the newsletter was a colour photo of Hoya Linearis with a comment from Margie that she had seen a very impressive basket of this at the Wintergarden in Auckland. We are looking at the possibility of including colour photos in Epiflora at some time in the near future.

A new feature this issue is the Problem Corner. We had planned to appoint an "Ellie Epiphyte" to answer these questions but have decided in the meantime to print the questions in one issue and ask you all to contribute if you can to answering them. Answers will be printed in the next issue.

Finally - a quote which came originally from an Onehunga Community newsletter seemed very appropriate for this journal. "If you find errors in this publication please realise they are there for a purpose. We try to publish something for everyone and some people are always looking for mistakes"

All the same I hope you won't find too many.

Keep the articles coming in.

Alison & Peter Beeston
Editors

Dear Fellow Epiphyte Lovers

Another year and we are well into it.

As this is my first letter to you as President I would like to record my thanks to Jane and Roy Griffith. Without their energy and drive our society wouldn't be in the strong position it is in.

Thanks Roy and Jane.

Now that we have the Convention successfully under our belt we can sit back a little and watch our plants grow and flourish. Many will be looking out for new plants that have been seen on our visits to members' collections. That is the great joy of our interest in these wonderful plants.

The Hutt Valley Horticultural Society's Summer Show was held over the weekend of 19/20 February. Our Society mounted a very appealing display - mainly hoyas, with cecropias and epiphyllums. A good number of visitors passed through, many showing great interest. At least one new member was registered and hopefully more will arrive.

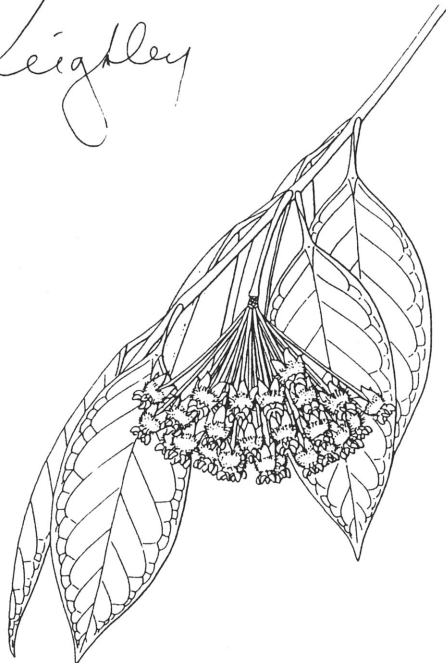
Peter Beeston was our Artistic Director and all credit to him for the many favourable comments. He already has ideas for the next show.

Thanks to members who lent or brought plants for display, who manned the show and assisted with assembling and dismantling of the display.

Now let us go on with anticipation to learn at our monthly meetings, and so share our knowledge with all who ask.

*Merv Keighley
President.*

Merv Keighley



1993 President's Annual Report

It gives me great pleasure to present my third and final annual report as President. It has been a great year for our Society, a year which seemed to be dominated by preparation for the Convention, but which had many other facets and one that we can look back on as a success on a number of fronts.

We have enjoyed a variety of programmes over the past twelve months and thanks are due to those who agreed to be speakers, facilitators or members of panels involved in discussion at meetings. Over my three years as President I have been impressed at the willingness of many members to contribute to our programmes and the amount of research that speakers have put into their talks to expand the knowledge of members.

This year the Epiflora magazine has gone from strength to strength. I would like to especially thank Merv Keighley for being the first Editor of the magazine - his enthusiasm and ability to encourage us to contribute has ensured the success of our magazine. Thanks also to Alison and Peter Beeston who agreed so willingly to continue Merv's good work. Epiflora is now on the international circuit and is being quoted by other epiphytic societies around the world. Not a bad achievement for a Society which is just three year's old!

As we were preparing for the Convention this year the Committee made the decision that the Society would only take part in one Horticultural Show. This was the November Show held in conjunction with the Lower Hutt Horticultural Society and the Cactus and Succulent Society. We staged a small but colourful display which attracted a great deal of interest and resulted in a number of people signing up membership of the Society. We also responded to an invitation by the Librarian of the Newtown Public Library to put on a small display prior to the Convention - this attracted a great deal of interest and made us aware of the potential of staging displays in public libraries around the district.

The biennial Convention was held at St. Johns Church from 19-21 November 1993. After eighteen months solid work by the Convention Committee, fund raising by the whole Society and a great deal of hard work by everyone the Convention was judged by those attending as an outstanding success. I would particularly like to thank the Committee for being such an easy group to work with, for their dedication and hard work - to Marion Austin, Merv Keighley, Dianne O'Neill, Joyce Walter and Roy Griffith many thanks on behalf of the Society.

The membership of the Society has shown a slight growth during the year but I am aware that the Society is still in a fragile state and would benefit from at least another ten members. This is something that we should all be aware of as we face 1994. To the growing number of members who are unable to attend meetings regularly but who keep in touch through the quarterly publication of Epiflora it would be great to hear from you. Do write and tell us about your plants, their growing conditions and

maybe you would like to indicate articles you would enjoy reading in the magazine. The ideal vehicle for your correspondence would be Epiflora.

In conclusion I would like to thank the Committee for its support during this past year. To Morris and Myra Tarr who are retiring from the Committee after serving for three years especial thanks for all your work. We appreciate that it is time for you both to have a break from Committee work but I am sure that you will continue to serve the Society in a number of ways. I would like to especially record my thanks to Roy as Secretary/Treasurer. I guess that it seems strange for me as his wife to thank him in this way but I am the only one who fully recognises the amount of work that he has done for the Society in this joint role during the past three years, and in particular during the last eighteen months as Secretary for both the ordinary Committee and the Convention Committee. In thanking the Committee I would also like to thank each of you as members of this Society for making my job such an easy and exciting one.

Jane L. Griffith



THAT WAS THE CONVENTION THAT WAS.....

(THE MONEY AND THE GLORY)

The convention's over, the people are gone and the bills are paid, and it's appropriate to take stock of an event that took some two years to prepare for. In fact it was two years ago this February that a small group spent a whole day in the St James' Theatre doing endless Mexican waves for a Canadian Beer advert. That was the start of the fund raising exercise to provide the float for the convention. The next milestone was a garage sale run at the Kortink establishment. Herman with his usual efficiency providing tables, accommodation and everything that was needful. Typically Herman played host to us again for the final item on the convention agenda. He offered his house and garden for the barbecue on the Sunday evening and when Wellington's weather made outdoor eating impossible, transformed his garage to provide both kitchen and dining room with comfortable seating for everyone. Every month for the last eighteen months or so, Myra has looked after the convention table. "Myra's Mart" as we might have termed it, also contributed substantially to the target of \$1,500 that we required as "float" for running the convention. This then became the pattern: a small group met regularly and plotted and planned and replanned and cross checked and co-ordinated; and numerous other members threw their efforts and enthusiasm into dealing with all manner of tasks. All of which added up to the final event. The 1993 Epiphyllum and Hoya convention.

The convention itself, held at the St John's Centre in Wellington, can be judged to be a great success. The feedback we have received from some of the attendees from Wellington and from out of town attest to this. The programme was designed to keep the attendee's busy with talks and workshops, opportunities to buy plants and to talk with other growers. We certainly succeeded in achieving this aim. Some of the talks and workshops were led by Wellington Society members. Herman Kortink, Jane Griffith, Merv Keighley and Morris Tarr, all put in much effort to prepare for the sessions they were involve with. To add variety we brought in some speakers from outside; and so we had Paul Cable talking about photography, Mike Capenerhurst talking about Ceropogias and Mike Oates talking about New Zealand Epiphytes and leading us through the Otari Botanic Reserve. As well as the speakers, there were other activities. There was the sales table organised and run by Herman. There were the many raffles run by Morris Tarr and there was food beautifully organised by the St John's catering group. We took people round to visit collections and Brian Reid did a sterling job in organising lifts for everybody that needed transport; unfortunately we forgot to schedule good weather for the visits. The efforts of all those who opened their collections to prepare and tidy them did not go unnoticed. This part of the programme was appreciated by our guests more than any other.

If all this makes those who did not come to the convention feel that they missed a great weekend, then they are absolutely right. We had a wonderful time.

You would not expect me to write an article like this without touching on financial things, so let us do that now. We were told that we would need a float of about \$1,500 to stage the convention. We aimed for this and in fact raised some \$2,070 over the two years. We had 54 attendees. Between them they paid \$2370 and the total cost of running the convention was \$3720. That means that we have about \$1590 left in the fund. At the December meeting of the society it was agreed that we should spend this residue on various items for the benefit of the Wellington Society members. Over the coming months, this will be seen in terms of new library books, new equipment, and so on.

And then maybe in another couple of years who knows we start all over again and get to raise more money to stage the next Wellington Epiphyllum and Hoya Convention!!!

A Word About Water

I had given my plants their usual watering and I thought I had done a thorough job. I then decided to repot two plants in to larger containers when I discovered that the water had penetrated less than one third down the depth of the pot. The lower two thirds was completely dry. The pots were hanging high up and it was much hotter up high than I had realised.

I then realised that as the soil was so dry the water had just gone straight through and out the bottom of the pot. I was very thankful that I had decided to do the repotting at that time as my plants would have suffered during the lovely warm weather we have been enjoying.

I now take more time to carry out the watering to ensure the pots are watered right through. This applies to those pots which are hanging up high, not the pots which are lower down. I think the advice was well worth heeding when Morris Tarr said at the February meeting that he dunked the hanging pots in a bucket of water about once a week. This could take some time to do, but no doubt it is well worth the effort.

NOTES ON POLLEN STORAGE

Andrew Flower

At a couple of recent meetings people have referred to the availability of pollen (or, rather, the lack thereof!) for cross-fertilization among the various cacti we grow. Pollen need not be a problem with species flowering some weeks apart—with minimal effort you should be able to store pollen for a couple of months at least. All you have to do is keep it cool and dry. That sounds easy if you say it quickly, but there is a problem with the relative humidity (i.e., the amount of moisture in the air relative to the temperature) increasing as the temperature decreases.

The effective environmental ranges for storing pollen from most plants are 10% to 50% relative humidity and 0° to 10°C [1]. So just wrapping the pollen in a small piece of clean hard paper (not tissue paper) for a day or two in the refrigerator should be enough to keep it alive. But under those conditions mould and mildew will soon appear and destroy the pollen. [2] If you want to keep the pollen for any longer, you need to take steps to keep it dry. The official method is to store it in a dessicator over a moisture-absorbant material such as calcium chloride or sulfuric acid. The method I use is to scrape the pollen onto a small piece of paper—about 5cm square—fold the paper around the pollen and place it in a small glass bottle with some absorbant matter, then put the bottle in the dairy compartment of the refrigerator. Currently, the temperature in there is 5°C. It goes down to about 3°C in winter. And don't use plastic containers, they are liable to produce toxic beasts which will destroy the pollen!

So far as absorbent material is concerned, calcium chloride would be fine. My local chemist didn't have any when I first started storing pollen, but they did have some silica gell. This is good because the crystals are blue when dry, and turn pink as they become saturated with moisture. You can then replace the crystals, and dry the used ones out in the oven for re-use later. (The latest commercial price I have for silica gell is \$11 per 500g, from Biolab Scientific)

By storing pollen in the refrigerator, in glass bottles with the pollen wrapped in paper and sitting on top of silica gell crystals, I have been able to successfully pollinate bromeliads up to two months after collecting the pollen. There are claims that the pollen should be stored in the freezer[3]}, but when I tried that I had no success. But I didn't carry out proper controlled experiments with the same pollen held at different temperatures, so I have no idea whether the lower temperatures were the cause, or some other factor.

Sorry, I didn't have time to look up references in the cacti literature. But the general principles apply to most plants, and its worth giving it a go! Then you can write an article and tell us all about it (particularly if you do it with *Hoyas*....).

REFERENCES

- [1] Hartman and Kester, *Plant Propagation: Principles and Practices* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall Inc., third edition 1975) 75
- [2] Don Beadle, "Pollen Preservation; Or, How to build Your Own Bromeliad" *Journal of The Bromeliad Society* January-February 1992,29
- [3] Don Beadle, "Pollen Preservation"-

Questions ... from our readers

Dear Ellie Epiphyte,

Recently I overheard two members discussing whether a plant was *Epiphyllum cooperii*, or *Epiphyllum crenatum*. I bought a plant from the sales table, and it has "*E. cooperii*" written on its label, and "*crenatum*" written on a leaf...

Are these epithets synonymous, or is at least one of them invalid? If only one—which one? If they are both valid, how do I tell the difference between the two species they name?

Yours in anticipation,

Novice (Northland)

1. I recently acquired some new hoyas and when repotting them found they were well infested with root mealy bug. Please would readers let me know what they do with the little critters?
2. What can I do to prevent segments of a rhipsalidopsis plant falling off?

(We would like to make this section a regular feature. If you have suggestions or answers to these problems - please send them to us to arrive no later than May 15th and we will publish your comments in the June Edition of "Epiflora". If you have questions send those in too.)

Recommended Reading

At the January meeting of the Society Penny Luckens talked about propagating from cuttings. Penny recommended a number of books on the subject details of which are given below:

From the Junior Section of the Library

Eyewitness Guides PLANT by D. Burne. Publisher: Dorling Kindersley 1989

The Visual Dictionary of Plants (Eyewitness Visual Dictionaries) Publisher: RD Press, Australia, 1992

From the Main Section of the Library

Plants for Free (A New Zealand Guide to Plant Propagation) by Andrew Maloy. Publisher: Shoal Bay Press, 1992

Gardens for Free (A Propagation Handbook for New Zealanders) by Geoff Bryant. Publisher: David Bateman, 1992

Plant Propagation by Keith Hammett. Publisher: Reed, 1992

Plant Propagation by Philip McMillan Browse. (Royal Horticultural Society's Encyclopedia of Practical Gardening) Publisher: Mitchell Beazley, 1992

The Living Garden by Sir Edward Salisbury. Publisher: G.Bell & Sons Ltd., 1946

The Evening Garden (Flowers & Frangrance from Dusk to Dawn) by Peter Loewer. Publisher: Macmillan, 1993

Plant Propagation (Principles & Practices) by Hudson T.Hartmann & ale E.Kester. Publisher: Prentice-Hall International, 1968

Society Officers:

| | | | |
|-----------|---------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| President | Merv Keighley | 72 Hobart St Miramar Wellington | 04 388 2008 |
| Secretary | Jane Griffith | 82 Kinghorne St Strathmore Wellington | 04 388 1885 |
| Treasurer | Roy Griffith | 82 Kinghorne St Strathmore Wellington | 04 388 1885 |
| Editors | Peter & Alison Beeston | 39 Southgate Rd Island Bay WELLINGTON | 04 384 2632 04 383 8899 |

Committee:

Mrs Alison Beeston, Mr Andrew Flower,
Mrs Robyn Gibson, Mrs Jill Griggs, Dr
Penny Luckens, Mrs Dianne O'Neill, Mrs
Nola Roser.

Subscriptions

| | | | |
|-------------|----------------------------|------|----------------|
| | Full Member | \$10 | 1 Jan - 31 Dec |
| | Associate | \$5 | |
| | (i.e. Wife, husband child) | | |
| Advertising | Contact Editors | | |

Programme for Coming Months:

1994 Meeting dates:

| | |
|----------------|---|
| March 12th | Seasonal Care of Epiphytes (<i>Epiphyllums</i> and <i>Aporophyllums</i>) |
| April 9th. | Seasonal Care of Epiphytes (<i>Hoyas</i> and <i>Schlumbergeras</i>) |
| May 14th. | Growing Tillandsias from seed |
| June 11th. | Schlumbergera Workshop |
| July 9th. | Rhipsalis |
| August 13th | The Botany of Epiphytes |
| September 10th | Preparing Hoyas and Epiphyllums for the flowering season. |
| October 8th | Selenicereus and similar genera |
| November 12th | Visits to collections Hutt Valley Show |
| December 10th | Annual General Meeting "Bring and Brag" |

Do you have a particular interest in *Tillandsias* ?
formation of

THE TILLANDSIA SOCIETY
OF
NEW ZEALAND

Is in the process of being discussed with anyone interested in this as a forum for the furtherment of our knowledge and enjoyment of *tillandsias*.

Proposed activities include a bimonthly bulletin, seed bank for members, ongoing discussion of growing techniques and active efforts to identify correctly the *tillandsias* grown in New Zealand. A library will be set up as we are able to raise funds - but annual subscriptions will be kept to a level sufficient only to fund our bulletin. Further suggestions are welcomed from anyone interested.

ENQUIRIES to Andrew Flower, Box 11-375, Wellington.

Phone (4) 475-9697. Fax (4) 475-8665.

