

# February 2013 General Meeting Speakers



## PLEIONE CULTURE

Peter VanEst.

### Recommended Compost

10mm pine bark or old cymbidium compost  
coarse river sand (washed)  
peat or coco fibre  
sheep, horse, cow manure or organic lifter  
Garden soil may also be added.

3 and 1/4 parts  
1 and 1/2 parts  
2 and 1/2 parts  
1 part

Fill pot with compost, allowing a 15 to 20 mm. gap from the top. Lay the bulb on the surface with 30 to 50 mm of roots spread out for anchorage. Fill with compost leaving 2/3 of bulb exposed. If a bulb pushes itself out of the mix, never push it back as roots will be damaged. Just cover the roots with fresh compost.

Begin watering when new growth appears in Spring, sparingly at first. Never let pots dry out from now on.

Flowers will emerge quickly....1 on smaller bulbs and 2 from larger ones. When flowers fade, increase water. Pleione will grow well among cymbidiums as they have the same light and fertilizer requirements. They are shallow rooted and once roots dry out they will not re-grow.

**DO NOT LET THEM DRY OUT!**

If your original compost has fertilizer in it, begin liquid feeding around Christmas with a low nitrogen fertilizer.

When bulbs are mature, leaves will yellow. Decrease watering.

When leaves drop off, cease watering altogether.

Peter leaves his bulbs in this mix until he repots around July, giving the newly potted bulbs a few weeks in the mild winter sun.

On top of the old bulbs, small bulbs will have emerged. These can be broken off and planted up for future years. The old bulb will have shriveled and can be discarded.





## **CATTLEYA** Sylvia Hawkins

### **Summer Watering:**

Sylvia waters once only, very early in the morning, preferably on a sunny, breezy day, but if the temperature is above 28 degrees she will water the floors. She aims for everything to be completely dry by nightfall therefore avoiding rot or fungal problems. She is careful not to leave water in the axle of a new growth and errs on the side of not watering if the conditions aren't exactly right. Cattleyas love good drainage, hate being saturated for long periods, hate being wet and cold and like to almost dry out between waterings. Sylvia is currently watering every 2 to 3 days.

### **Re-potting:**

Sylvia re-pots when roots grow over the sides of the pot. She never re-pots a plant with a flower sheath and she likes to stake newly potted plants. They are given a sprinkle of dolomite and a dose of Seasol and left in a cool place for a week. If scale is present they are sprayed with eco oil and if there is any sign of root rot they are dipped in a Fongarid solution.

### **Pest Control:**

Sylvia keeps Confidor for aphids and Eco Oil for scale in her orchid house. Any fungal signs she mixes 20 mls of Eco Oil with a measure of Mancozeb (according to directions) with 5 litres of water. The cattleyas are sprayed once and then again in 7 to 10 days. Eco oil is never used when temperatures are over 25 degrees. Soft toothbrushes are used to remove scale after a day or two.

### **Fertilizing:**

Sylvia feeds weekly, mainly with Manutech Blossom Booster which is sometimes alternated with organic feeds. She believes this provides their summer nutrients.





## **DOCKRILLIA**      Jean Swindley

Dockrillia are terete-leaved dendrobium species from Australia and Papua New Guinea which have been moved into a newly created genus in recent years. The name Dockrillia is not internationally recognised. These plants are still called Dendrobium in some countries.

The local species *Dockrillia teretefolium* or the Bridal Veil Orchid is commonly found in coastal areas growing on *Casuarina* often overhanging water. In time specimen plants become quite spectacular with pendulous leaves growing up to 60 cm. long.

Dockrillia species are found from Queensland to Tasmania growing on rocks or trees. Hybridising has been occurring over recent years. The P.N.G. species *fuliginosa* has been used to introduce red colour into flowers. Be aware if showing a *fuliginosa* cross. It is not an Australian Native and needs to be shown in the Miscellaneous category.

Jean's growing tips:

These are tough plants. They enjoy humidity and cooler conditions. In warmer weather Jean waters 2 to 3 times a week.

Before mounting, research growth habits.

They can be grown in shallow pots in rock or bark.

