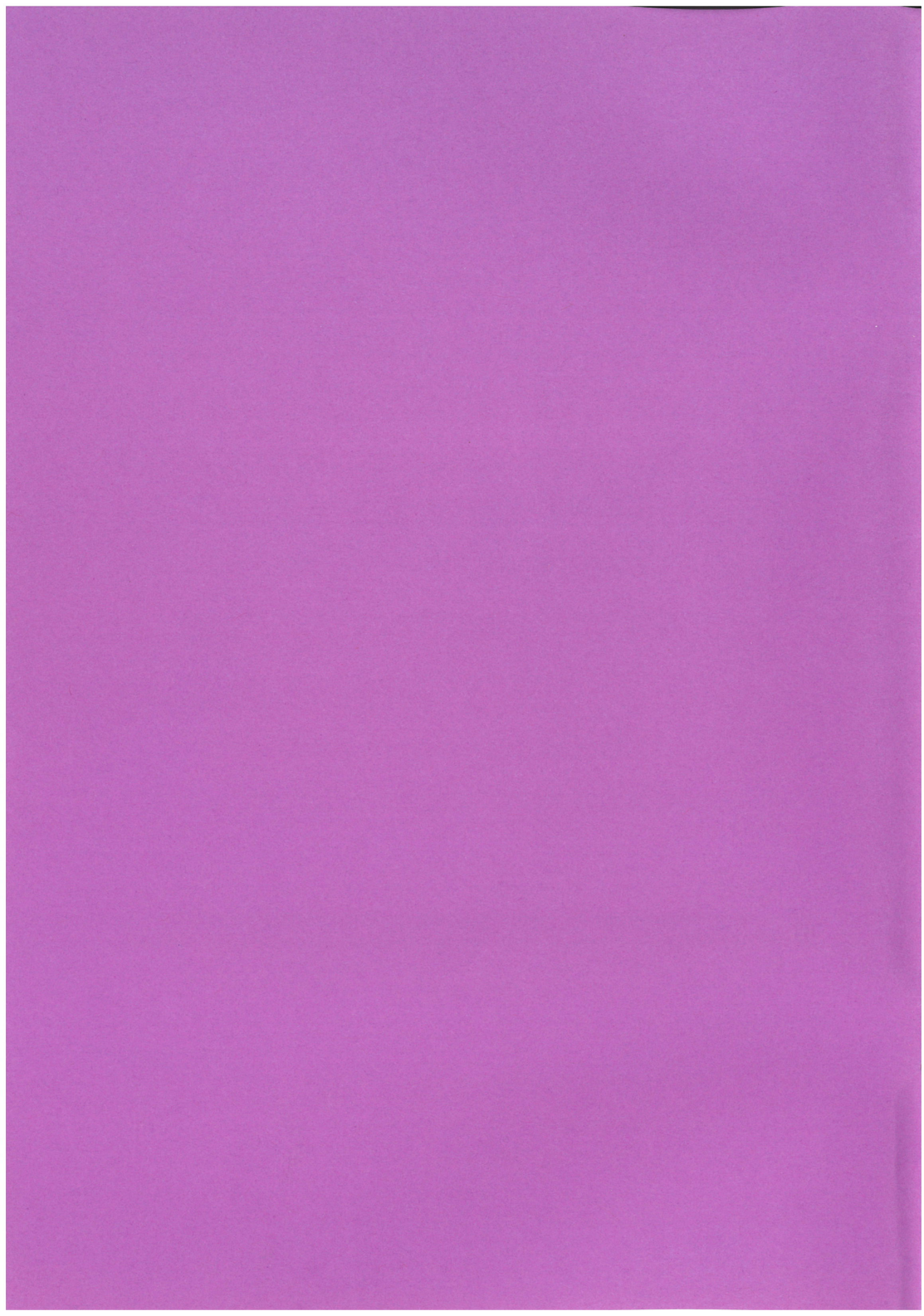




EPIFLORA

Volume 10 No. 3

September 2001





EPIFLORA

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From the President

Dear fellow epiphyte growers

There are signs of spring all around us here in Waikanae – the willows in the paddocks on the way to the beach are bursting into leaf, the blackbirds are gathering bits and pieces to make new nests or repair old and the tuis have found the first kowhai to flower in the neighbourhood. What a wonderful season it is as the earth warms up and new life blossoms. After all the rain we have had over the last month it is gumboots on to give the garden its much needed attention.

As the year races by we come closer to the Convention. It is pleasing to see so many registrations at this point. If you haven't registered already do send your registration into Kaye Keighley as the Convention promises to be a good one, with plenty of varied activities and opportunities to catch up with fellow epiphyte growers from other parts of the country.

If you are an epicactus grower you will be noticing buds developing on your plants and for those who have hoyas there are signs of new leaves bursting forth. We have kept some warm growing hoyas in the house all winter and have been having a regular battle with mealy bugs, whereas those cooler growing plants in the shade house have been cold enough for the mealy bugs to die off. I imagine hoyas that grow in the tropics are constantly being attacked by "creatures" of various kinds.

Do hope you have great pleasure preparing your plants for the summer and watching buds grow larger.

Happy growing and kind regards

Jane Griffith

The Programme for 2001

Meetings are at Johnsonville Union Church (Dr. Taylor Terrace) and start at 2.00 pm. Library books etc. are available at 1.30 pm.

Those on duty are responsible for preparing the room, assisting with tea and tidying the room at the end of the meeting. If for any reason you are unable to do your allocated duty please arrange for someone else to do it.

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| September 8th | “The Forest Canopy”
<u>On Duty</u> : Marion Austin, Leone Neil, Penny Luckens. |
| October 13th | “Your favourite epiphyte” - bring it - talk about it!
<u>On Duty</u> : Jenny Askwith, Yvonne Johansen, Isobel Barbery. |
| November 16th-18th | National Convention - in Wellington |
| December 8th | AGM and Christmas Function
<u>On Duty</u> : Dianne O’Neill, Sunping Chin, Sunping Flora. |

Joyce Carr.

*Joyce Carr died recently in Adelaide. Some of us met Joyce when she came to one of the Auckland Conventions. **Derek Butcher** writes:*

Joyce died on Aug 9th and left much work not done! She was that sort of horticulturalist who

always looked to the future despite what accomplishments had been made in the past. Perhaps in the backwaters of Cactus research, Adelaide, Australia is blessed with a climate suited to the growing of Cactus and Joyce exploited it to the full. 40 years may seem a long time to keep fully charged but Joyce managed to do so. Her hybrid achievements are too great to list here.

She was an avid correspondent and made many pen pals around the world. She shared some of her achievements with others outside Australia but the problems of export, phytosanitary certificates, quarantine restrictions, etc, meant that many of her plants remain in Adelaide. In her early days it was the large *Epiphyllum* hybrids, then to the smaller *x Aporophyllum* cultivars and lately in the *Schlumbergera* group. Being somewhat isolated in Adelaide she was able to experiment with unconventional and the impossible! and even had a *nothogenus x Joyceara*, to remind us of some of her 'odd' successes! In 1997 she was awarded the Order of Australia Medal for her achievements with Epiphytic Cactus.

In Adelaide we knew her as Joy and while she was, at times, pragmatic she did live up to her name when showing off a newly flowered cultivar as she gently stroked its petals into a more perfect lie. In conversation, many of her sentences finished with "you know" and I know that she will be sorely missed.

Midwinter Meeting

*At our "midwinter" meeting we invite an outside speaker - and have a pot-luck lunch.. This year we celebrated midwinter in July. Alice **Hannam** was there and writes...*

Some twenty members gathered for the mid-winter pot luck luncheon, and interesting and varied were the dishes. After all had sufficiently partaken we were treated to an informal talk by Jeffrey Paris who is in charge of the bedding areas of Wellington's sixty four acre Botanical Gardens.

At present they have got the 25,300 tulips (which were bought from an Invercargill grower) just coming through the ground, ready for a brilliant display in spring. A staff of eight or nine plant all the bulbs, in batches, over a period of three weeks. While waiting to be planted the bulbs are held in coolrooms.

(Top)

"*H. Obovata*" some pictures show the flowers as having a pink cast.

"*H. Pubycalyx - Red Buttons*" (now look at the picture of a hybrid of this plant later in the magazine).



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The bulbs are replaced every year - as this is more economical than trying to hold them over until the next season. When the tulips, which can be affected by the narcissi fly, are spent they are lifted to make way for summer annuals and bedding plants. If any members of the public are around they are welcome to the spent bulbs at the end of the season. Other flowering plants are given away at the end of their flowering life too - for example dahlias and polyanthus.

Daffodil bulbs are also bought in from Pleasant Point - in the South Island - and are mainly planted in the rockeries.

This year's drought has been devastating in that large copper beeches and 30-40 year old kauris succumbed, along with other plants. When water is short the only areas watered are flower beds and specialized borders.

During the address, and while questions were being answered, colourful photos were passed around to show off some of the flower beds. Sometimes plants are offered by the public to the gardens, which are accepted. It was suggested that a few epicacti, especially the locally hybridised ones, would be acceptable.

Hoya Multiplication

A show by the comedy duo Mary Hardgrave and Merv Keighley - with audience participation. Review by Anne Goble.

Mary brought in her *Hoya australis* cutting. It had been accidentally broken from her plant in January 2000. Mary decided to pot it up so she trimmed the stem and cut the leaves in half before putting it in her mix of ½ bark, ½ tub mix. It was watered with ½ strength phostrogen. Nothing happened - but the leaves did not die. By November it had a 1/8 inch shoot and has since produced another two leaves. Mary keeps the cutting inside at a window facing onto a porch. It may be small but it looks healthy. Mary says it is completely neglected.

Merv said he would be very proud of Mary's "neglected" plant. He showed us a cutting of PNG544 which he took on 16th October 2000. It has been kept in his glasshouse and is looking well. PNG544 has since been renamed. Merv demonstrated the three methods he uses to grow cuttings.

1st method.

Using older growth, cuttings should be about six inches long. Strip the lower part of the cutting and leave a couple of sets of leaves so there is already a flowering node. Let the ends

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dry and simply put them in water. Willow-cutting water may be used. (This has been scientifically proven to create a hormone). Leave the cutting until the roots are an inch or so in length, then pot it in a very small pot. With the flowering node, it should flower the next season - though it may not flower for another couple of seasons after that.

2nd method.

Merv has had success growing cuttings in gravel mix he had been using for laying paving stones. The substance is dust up to 3/4 inch chips. Together with the cheapest potting mix he can purchase from Pak 'n Save or The Warehouse, and using old polystyrene cups he layers one part of gravel and three parts of potting mix until the cup is nearly full.

3rd method

The third method of hoyo multiplication is by sowing seed. It must be sown immediately for a good "take". The fresher the seed the better. Andrew showed us a *H. serpens* sporting many long seed pods. He said it was in a shade house and there was another hoyo with flowers open - a long way off - he had no hand in making a cross. Grant said they will self-pollinate but most come out *serpens* - true to type. Nola gave some seed to Merv and he got two or three to germinate - but he did not use fungicide and they all succumbed. Merv uses "Black Magic" seed raising mix for sowing seed. Tap it down and soak it. Sieve some more on top of the seed - and then put Thiram on top. Merv puts the pots in plastic bags in polystyrene boxes in the glasshouse.

When and Where

Cuttings may be taken at any time - but the optimum time is very late winter or early spring. Merv does not look after his cuttings. They survive or rot. Grant said he does his this way. He also said he does his epis this way - but they must be dried off first, otherwise they will rot.

In springtime, water is the fastest method of rooting plants. Put them in soil immediately they have rooted, not letting them dry out. Pot them up, water them, let them soak up the water then let them go. You can tell when it has rooted in the mix because there is new growth on top. Jane commented that she lets the roots grow very long before potting. She cannot get *H. serpens* to root in water; however Dianne finds *H. serpens* sends out roots very readily.

Merv says the location of the plant has a lot to do with their state. With a little warmth they make great strides. They will grow outside, but not a PNG hoyo. Merv said the PNG hoyas like it dry in the winter and wet in the summer. He also uses a fine pumice mix by Daltons. Rex reminded us not to water them in winter - whether they are inside or outside.

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H. linearis is difficult to grow. Merv has done it in water. Grant also has difficulty with this one. There is no substance to the stem; its very floppy and there is nothing to work with.

Diseases

Mealy Bug

Merv says that hot stuffy conditions will always cause mealy bug. A good run of air circulation is necessary. Putting mealy-ridden plants outside will usually get rid of it. Mary's *H. pauciflora* was outside for six months. It was expelled after being riddled with mealy bug. She placed it under the eaves of the house and hosed it just once. The plant now appears to be rid of it. Alice's mealy-ridden staghorn fern was put out on the fence with the same result.

Penny reminded us that there are two types of mealy bug, one of them being native to NZ. Merv said the etymologists are presently working on this and have been asking people to send in mealy bugs for identification - recording details of location etc.

Andrew said the commercial growers use "Susken Green" in the potting mix to prevent mealy bug. This is a not a purchase for amateurs as the cost is horrendous.

Scale

If there is only a little, it can be removed by a fingernail. It can be washed off using a cloth or affected plants may be placed outside. Summer oil, available from garden centres, can be used. Don't get it on Tillandsias, it suffocates the whole thing. The insect is under the shell so the shell must be squashed to get to the insect. Orthene can be placed in the mix as a preventative when potting. Neem oil, available from garden centres and Otaki Hydroponics is systemic and must be constantly used. Robyn's *H. pubycalyx Red Buttons* is covered in scale. It has had seeds and she is hopeful of some sprouting from that. Merv said that *H. Red Buttons* sprouts easily. He said that Phyllis is an expert at growing cactus from seed, and if you can grow them from seed - you can grow anything.

Pruning

Leone asked about pruning trailers. A hoyo had been given to her that had done nothing for years. After it was taken to live in a well-heated Auckland office it sent up a runner 3 inches long in one day. This is not unusual. Merv said you need to prune them sometimes because some of them send out so many trailers, they don't flower. The trailers can be seen moving in a complete circle until they find something to latch on to.

Conclusion.

Jane thanked Merv and Mary for their informative talk and said it would encourage many more people to grow hoyas assisted by a good stock of publications on hoyas held in our library.

CONVENTION 2001
Wellington
November 16th to 18th

Guest Speakers
Workshops
Visits
Meet Friends
....and Much More

For Further Information - Contact:
Kaye Keighley, c/o PO Box 15024, MIRAMAR

The Convention.

The convention arrangements committee reports that registrations are now rolling in. Quite a number of our old friends from Auckland will be with us - together with some new ones. This is the last reminder you will get. If you have not done so we suggest you send off your form and money as soon as possible (or bring them to the next meeting) - as we will fill the workshop lists on a first come, first served basis. If you need more conference enrolment forms - please ask. Please use one form for each person.

Pest Wars.

*Anyone who grows plants knows that all kinds of creatures - looking for lunch - come to attack and eat them. We often respond with pesticides of one form or another - some of them exceedingly toxic to both the pests - and anything else that happens to be around. Nothing is new here - some plants started creating such things off their own bat aeons ago (presumably they don't appreciate being eaten any more than you would) **Roger L Sieloff** sets out a brief history of our modern weapons*

Imidacloprid, otherwise best known as "Marathon" is what could conceivably be called a "fourth generation" pesticide. It is a hallowed, not to mention halogenated, member of a long and distinguished line of poisons, its family tree goes as follows:

First Generation : Farmers aren't as dumb as most folks think. Obviously insects were showing quite a lot of discrimination as to what suited their tastes and it wasn't long before agriculturalists were concocting all manner of extracts from noxious plants and dowsing their crops with it. The best example is ordinary tobacco and its very toxic alkaloid, nicotine. "Black leaf 40" was a popular 40% solution of nicotine sulphate, now taken off the market presumably because it was dangerous to use, especially if one was informationally challenged, not to mention downright clumsy. In other words, NOT a farmer. A much more benign "organic" pesticide is pyrethrin. Another safe-to-use natural pesticide is "neem oil".

Second Generation: It was the late 40's and America had just conquered the world. Microbiologists had the "magic bullet" of antibiotic compounds and Mr. Salk had actually slain the draconian scourge of Polio. On the agricultural front, chemical engineers were beginning to notice some plastic by products had rather deleterious effects on the local insect population but "higher" organisms like mice and men didn't seem to be much effected by them. Polyvinyl chloride (PVC) is a polymeric compound consisting of a long string of carbon atoms with intermittent double bonds and lots of chlorine atoms. Snip the chain, throw on a couple of benzene rings, add more chlorine and voila - DDT is born! This miracle of (human) nature eradicated typhus in what remained of lousy, war torn Europe. It was so popular American GI's were actually drinking cocktails deliberately laced with the stuff. Looking back, I suppose all people can say is a good thing cannot last forever. In the case of the above, it was all over in 20 years. Nature waged a swift and deadly counterattack to pesticides and antibiotics in the form of resistant strains of nasty bugs of all kinds. To make matters worse, stuff like DDT was about as persistent in the environment as the plastics which had spawned it in the first place.....

Third generation: THIS MEANS WAR!! Vietnam was a gentle reminder America did not

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own the planet; as we wrangled with the TET offensive, the chemical industry came up with something much worse - TEPP. Tetra Ethyl Pyro Phosphate is a simple organic molecule that is technically known as an alkyl phosphate. It is also one of the most toxic substances known, if you disregard the kinds of stuff the CIA plays around with. At any rate, organic phosphate pesticides were the offspring of the chemical warfare industry - "nerve gas" seemed to kill communists about as well as cockroaches. The most wonderful thing about these substances were they broke down very rapidly in the environment, leaving nothing more than carbon dioxide, water, a bit of phosphate and dozens and dozens (and dozens) of dead sheep. Obviously the boys in the lab had to mellow this stuff out a bit. Eureka - pyrophosphate lite! Increasing the size of the molecule and throwing in a little brimstone resulted in a relatively benign compound known as "Malathion", very popular for mosquito control. In fact one could even appreciate its nauseating stench without collapsing in convulsions whenever the fogger drove past belching clouds of the stuff like a shark fisherman "chumming" the water.

Pesticides - The Next Generation: Well, well, well, yo ho ho, a bottle of rum and twenty dead men on a dead man's chest. We've come a long way, baby. Modern pesticides might be thought of as the serpent eating its own tail. The latest trend is to take naturally occurring compounds, ferret them off to the lab, molest them a bit with a big, bad chlorine atom and come up with a half natural half synthetic chemical chimera of sorts, in other words - Imidacloprid.

"1-(6-chloro-3-pyridymethyl)-N-nitroimidazolidin-2-ylideneamine",

if you prefer. In other words 6-chloro nicotine. That's right, this stuff is little more than nicotine with a chlorine atom attached to it. How's that for progress? Imidacloprid is manufactured by the Bayer company and speaking of aspirin, let's say I began taking tablets with the same amount of Imidacloprid as aspirin (325 mg each). How many tablets would I have to take before I fell on my back and my arms and legs curled up?

Well, if I were:

- A. an 80kg Roger L. Sieloff 110 tablets.
- B. the average bird (1.2 kg) 1/2 tablet
- C. a very fat mealybug (0.01 gm) 1 tablet kills 382,352 bugs

Well 191,176 mealybugs actually, since the data above is LD50 dosages, which break down to be 450mg/kg (sieloffs), 152mg/kg (birds) and 85mg/kg (bugs). Other interesting Imidacloprid facts to banter about at your next party are its solubility in water (about 500 mg per litre); the half life in soil being about 100 days and in water about a month; the permissible food level being 0.02 PPM and the fact the insecticide is a systemic, meaning it is actually absorbed by the plant as well as the bugs, rendering the former immune to further attack by the latter, at least until the close of the next fiscal quarter. Toxic side effects include rapid pulse, difficulty in breathing, blurred vision and voting Republican in the next election.

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It should come as no surprise that the chlorinated form of natural pyrethrin is known as the semi-synthetic pesticide "permethrin".

That's the way it was, it is and it probably will be,

Roger L. Sieloff

The Nursery perspective.

Penny Luckens reports on the August meeting

The speaker was Sarah Hodge who, with her partner Wayne Horobin, runs the wholesale nursery Horobin and Hodge which is in Manakau. The nursery until recently had a staff of six to seven reliable, hardworking and dedicated women, mostly solo mothers, producing herbaceous perennials and herbs for the retail trade. It is a nursery that produces its own plants from cuttings and divisions etc. rather than buying in small plants and growing them on, as many wholesale nurseries do today.

With the downturn in the horticultural industry over the last year or so they have been forced by the bank to lay off all their staff, except for the leading hand who now works for them part time. Of those laid off only one now has a job, the other six are on benefits. Once a month they still all meet and have coffee together.

Sarah spoke of the close-knit local community where everybody is known by their nicknames - at least to others - and of her "green" friend who was involved with a project at Manakau School which included vegetable gardens for the pupils and growing native plants as well as deciduous trees to compliment those in the rest of the village. The children have an older person who gardens with them once a week so the gardens do not get out of hand and the children discouraged.

People these days sit around sending e-mails and then go to the gym for exercise instead of gardening as they used to. They want instant colour and easy care gardens so there is no demand for such things as *Albucas* (summer growing bulbs from South Africa with either white or yellow flowers) or *Pulmonarias* (lungworts with white speckled, hairy leaves; the flowers are usually blue but some varieties have white or pink flowers. These look a bit like perennial forget-me-nots but they actually belong to the borage family). Since there is no demand - nurseries stop propagating these plants.

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Sarah asked if any of us had attended any of the lectures given by Jane Sterndale Bennett who visited New Zealand recently. She is now in her sixties, runs the Hardy Plant Society, wears sensible shoes and reminds you of useful things that you had forgotten like “cut back pulmonarias and delphiniums for repeat flowering”. She is a serious, sensible and impassioned gardener - and human with it.

Agapanthus are plants that people seem to either love or hate - although some go from hate to love as they get older! They can self-seed into paths and crevices where they are not wanted (so cut off the seed heads and dispose of them before the seeds ripen) but for steep banks they are ideal. They compete with weeds, suppressing competition. Recently Sarah planted a bank with a combination of agapanthus, bog sage (*Salvia uliginosa*) and rugosa roses - one of the few roses that don't like sprays and are free of pests and diseases. Good shade plants are *Liriope* and *Ophiopogon* for edging plants or ground covers. They have either green, black (almost) or variegated leaves.

People should be gardening from scratch. They should spend time and money first building up their soil, making decisions about watering systems and then thinking about what they should plant. Too many garden designers today look at colours and shapes without thinking about the conditions that each plant requires. Initially the combinations look good, but the plants will not all thrive.

One way of unifying your garden design is to have clumps or groups of one plant scattered through it. “Indigo spires” an upright flowering salvia, purple irises or plants with coloured foliage such as euphorbias, lady's mantle (*Alchemilla mollis*) or cotton lavenders (*Santolina spp.*). There are santolinas with soft yellow flowers which blend better with other colours than the very bright yellow varieties. If you like the foliage but not the flowers then they can always be trimmed off! Linking plants even out a tendency to “spottiness” in gardens. Something green always sets off other colours and is restful.

Sarah is not impressed by the wild-flower gardens planted along Auckland motorways. They require great attention to the elimination of weed seeds before planting and are far from natural in New Zealand. She enjoys the naturally occurring wild flowers on road-sides - all made appropriate to their environment by the natural processes of soil, climate etc. at their sites. The Wellington motorways with their ever-changing flora through the seasons and the wonderful display of mauve daisies each year are preferable to packaged wildflower gardens.

Cherish (and patronise) garden centres with staff who know about their stock and are willing to buy in requested plants. They are becoming rare. Staff tend to be young, poorly paid, unqualified and without gardening experience. Many long-established nurseries are going out of business. They are being undercut by plants raised with “free” prison labour and sold below actual cost. There is nothing wrong with giving prisoners training in work experience

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and skills; but with labour costs being thirty to forty percent of the price for plants raised at nurseries, they cannot compete with prison plants.

In the 1990's wholesale nurseries were informed by the "NZ Gardener" magazine what articles were to be published three months later. This meant that they were ready for requests for plants from readers. This no longer occurs.

In reply to a query about how she gained her interest in gardening she spoke of her grandparents home in Miramar, opposite the brickworks. It was down a right-of-way with fuchsias down the shady side, and roses down the other. She remembers being fascinated by the sound of the hose on what, to her, were towering hydrangeas; of hosing up high but avoiding being deluged by the drips. The back garden had fruit trees and a glasshouse with a grape vine. Her special memory is of eating poached fruit in the garden, complete with the smells of the fruit and the flowers. Both Sarah and her grandmother had their own special gardens where they grew what they wanted - including sweet peas and *Lachenalias*.

Thank you Sarah, for your commitment and passion. May you and Wayne trade your way to a gardening future with support from both specialist and non-specialist gardeners.

Now is the time.....

Epicacti - *late pruning is possible, start watering again and fertilise lightly*

Hoyas - *as the days warm up water a little. Cuttings may be taken. Start watching out for mealy bug*

Schlumbergeras - *a good time to re-pot, using a slow release fertiliser in the potting mix. Water when dry.*

Rhipsalis etc. - *Water regularly as rhipsalis come into flower. A little fertiliser will assist the plants.*

New Journals, Magazines and Newsletters.....

As no doubt you are aware the Society exchanges journals/magazines with a number of overseas societies. In this new regular feature interesting articles which have appeared

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since last *Epiflora* will be highlighted. Hopefully this will bring to your attention information that is available for you to read from our extensive library.

Fraterna (Bulletin of the International Hoya Association) Vol 14#2, Apr-Jun.2001

Interesting articles about new species collected in Malaysia and a relative of the hoya *Absolmsia spartiodes*. Also some beautiful photographs by Ann Wayman.

The Bulletin (Epiphyllum Society of America) Vol 56, No.3, March 2001

Article on *Selenicereus chryso-cardium* and one entitled "Do I Have a New Cultivar?". This latter article is one in a series of articles on the *International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants*.

The Epi-Gram (Newsletter of the South Bay Epiphyllum Society) Vols XVI & XVII, July and August 2001

In the first volume Dick Kohlschreiber pays homage to Ethel Hurst who died in June. Ethel was a well-known epicactus grower and hybridiser. Also in this newsletter Dick gives his soil mix for growing epicacti and epiphyllums.

In Volume XVII there are some interesting letters from various epicactus growers; also some brief comments about repotting.

Odd Cuttings and Seeds

Common Names of Plants...

We all use them. Of course it is always risky to try to find plants by their common name, try identifying the plant "Queen of the Night"-but there are two good internet resources to try to find out about such things. One is the list of common names at the Cactus Mall:

<http://www.cactus-mall.com/names.html>

which, for example, lists "desert rose" as a name for *Adenium obesum*.

Another very useful general internet search tool is

http://www.google.com/advanced_search

Just put "desert rose" on the line for "with the exact phrase" and you get too many responses. If you add "plant" on the line for "with all of the words" you will find many useful references, and they all seem to agree that *Adenium* is referred to as



***Hoya pubycalyx* Red Buttons hybrid**

The photograph on the opposite page shows a Von Cross hybrid of *H pubycalyx* Red Buttons.:

the "desert rose." If you now change "plant" to "adenium" you will have over 300 references and many of them are useful. One of them discusses the bonsai potential of Adenium.

<http://www.vassl.com/tropicalgarden/adenium.htm>
has pictures and mentions that the plant is also known as the "impala lily."

Why do Rhipsalis shed their stems??

Sharon McKenzie posted these thoughts on the question recently..

Rhipsalis of many species will do this any time that they are under stress, and the stress can come from many sources. Often, it is from being too dry, or from too much sunlight(which also causes many species to become yellowish instead of green). Too MUCH water can also cause stem-shedding, especially in winter. Sometimes it can be something as simple as an abrupt change in environment.

How are you keeping your plants? Mine hang outside under the trees all summer long, and really thrive that way. We have been getting some pretty heavy rains here lately(in South Carolina), but so far they don't seem to mind. I have had more problems with stem-shedding in winter, when they are kept in my classrooms(I am a school teacher).

I have had plants, especially *R. cereuscula*, that got some pretty direct sunlight for at least part of the day by a window, lose their stems, but re-grow them when watered more frequently and re-located to a less-sunny spot. I have also had *R. capillariformis* lose stems when placed near a heat source in winter, where it became dry, and a large *R. baccifera* lose stems just from being re-potted, although it began growing them back immediately!

Foiling Fungus Gnats...

Many of us have encountered these annoying little insects whose larvae, while in the potting mix our plants grow in, can eat the plants roots and do other damage. Chemical warfare is one answer- but here is another....

Spread 1/4 to 1/2 inch of clean sand on the soil surface of every potted plant. This way the gnats cannot get to the organic matter in the potting soil to lay their eggs and eat. They will die out in a week or two...

Cleaning Seeds

This can be a chore - as those who hybridise epis can vouch for. On a discussion forum recently someone suggested putting the whole lot in the kitchen blender with a little dishwashing fluid and water. Another correspondent replied a little while later that, with great trepidation, he had tried it - and to his amazement the method worked beautifully. He added:

“To those who may have wondered how I could wrest control of the family blender from the possessive wife, I will say proudly that here in California even husbands have rights and I was awarded sole custody of the blender! It may have helped that it was mine in the first place.

“Being the budding botanist that I think I am I certainly had to sterilise the blender after such abuse I added copious amounts of raw rum to the blender, plus some other ingredients, put it on high, and consumed the results. I did notice some black seedlike spots on the foamed results but chalked it up to my ignorance of proper sterilisation techniques.”

Postscript.....

Herman Kortink points out an error in the article on *Selenicereus chrysocardium* in the last issue of *Epiflora* . He notes that E Meier’s hybrids are listed as “Flammenspiel” x *Selenicereus chrysocardium*. the word *Flammenspiel* translating roughly as “flames-play”.

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Derek Butcher comments on one of the photos in last month's issue:

More things need to be said about *Rhipsalis pilocarpa* on page 4.

It was way back in 1995 in Adelaide when Andrew asked nicely whether he could pick fruit from my Rhipsaloids. He was gone ages but when he returned to the kitchen we all said "You smell, Andrew." Andrew then wanted to know why we had not told him where the dogs did their toilet. This is the scenario where Andrew picked fruit. I have both 'pilosa' and 'pilocarpa'. I leave it up to you to decide if Andrew got his names mixed in such a doggone mess!

By the way I still have 'pilosa' on the label of the plant from Madagascar because ever since the first Rhipsalis was found there in the 1890's botanists are still undecided as to the proper status of the various forms that are found there!

Back Numbers of "Epiflora"

The first edition of Epiflora appeared in March 1992. We have limited stocks of back-numbers for most issues from Volume 2 - issue number 1 (March 1993) onwards. Prices are 50c per copy plus postage (if applicable) - contact the Editor ..

People

We hear that **Grant Bayley** is recovering well after his stroke, he says he is looking forward to meeting people at the convention. We are looking forward to catching up with you Grant.

Alice and Rex Hannam are recovering after their busy time with the National Camellia Convention - which this year was held on the Kapiti Coast. They said they would be prepared to do jobs for our November convention!.

Future Publication Dates..

EPIFLORA is published quarterly by the Wellington Epiphyllum and Hoya Society.

Comments and contributions are most welcome. The society aims to encourage discussion and debate; opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the society. It is the policy of the society to publish corrections of fact but not to comment on matters of opinion expressed in other publications All material in Epiflora may be reprinted by non-profit organisations provided that proper credit is given to WEHS, Epiflora and the author.

Please address correspondence to:

*249 Te Moana Road,
WAIKANAE.*

Or: griffith@globe.co.nz

Closing dates for contributions:

Summer 2001 edition - 10th November 2001

Autumn 2002 edition - 9th February 2002

Subscriptions:

Subscriptions are due on 1st of January and are:

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(overseas members \$NZ24.00 or \$US12.00)*

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