



WELLINGTON

EPIFLORA



EPIFLORA

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Editorial

This is our last effort as Editors of Epiflora. We took it on two and a half year's ago well aware of our own shortcomings as editors and with a clear understanding that it would not be a long term job. It has often been difficult to meet the deadlines and our lack of knowledge of the plants has made it hard to find the fill ins needed from time to time. We will be relieved to hand it over to someone with a greater knowledge of plants and plant people than we have. Our present understanding is that we will still be involved on the production side and we are happy to do that.

On the tentative programme for next year is a session on Epiflora. This will give all members a chance to have their say on what they expect from the magazine and whether they feel it is worth the cost. Until fairly recently it has been subsidised by the editors but the committee this last year felt that the Branch should cover the costs and so in the budget printed in this issue the total cost has been allowed for. The two main areas of cost are the colour photographs which have been included on occasions and the cover paper which we get at a special rate from the paper merchants. Next year's covers have already been produced. We think the cover adds something to the production but others may not agree.

At this stage it seems appropriate to say thank you to all who have contributed. Most of the articles have come from Branch members and a few have contributed regularly. While we would have liked to have had a wider group to call on we feel it has been a pretty good effort for such a small group and over the period we have been editing there has been a good selection of articles coming in. The one disappointing feature has been the lack of answers to some of the questions asked.

Mentioning names runs the risk of forgetting someone but we have called on Penny Luckens from time to time for information we needed and had the use of some of her books. News of Penny will be found elsewhere in this issue. We would also like to acknowledge the help of one non-member, our son Stephen who is responsible for foiling the covers and gets roped in to help with paste-up, photocopying, folding, collating & stapling at times.

We have enjoyed our time as editors even if occasionally we have wondered why we agreed to do it. We built on what Merv started and we will look forward to seeing it go from strength to strength under new editorship.

Alison & Peter Beeston



Presidential Perambulations...

Well, here we are at the end of the year. A time of joy... a time of hope... but best of all, time for a new committee and a new President! Thanks, perhaps, in part to the Caretaker's whinges in the last issue, we look like having an exciting new President and Committee to inject more enthusiasm into the Society. A group such as ours takes its lead from the President, and if that person is not a really enthusiastic grower of epiphyllums and hoyas it is hard to get the whole show enthused!

So thanks to all the good soldiers who stepped forward. Next year should be a bumper one, let's hope.

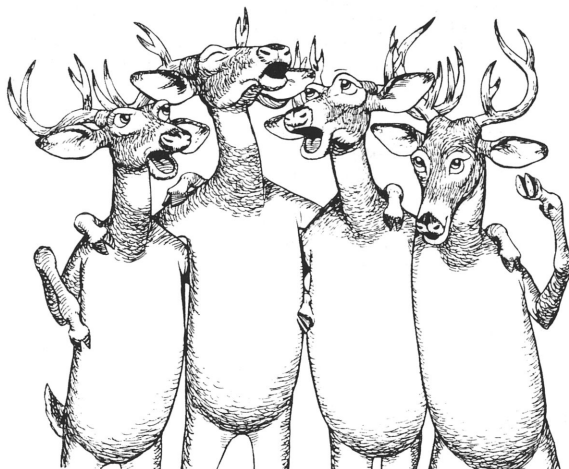
A special mention for Merv Keighley, who organised our display at the Lower Hutt Flower Show last month and who should take all the credit for the award of merit received from the Lower Hutt Horticultural Society.

A good number of members ventured up to the Auckland Epiphyllum & Hoya Society 1995 Convention. Many gardens and nurseries were visited and all were able to sit back and relax in the BUS provided. Unfortunately your President got sometimes sidetracked by meetings of that OTHER plant group, and so missed out on the culinary highlights...

Speaking of Conventions, we have decided to hold another in 1997 so that should be a focus of our attention in 1996.

Oh behalf of the Committee, thanks to all who worked hard to support the Society during the year. And to all members, best wishes for a happy and successful 1996.

Andrew Flower.
(The Caretaker)



Branch news and notes

The committee has had its last meeting for the year. This year we were down to a minimum of committee members and with one member overseas for part of the year and others unable to attend for various and legitimate reasons it has made things hard at times and undoubtedly added to the workload of the few as well as that of the President. Next year looks more promising and you are reminded that the December meeting is the Annual meeting and we need nominations for new officials and committee members.

While one or two committee members are prepared to continue there will be a completely new line-up at the top. Three of this year's committee, Dianne O'Neill, & Merv & Kay Keighley are definitely not standing. Dianne and Merv. have been on the committee for some time and have given much time and energy in a variety of ways - while Kay has had only a year but in the important position of secretary. At time of writing I'm not sure what Andrew's plans are except that he is giving up his position as Caretaker President but perhaps he can be persuaded to remain on the committee. Committee meetings wouldn't be nearly as lively without him.

The weather didn't co-operate very well with the the visits to Hutt Collections held on Nov 26th but it didn't noticeably dampen the spirits of those who attended. Apart from a minor hiccup when the gas for the barbecue ran out it went smoothly - good collections, good company, good food - not to mention Herman's wine. And at least the worst of the rain came at the end of the day and we got around the collections without getting too wet.

Don't forget that for the December meeting we need party food - and nominations for next year's committee. Nomination forms are included with the magazine as are subscription renewal forms. New subscription rates as agreed to at the last meeting are \$12 per member and \$18 per family.

A postcard was received from Penny Luckens showing part of the Chengdu Institute of Technology campus under snow. Here is what she says - "No, it doesn't snow on the campus every winter! We have lots of trees through the campus, the tallest are eucalypts. There are London planes along the roadways. This area is in the centre of the campus jutting out into the lake. Marion Austen has a photo of the other end of the lake. There are gardenias, roses, japonica, oleanders, salvia bonfire, African marigolds, zinnias, Chinese lanterns, osmanthus and ginkos surviving in spite of dust and smog here. Emily Young in the Foreign Affairs section has Zygocactus on her window ledge but I haven't seen the flowers yet. They are all the same colour. Great place for mosquitos & minute sandflies and rats. No wind so far though. Interesting fruit and vegetables in the market straight across from my flat and still on the campus. How are things in Wellington? Can you send us some sun and blue sky? Love, Penelope Luckens.

Penny's address is Chengdu Institute of Technology, Chengdu, Sichuan 610059, P.R. CHINA.

Tentative programme for 1996

Jan	Report on convention
Feb.	Summer care of our plants
March	Hoyas
Apr	Epiphyllums
May	Arizona visit -Herman
June	Schlumbergeras
July	From the Ediotr's desk
Aug	Visiting speaker
Sept	Propagation
Oct	Report from Penny Luckens?
Nov	Visits to collections - Levin
Dec	A.G.M - Christmas do

Note: This tentative programme was suggested by the present committee. It is subject to verification and/or alteration by the incoming committee. Some suggestions have been made as to speakers and convenors of discussions but these also have to be confirmed. I am sure the incoming committee would appreciate your suggestions or your offers to help with any of the sessions.



Exciting NEWS

BUDGET 1995/96

Rental of Hall	\$240.00
Teas	120.00
Epiflora	400.00
Pots wire etc	560.00
Postage	<u>150.00</u>
	\$1470.00

INCOME

Membership	\$420.00
Raffle	267.00
Sales	<u>693.55</u>
	\$1380.55

MID WINTER DINNER

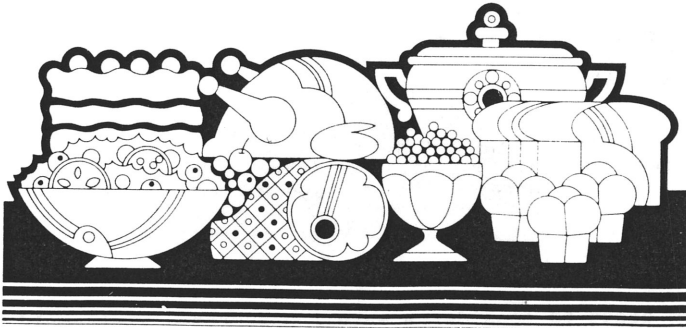
RECEIPTS

Attendees	\$325.00	
Bring & Buy	136.10	
Sale of Surplus Wine	<u>30.00</u>	
	<u>\$491.10</u>	\$491.10

PAYMENTS

St Johns Church	98.00	
St Johns Caterers	390.00	
New World (Wine)	<u>136.18</u>	
	<u>\$624.18</u>	\$624.18

Subsidised by Society \$133.08



Water, water ...

*One may not doubt that, somehow, good
Shall come of water and of mud*

Rupert Brooke

Unless your plant collection consists of plastic palms and silk roses you will have to provide your plants with water. Watering a small number of plants by hand is not too time consuming - and provides the opportunity to inspect each regularly for signs of pests or disease. Watering a collection of three hundred plants or more is a different matter altogether, and some form of "system" may be appropriate.

The objectives are to deliver sufficient water to every plant on a regular basis. For epiphyllums this means at least weekly. You may also wish to be able to add fertiliser to the water supply. Lastly - but probably not least - cost must be considered.

In habitat the plants are subjected to frequent rain, as well as water running down the tree trunks (bearing nutrients). To mirror this - overhead mist sprays would appear to be the best solution. These have two disadvantages, they leave the plants wet (which may encourage leaves to rot) and they are relatively inefficient (large quantities of water being needed). The alternative strategy is to deliver water to each individual pot.

Over the years we have tried a number of systems for taking water to each pot. Each has been found to have disadvantages. We discarded early a system which had an adjustable dripper for every pot - on the grounds of expense, and that the drippers needed to be individually adjusted and checked very regularly. We have used micro-tube for a number of years. This has the advantage of being cheap, but the pipes can block unless (or even if!!) a good quality filter is used.

Recently we have been doing a limited trial using "spray stakes". This would appear to be the answer. The piping is 5mm so does not block and the water is sprayed in a fan-shaped pattern over the surface of the pot - which promotes even watering. This system is almost identical to one we saw in use in the "Rainbow Gardens" nursery in California.

So if you are about to consider a watering system - what would I recommend?

firstly if you even think your collection will grow big enough to warrant a system - get the main supply pipes in

early! Moving the whole collection out to lay them afterwards is a pain. The pipes should be laid so that the route is simple and direct, and no plant is more than 18" away from a pipe. Laying them in a loop will help to ensure that the pressure is more even throughout the system.

secondly fit a high quality filter at the start. The up-market "Gardena" one has the additional advantage that fertiliser tablets can be inserted.

then use delivery tubes of the same length, joining to the main pipes at regular spacing to link up each plant. This means that as you move the plants of your collection around - you still will find every plant can be reached and so you do not have to put in new tubes, or move connections.

Supplies:

"Spraystakes" and the necessary pipe and fittings can be obtained in NZ from NZ Hydroponics, Tauranga. The stakes cost 30c. each and the off-takes 14c. pipe is 49c. per metre - so the cost per plant is of the order of 58c.

"microtube" we still have a large supply - quantities free to a good home if you want to start in a small way!

Roy Griffith



WATERING SYSTEMS

Morris Tarr

The two methods of automated watering that I use are, Drip Feed, and Microjet mist spray. In both applications I use Plassey Watering Systems. With these systems a must is a good in-line filter, as we do not want jets and drippers being blocked with grit, or unwanted debris.

In the Drip Feed system as well as the filter I use an in-line pressure reducing valve, which reduces the pressure by 4 without affecting the volume.

There are two types of drippers which can be used, an in-line dripper or an end-line dripper, the latter is the one I use. These drippers are non adjustable and have a flow rate of about 4 litres per hour. I generally leave them on for 1 to 2 hours, using a manually operated water timer.

End-line Dripper 4mm

Code: 701-818

A non-adjustable flow rate of approx 4 litres per hour.



The main feed line from the tap is 13mm polythene tubing which is run up and along, above wherever plants may be hanging, (in this system you can run up to 500 outlets off the one tap), it is then just a matter of fitting a 4mm offtake into the 13mm tube above the plant, and attaching the required length of 4mm polythene tubing with the end-line dripper fitted to the bottom. I make it long enough so that the dripper just sits on the potting mix, because the outlet of the dripper is not on the bottom, but the top of the unit and will therefore not block up. If you decide to move the plant somewhere else, or make the hole in the main tube in the wrong place, you simply push in a goof plug which seals the hole. These are readily available, also a microjet spanner/punch for making the holes.

Offtake 4mm

Code: 701-740

Connects 4mm tube to 13mm tube.



Elbow 13mm

Code: 733-086

Multipack (4 per pack) Code:

For joining tubing at right angles or for use where sharp bends are required—otherwise tubing will kink and block.



With the Microjet spray system, I do not use a pressure reducing valve as we want as much pressure as possible.

Each spray which delivers water in a 360 degree circle, has an output of 18 litres per hour through a 0.7 metre radius. The maximum number of sprays which may be used off one tap outlet is 55.

Here again the main water supply is through 13mm polythene tube run up and along over where plants are to be watered. The sprays are located at 600mm spacings, either pointing straight down under the tube, or at a 45 degree or less angle depending on where you want the spray to go. They are simple to attach by using the spanner/punch, make the hole by pushing the punch into the 13mm tube and then screw in the spray. If you wish to re-locate or alter the angle of the spray, simply screw it out and push in a goof plug and try again.

I generally only leave this system running for about 15 minutes.

360° Mist Spray

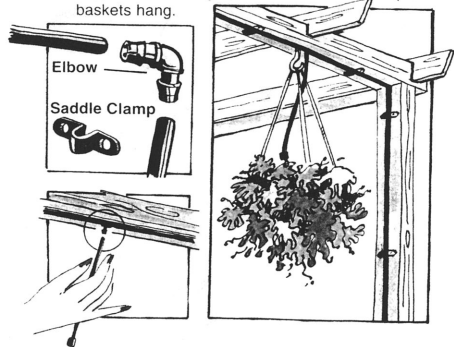
Code: 732-942

Creates a fine mist. Full circle.



2 Irrigating Hanging Baskets...

A Lead 13mm tubing up the pergola or verandah support and along the beams from which plant baskets hang.



Did you know?

A method of measurement used quite a lot in botany is lin. It is not difficult to convert as 12 lin = 1 inch or if you prefer it 1 lin is 1 12th of an inch.

You may notice that this is slightly briefer Epiflora than usual. We had hoped to have a report on Convention but evidently the gap between returning from the Convention and the magazine's deadline was too close at such a busy time of the year. One other promised article didn't eventuate either and as this is a completely chaotic time of the year for your editors we simply couldn't fill the gaps. In fact as I write this I have no idea where we are going to find time to produce this edition. If it's a little late our apologies. At least next year it will be someone else's problem.



