



Newsletter

MAY 2020

Founded March 1982

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Next General Meeting:

20 May 2020 at 7:30pm (Cancelled)

Canungra School of Arts Hall

Canungra

Next Committee Meeting:

27 May 2020 (Cancelled)

Other information:

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Membership Fees

Members who contribute to this Newsletter endeavour to assure the reliability of its contents. Any cultural advice provided is a guide only and may not suit individual growers. It is the responsibility of the individual to validate such advice before applying suggested methods.

The Society welcomes potential members to come to the general meetings as our guests, and advises those wishing to join us, that subscription fees (in Australian Dollars) are \$15 for a single, \$20 for a family from 1st January each year.

****GUEST** Judges for the next Meeting**

Orchids — Members of the society

Foliage — Judging by members of the society

Guest Speaker

Guest speaker for the May meeting is **Cancelled**

Coming Events / Shows 2020

22nd AOC Conference & Show, 1/5 Sept 2021, Logan Metro Sports

All shows for the first half of this year have been cancelled until further notice

This newsletter is being printed by the office of Scott Buchholz, Federal Member for Wright

Editorial

The front page has the usual info about shows, meeting dates and guest speaker for the month. Page 2 has the editorial and Page 3 has an article on *Baptistonia* orchids and page 4 has an article about growing *Barkeria* orchids.

Page 5 and 6 have an article about growing *Staghorns* and *Elkhorns*.

For those of us on email know that shows and meetings have been cancelled to sometime in the future. I will continue to produce a newsletter so that we can all stay in touch.

Feel free to contribute to the next newsletter. STAY SAFE

Michael - Editor



Holcoglossum kimballianum



Holcoglossum wangii

Just a couple of orchid species flowering at home at the moment. They belong to the *Vandaeae* tribe.

Growing Baptistonia Orchids

Baptistonia echinata is the only species of this genus.

ORIGIN: This is a small sized, cool to hot growing epiphyte, native to Minas Gerais, Espirito Santo, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Parana and Santa Catarina Brazil in montane rainforests at elevations of 50 to 1200 meters.

DESCRIPTION: This is a small sized, cool to hot growing epiphyte, native to Minas Gerais, Espirito Santo, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Parana and Santa Catarina Brazil in montane rainforests at elevations of 50 to 1200 meters that has narrowly ellipsoidal or sub-cylindric, compressed pseudobulbs partially enveloped basally by several distichous, imbricating, leafless sheaths carrying 1 to 2 apical, oblong-lanceolate, narrowly elliptic or obovate, acute leaves that blooms in the winter on a 1 1/2' [45 cm] long, pendulous, mottled with dull crimson, paniculate [2 to 6 flowers per branch] or racemose, densely many flowered inflorescence with papery, elliptic, obtuse floral bracts and has numerous small flowers. They do best mounted on tree fern or cork and like to be kept humid, with moderate shade and have frequent waterings year round with less after the pseudobulbs fully mature.

FLOWER SIZE: To 0.8 inches [2 cm] -- information provided by Jay Pfahl, author of the Internet Orchid Species Encyclopedia (IOSPE).

Genus Name	<u>Genus</u>	<u>Grex Name</u>	Origin
Add+ Baptistonia	Bapt	echinata	Sander, traditional
Add+ Oncidium	Onc	brunleesianum	
Add+ Oncidium	Onc	echinatum	
Add+ Oncidium	Onc	vellozeanum	
Add+ Oncidium	Onc	vellozoanum	



Growing Barkeria Orchids

Tribe: Epidendreae

Subtribe: Laeliinae

This genus, first described in 1838, honors George Barker of England, who imported and flowered the first plant from Mexico. The genus is described as having epiphytic plants occurring on rocks, trees or shrubs. Stems form slender pseudobulbs, covered with sheaths. The flowers are in a terminal raceme or panicle with the lips free or attached to column up to ½ length. The column is winged, rostellum tongue shaped, and there are four equal-sized pollinia.

These plants have a definite cycle of growth and rest, with the leaves becoming deciduous during the winter rest period. These plants are easy to cultivate and thrive on neglect.

Barkeria orchids are close relatives to Cattleya and Epidendrum (and once these orchids were classified within Epidendrum genus), but they have a unique morphology, ecology, which are the reasons that they are classified within the other distinct genus. Their uniqueness lies within their morphology – they are sympodial but do not possess pseudobulbs. Unlike Cattleya, they have stems, which are long and can-like. Leaves are thin, nice but do not have longevity – in fact, they are deciduous, unlike most other Laeliinae orchids, which have perennial leaves. Barkeria orchids grow in Central American warm forests with distinct and long dry periods. So they are adapted to this – and adaptation is winter dormancy, Barkeria just drop their leaves and stay nearly lifeless, only in spring, when the plant gives new growth, you finally understand that it was only dormancy and the plant is alive. And another distinct feature is thick roots.

Barkeria orchids are small to medium sized sympodial epiphytes and lithophytes with distinct dormancy. The most common in cultivation species is *Barkeria lindleyana*, or Lindley Barkeria. It has flowers, born in racemose inflorescences with five to twenty flowers. Flowers are relatively large, up to 3 inches wide, odorless, pink to light purple, there are also very beautiful alba clones with white flowers. *Barkeria lindleyana* blooms in the fall on mature stems, just before leaves drop. *Barkeria uniflora* (synonym *Barkeria elegans*) is a type species. It has more tender habit, flowers are smaller, light pink with purple markings on a lip. It blooms in the fall and winter. *Barkeria melanocaulon* is a lovely miniature orchid with lavender 2 inch wide flowers, blooming in the summer. *Barkeria spectabilis* has very lovely 3 inch wide short lived pink flowers, lips are white with pink spots and markings.

Barkeria orchid care is not very difficult, but quite specific. It can grow in pots, hanging baskets or mounted on slabs, but the latter two are much more preferable, given the fact that Barkeria orchids have long, thick, epiphytic roots which require a lot of air. Temperatures should be cool to warm, with intermediate as optimal temperature. Light levels should be bright, something like as for Oncidiums and bifoliate Cattleyas. Waterings should be ample in the summer, when the plant is actively growing, with lots of applied fertilizers. In winter it has strict dormancy. When leaves are dropped, the plant should be given bright light and no water at all, until the new growth is seen in spring. It can shiver and look completely lifeless, but it is ok and the part of its adaptation to long dry periods at its native habitat.



Barkeria vanneriana



Barkeria melanocaulon (halbingeri)

Growing Stagorns and Elkhorns

Staghorn or *Platycerium grande* and the Elkhorn or *Platycerium bifurcatum* are ferns belonging to moist forests in Eastern Australia. They are classified as epiphytic ferns which grow on fallen logs or on branches of trees. These plants have minimal roots but are well adapted to capture debris, leaves and rainwater falling from the canopy. Stagorns and Elkhorns grow well in lightly shaded areas with occasional sunlight. Stagorns and Elkhorns grow well in outdoor conditions in Australia but need to keep them dry during the cold winter season. Stagorns and Elkhorns ferns produce sterile and fertile fronds. These are plants with minimal fertiliser requirements.

Difference between a Staghorn and an Elkhorn

Stagorns grow as large individual plants with large and broad fronds. The fronds curve outward at the front to collect organic matter and water falling from above. Elkhorns have a group of plants or rosettes growing as a cluster and have slender and smaller fronds. These rosettes can be easily separated to grow new plants. Elkhorn has better surviving qualities and is grown from Northern Queensland to Southern part of New South Wales.

How to mount Staghorn and Elkhorn on tree or board material?

Take healthy plants and mark the area on board material or tree where you are planning to plant the fern using 6-8 nails to form a circle. Make sure that you leave at least $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of space between the nail head and board or tree. If you are using the board place some potting soil inside the nail circle. Remove the fern from the nursery pot and loosen the roots slightly and place the plant in the potting soil. Use sheet moss to cover the base of the plant. Use mono-filament fishing line to secure the moss in place by tying it around one of the nails and stretching it to the nail placed in the opposite position. Repeat with other nails until the moss and fern is secured. If you are mounting on a tree just attach the fern to the moss and then secure it onto the bark of the tree. You can add bone meal to the moss to provide the nutrients for growth.

Staghorn and Elkhorn Diseases

Both the ferns are relatively pest and disease free. However, they may be attacked by sap-sucking scale insects. You can use a low toxic systemic insecticide. The brown coloured spots that are seen on the underside of leaves are spores which help in reproduction. The ferns need very little water and excessive watering can lead to fungal infections. Remove any leaves with leaf spots.

What to feed Staghorn fern?

Staghorn ferns need very little care and maintenance. The ferns grown on a tree trunk can usually survive without any special care. Do not overfeed or overwater these ferns, think of their natural habitat surviving on only fallen leaves. When growing in conditions with an overhead shelter, like in the balcony or porch, additional feeding and watering is required. Feed these plants with organic matter like compost, leaf litter, banana skins on the back of the plant where it meets the board or water them with very diluted dose of Fish & Kelp nutrient such as Maxicrop. During very hot and dry periods, Elkhorns and Staghorns also need light watering.

How to grow Staghorns from spores?

Apart from propagation by division of pups, Staghorns can be propagated by spores collected from the underside of the plant. Scrape the spores from brown coloured spore patch and sow them in potting soil or peat moss spread on the sterilised seed tray by pressing the spores in the soil. Cover the tray with a plastic sheet. Water the seeds when needed from the bottom of the tray by placing the tray in a shallow pan of water for a few minutes. Germination occurs within three months. Once few leaves emerge plant them in individual pots.



Staghorn— *Platycerium grande*



Elkhorn — *Platycerium bifurcatum*