



NOTES FROM MITCH KARNAGHAN'S TALK

EOC GENERAL MEETING

14 MAY 2014

Mitch mainly grows Australian Natives, Oncidiums, Masdevallias, Restrepias and some Exotics.

Deflasked plants are potted into 63mm square (black) pots and later into 80mm square pots. Since using square pots, Mitch has achieved healthier and more vigorous root growth that tends to descend rather than wrap around inside the pot. Consequently, these plants produce an increased number of above ground growths – i.e. faster maturing, earlier flowering plants.

At potting time he uses a root hormone (eg Auxinone etc) and repeats the hormone treatment 4-5 months later, in between time using molasses to sweeten the mix. More mature plants go into clear 125mm round pots which are then placed in 125mm black pots. As they mature they are potted into 150mm clear pots inside 140mm (squat) black pots. The use of a '2 pot' system, 1 clear, 1 black, not only stops the 'green sludge' build-up associated with clear pot culture, but also enables viewing the state of the roots and assessment of moisture levels. (Any plants that tend to unruly roots are placed on slabs – still with the hormone and molasses treatment.)

Mitch uses a cow/sheep manure 'tea' – the manure being placed in a shade cloth bag which is immersed in a 40 litre drum. It is decanted into a sports drink bottle from which he adds three squirts to 5 litres of water. Mitch uses this final solution at every watering. He also uses Katek 2-3 times a year.

Mitch conjectures that the technique he uses would also work for other genera. He grows under 30% shade cloth but aided by a fair tree canopy. A plastic roof is used from May to September to protect from the cold. Mitch is happy to have Members visit to look at his growing conditions, but asks that you ring first, 4471 5662.

