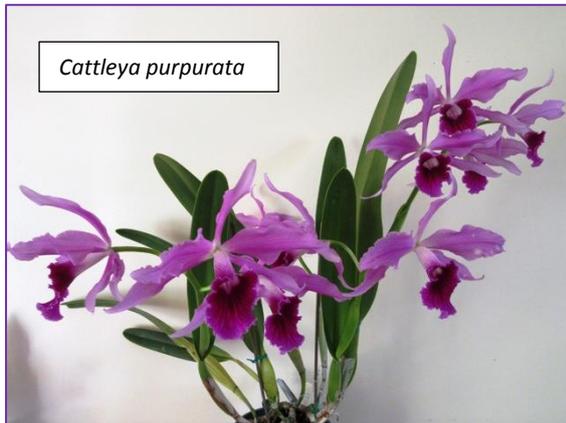


ORCHIDS IN SUMMER

Most orchid societies have a break over the summer period so there are some orchids that you rarely see on the benches because this is precisely the time that they come into bloom. The stars of the festive season would have to be *Laelia*, OK, now *Cattleya purpurata*. There are lots of different purpurata varieties and in Brazil, their home country, they have entire orchid shows devoted to this one species.



Cattleya purpurata

Laelia, OK, now *Cattleya tenabrosa* flowers at about the same time. These flowers are a good 200mm wide with deep bronzy petals and sepals and a brilliant purple lip. The three huge flowers made a stunning display in 2019.



Cattleya tenabrosa

Some of the other summer flowering orchids that I have include *Vanda falcata*, *Laelia speciosa*, *Vanda Rothschildiana*, a delicious chocolate smelling *stanhopea* and the dainty *Stenoglottis woodii* and Brian has lots of *Miltoniopsis*.



Stanhopea nigroviolacea



Vanda falcata



Vanda Rothschildiana



Laelia speciosa

An orchid grower we know once said he would only buy an orchid if it flowered at show time. These of mine may never make it to the show bench but they certainly give me a lot of pleasure over the summer.

Culture Tips for Summer

- For most orchids summer is the middle of the main growing season so keep up your watering and fertilising programme to ensure maximum growth for the next flowering season. If plants



Stenoglottis woodii

are under stress due to extreme heat wave conditions cut back on the fertiliser.

- Try to minimise heat stress by increasing shading and improving air movement. Orchids with large and/or thin leaves like stanhopeas generally need more shade than orchids with fleshy leaves.
- Keep moisture up to your plants, especially those that don't have pseudobulbs to store moisture; e.g phalaenopsis. Plants in baskets and on mounts can be watered daily. Misting might be necessary if we have prolonged hot, dry weather.
- Many orchids love high bright light but direct summer sunlight can burn orchid leaves, especially if there is residual water on them. Water very early or after the sun has moved off them if you keep them outside.
- Cooler-growing orchids may become stressed during the summer. Treat masdevallias, miltoniopsis and the cool-growing *Odontoglossum crispum* hybrids with special care. Additional misting and shading or hosing the floor of the growing area may help keep temperatures down.
- Watch for bacterial and fungal conditions as warm, humid weather is conducive to the spread of rots and diseases.
- Monitor for pests. Dendrobium beetles, scale, mites and other pests will be around and can cause a lot of damage if not controlled.
- Australian terrestrial orchid will lose their leaves and become dormant. They can be repotted once they are dormant.

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