



# The New Zealand Orchid Society Inc.

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## NZOS NEWSLETTER

August 2024

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### This Month's Orchid:



#### **Cuitlauzina (Cu.) pulchella**

This little white flowered species is a native of Mexico, Guatemala, and El Salvador.

It's common name is "The Beautiful Odontoglossum", which is now rather ironic, as it is no longer an Odontoglossum, in fact the whole genus of Odontoglossum no longer exists, all now being reclassified as Oncidium.

This plant has been known as *Odontoglossum pulchellum*, and *Osmoglossum pulchellum* for many years, and more recently as *Osmoglossum panduratum*, and even as *Cuitlauzina pandurata*, before someone at Kew Gardens finally settled on *Cuitlauzina pulchella*.

It is an easy grower, and consistent flowerer – something that is not always the case with orchids as we know!

As such, this little plant is well worth having in your collection, especially if you are new to orchid growing.

This *Cuitlauzina* also has another unusual feature separating it out from almost every other orchid, as the flowers are upside-down – at least as far as we are concerned.

Referred to as "resupination," the lower lip of almost every orchid flower is actually the top petal and, as the flower develops inside the bud, the whole structure makes a 180° rotation shortly before opening. This orchid, and a small handful of others, are the only ones who do not rotate.

## ✦ ✦ ✦ NEXT MEETING ✦ ✦ ✦

<b>WHEN?</b>	<b>Wednesday, 18 September 2024</b>
<b>WHERE?</b>	<b><u>Meeting location:</u> Mt Albert Senior Citizens Hall, 3B Wairere Ave, Mt Albert (Next to our old haunt, the Mt Albert War Memorial Hall)</b>
<b>TIME?</b>	<b>7.30pm</b>
<b>WHAT?</b>	<b>Greg Barnes: Options for controlling pests &amp; disease in orchids and house plants</b>

Greg has been involved in the growing of various pot plants and orchids for many years now, and as part of his business, has done a lot of research into the various sprays, and even growing habits, of orchids.

Greg will share a range of strategies for preventing and controlling pests and diseases in orchids, covering both organic and chemical options.

While the focus will be on orchids, the information provided will be applicable to other plant genera as well.



Come along and find out more about managing your orchids.

## ✦ NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hey Guys, it is that time of the year again which I would call “the fun time” - repotting. With the weather warming up, now is the time to give your orchids the TLC they need to prepare for the growing season.

Since we moved into our new house, our orchids have been neglected, and I am now looking forward to repotting them and moving them into their new greenhouse.

We will use the 7-1-1 potting mix, i.e. 7 parts bark, 1 part pumice and 1 part charcoal.

Fresh bark tends to repel water (hydrophobic), and ideally, it would be better if it absorbed moisture when we watered our plants. Older bark does this. One way to ‘age’ your bark so that it can absorb

water, is to soak it for about 7 days. Soaking removes some of the waxes and tannins thus increasing the ability to absorb some moisture.

I like to wash my pumice and charcoal to remove fine particles and dust.

Pumice can be bought locally from Bark & Soil, Whenuapai:

<https://www.barkandsoilgrowingmedia.co.nz/product-category/pumice/>

I like to use the Size 4 – 10 mm and sieve out the fine and larger rocks.

Charcoal can be purchased from Commodities NZ: <https://www.commoditiesnz.co.nz/store/Biochar-c91423001>

I would like to thank Richard and Lyn for the display they presented for NZOS at the Waitakere Orchid Show; well done, we got 4<sup>th</sup> position. Graham brought in a beautiful Dendrobium for the display and, to his amazement, got 3<sup>rd</sup> place. So, the moral of the story is no matter how bad you think your flower is, bring it in for display, as you never know what will happen. So, with the Spring show on Saturday, 14/09/2024, at Western Springs Community Garden Centre, I encourage you to bring all your flowering orchids for display.

Please, if any of you are free on Friday or Saturday, we need your help in various areas, like setup, floor walkers (checking for theft), raffle table, serving tea and snacks to the vendors and any other jobs that may arise.

Look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the show.

Cheers

Greg

## REPORT FROM THE AUGUST MEETING

Our guest speaker this month, and back again for more punishment, was Allan Benson, and his subject was “Growing a mixed genera collection - there’s always room for one more”.

Allan gave us an insight into how he tries to manage his growing houses to try to accommodate as many different orchids as he can – as like most of us, he just can’t get enough of them. His advice covered the orchids in general, and also about some of the specific genera he grows.

The major things from his talk were:

Research the plants you are going to attempt - talk to other growers – if you see a plant that you are interested in, seek out the grower and ask them how they grow it. Ask lots of people if you can

Try to understand the micro climates you might have in your growing houses – some parts will get more light, get warmer quicker, or be windier, for example

Be prepared to experiment – if something isn’t growing well, maybe the mix is wrong, or the location is wrong, or you are watering is too much/not enough

Plants that might not like it cold – by keeping them drier over winter, that might make a 2-degree difference to how cold the plant’s roots gets overnight, and that extra 2 degrees might be sufficient to keep that plant alive

On this subject – Allan advises to look at the forecast for overnight temperatures for the next few days, and water when the forecast indicates the nights are going to be warmer – not ones when it is going to drop down

Just because you are growing one particular genera, it doesn’t mean to say that they ALL grow the same way. Allan gave an example where he grows all his Paphs in a particular bark mix, except one species, which he said only grows well in fern fiber  
However, none of his other Paphs go well in fern fiber.

The answer - Experiment!



**Allan explaining the vagaries of growing orchids**



**Allan brought a number of his plants along to illustrate the variety he grows.**

And his last piece of advice: not everything will work, and some things you just have to accept you aren't going to be able to grow.

As final punishment, Allan was given the job of doing the plant commentary, and along the way, talked about some the plants on display that he had attempted himself, or was currently growing, along with some general information about them.

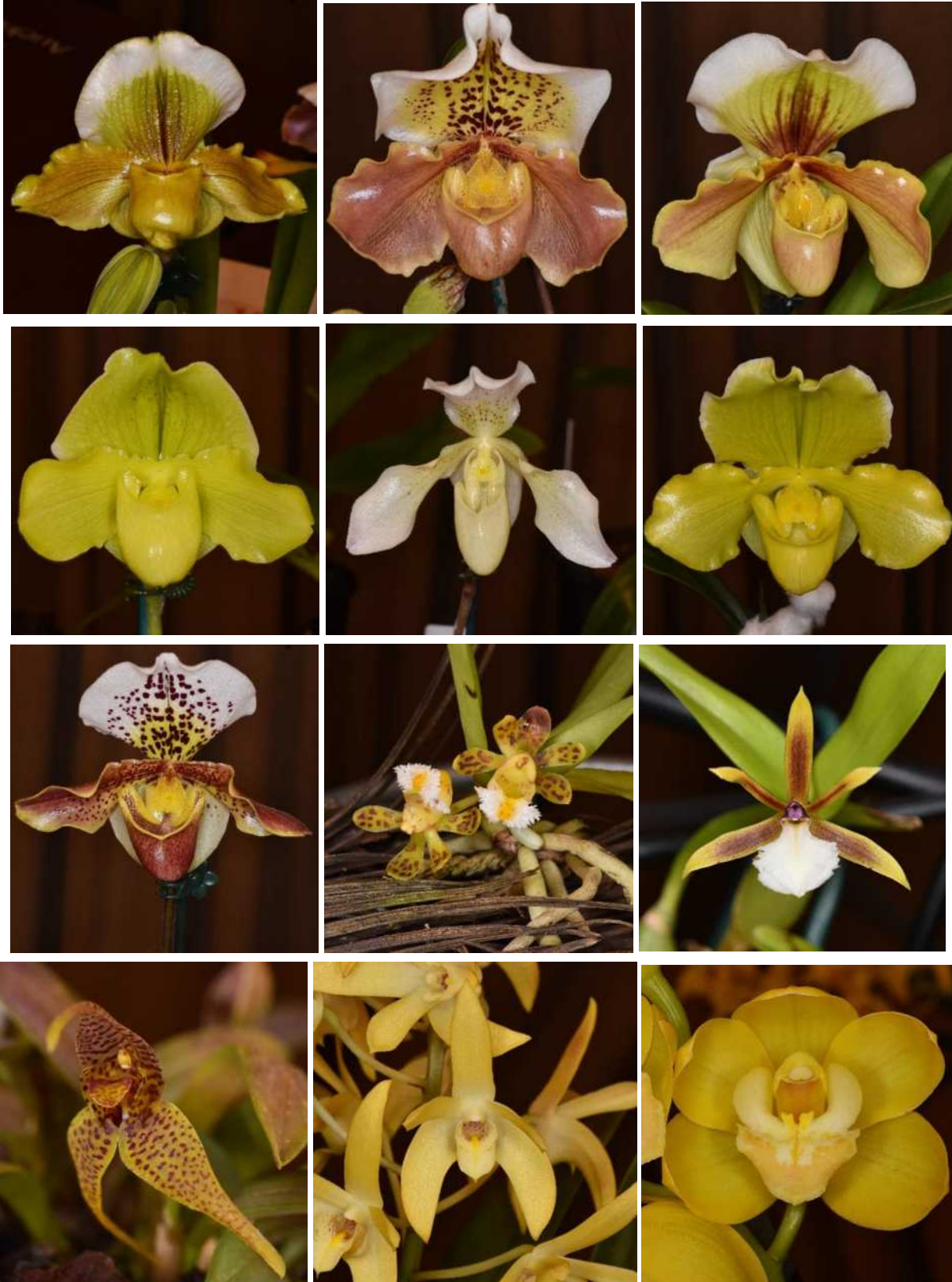


**Allan doing a commentary of the plants on display**

This was an informative night from Allan, and hopefully it gave people a bit more information and inspiration to attempt to grow a few different plants along with what they currently have.

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**Plants on display - compiled by Noel Townsley**





**Richard Legg**

Paph. Velimartini de Paris

Paph. Harbur 'Perfection'

Paph. Phips

Paph. San Francisco  
 Paph. Harbur 'Perfection'  
 Paph. Pavaroti  
 Paph. Poole 'Sundancer'  
 Paph. Burpham 'Penn Valley' x Star Scream

### **Lana Parsons**

Gastrochilus (Gchls.) *ruhilans*  
 Paph. Fumi's Delight  
 Dinema (Din.) *polybulbon*  
 Dryadella (Dda.) *zebrina*

### **Yvonne Tapsell**

Den. unknown  
 Den. Cassiope  
 Coel. *cristata*  
 Den. x *delicatum* 'Sunrae'  
 Den. Starbright Corona

**1<sup>st</sup>**

**3<sup>rd</sup>**

### **Noel Townsley**

Cuitlauzina (Cu.) *pulchella*  
 Onc. Sweet Sugar  
 Onc. Inquisitive Margot 'Violet's Shadow' HCC/NZOS  
 Mtdm. Guann Shin Pink Lady  
 c. Lindy-Lou

### **Ross & Susan Tucker**

Cym. Del's Delight  
 Den. Golden Arch  
 Onc. Papatoetoe Ann x sib  
 Onc. Twinkle 'Fantasy'

**2<sup>nd</sup>**

## **✳ NZOS DISPLAY AT THE WAITAKERE OC SHOW**

The NZOS put on a display at the recent Waitakere OC show. We had a good number of plants brought in by members, and so there was a wide variety of plants making up our display.





Hopefully many of you got along to the show and saw our display, and also the other plants on there as well.

It's very hard to get tired of looking at orchids.

## THE NZOS ANNUAL SPRING SHOW IS NEARLY HERE

Spring has sprung, and so now it is time for *our* annual **Spring Show**.

This will be held at the **Western Springs Garden Community Hall**.

Set up day will be Friday **13 September** with judging later on that day – refer to the show schedule accompanying the previous newsletter for full details.

And the show will be open to the public on Saturday **14 September** from 10am to 4pm.





We will of course need as many plants as possible to make the show a spectacle for the public.

★ *Plus, we will need help at setup, and during the show itself, so any time you can give here will be very much appreciated.*

You never know, one of those plants you bring along could end up being the Grand Champion, or even a class winner – after all someone has to win it, and, *if it isn't there, it can't win!*

And even if it isn't a winner, you can have the satisfaction of knowing that you have helped contribute to yet another great show, and maybe get more people enthused about growing orchids, just like us.



🌸 For this show, in an interesting coincidence, the Auckland Horticultural Council are having their Spring Show in the other hall, so I think we can expect to see a few more people than normal, who might want to take in both shows. To this end, we have been teaming up with the AHC, and hopefully the two shows being together, will bring in even more people. And if you want to see what things other people grow, that don't grow orchids – presumably there are some - then you might want to have a look at their show as well.

#### ✦ FROM THE INTERWEB:

### 'Holy grail' ghost orchid rediscovered in UK for the first time since 2009

Location of recently found sample of Britain's rarest plant kept secret to protect it from enthusiasts and poachers



The ghost orchid has no leaves and no chlorophyll, and feeds on nutrients from fungi that live underground. Photograph: Richard Bate

[Helena Horton](#) Environment reporter at The Guardian  
Tue 27 Aug 2024 11.55 BST

Britain's rarest plant, a "holy grail" orchid, has been rediscovered for the first time since 2009, and scientists are now working to protect it from slugs, deer – and poachers.

The ghost orchid was discovered earlier this month by Richard Bate, a dental surgeon, orchid lover and member of the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (BSBI).

Its location in England is now being kept secret to protect its sensitive underground parts from being trampled by enthusiasts who would flock to see it – or having its flower plucked by a poacher. Bate has spent 30 years searching deep, dark woodland in the hope of catching a glimpse of this rare flower.

Prof Ian Denholm, one of BSBI's two national expert referees on orchids, said: "[The] ghost orchid has long been the holy grail for British botanists. There was a brief flurry of records in the 1960s and 1970s, and I was lucky enough to see a single specimen in the mid-1980s. Since then, I reckon only six people have knowingly observed it in the wild in Britain. It is wonderful news that it has reappeared and let's hope it does again."

The flower, named for its otherworldly glowing white hue, was first recorded in Britain in Herefordshire in 1854. It appears rarely and in elusive places, and has been spotted in Britain only a few dozen times in the 170 years since. Experts declared it extinct in 2009 after it having been absent for 22 years, but the orchid defiantly appeared a week later. Until this month, it had not been seen since then.

Dr Kevin Walker, BSBI's head of science, said: "This is an outstanding discovery by Richard and is a fitting reward for his years of painstaking searching. Anyone who has tried and failed to see this enigmatic plant will know just how skilful and lucky you have to be to find them. They are incredibly hard to spot amongst the leaf litter and often only persist for a matter of hours or days, being avidly predated by all manner of creatures ranging from slugs to deer."

Found only in the deepest woodland, the orchid has no leaves and no chlorophyll so cannot photosynthesise. It feeds on nutrients from fungi that live underground, and because it does not need sunlight it mostly lives in the soil, rising to flower only in perfect conditions. In England it favours dark woodland of beech or oak but elsewhere in Europe it has also been found under pine trees.

Bate said: "Knowing that the ghost orchid is still here and hasn't gone extinct in Britain fills me with hope for the future of this species. This discovery reminds us that even in the darkest woods, there is always hope."

Ghost orchid sightings in Britain

- Herefordshire and Shropshire: Found flowering in only five years between 1854 and 1910, followed by a 72-year gap until 1982, and then a 27-year gap until the last sighting in 2009.
- Oxfordshire: Discovered by a schoolgirl in 1924, the ghost orchid was found flowering in about a dozen years between 1924 and 1979.
- Buckinghamshire: First found in 1953, the ghost orchid was recorded in bloom in 25 of the years between 1953 and 1987.

## 2024/2025 FUTURE PROGRAMME AND UPCOMING EVENTS

**14 September 2024** – NZOS Spring Show - Western Springs Garden Community Hall

**18 September 2024** – NZOS Meeting Night

**22 September 2024** – Waikato OS Spring Show

**29 September 2024** – North Shore OS Spring Show. *If anyone wishes to put their plants into this show, just email me, and I will send you a copy of their Show Schedule*

**16 October 2024** – NZOS Meeting Night

**19 October 2024** – Howick OS Show

**2-3 November 2024** – North Shore OS "Sarc" Show

**20 November 2024** – NZOS Meeting Night

**19 February 2025** – NZOS Meeting Night

**19 March 2025** – NZOS Meeting Night

**16 April 2025** – NZOS Meeting Night

**10 May 2025** – NZOS **Autumn Show** – Western Springs Garden Community Hall.

**21 May 2025** – NZOS Meeting Night

**18 June 2025** – NZOS Meeting Night

This is what irony means. You buy an electric car to save the planet and a tree kills it!

