



Tuckers Orchid Nursery

Presents...

Orchids for Everyone



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FROM ROSS THE BOSS

Welcome back –

Another year to look forward to and a bountiful year of orchids and orchid growing. This year had many highs and, unfortunately, lows to already be remembered for.

Our long time Production Manager, John, passed away after returning to work post the Christmas break (see Vale in later). He was a big part of our team, and was always there when he was needed.

This month's newsletter is about the Oncidiums, which are available in flower at the moment, and will be flowering over the next few months. Everybody has the easily grown *Onc flexuosum*, a bright yellow dancing lady with its myriad of flowers or one of its hybrids such as *Onc Sweet Sugar*.

Along with the above types we have collected numerous, highly scented, miniature type Oncidiums bred from the *Onc ornithorhynchum* and *Onc leucochilum* parents, to create a splash of colour and an aroma that is hard to miss at this time of the year. When we visited Taiwan last year, I took note of a grower of miniature orchids, who presented all his orchids in small ceramic pots, and many of his plants were these oncidiums of every colour (reds, pinks, yellows). They were petite plants, all looking great and colourful. Whilst we would walk past his stand numerous times during the show, you would always stop and always see another orchid that you had missed before – always very interesting. We were so impressed with this display, that not only did we import the plants, but we bought some of the pots as well. These small decorative pots especially for miniature orchids including the oncidium types mentioned. As we have a few spare these will be offered to our online orchid club members, but only in limited numbers, and on a first come, first served basis.

Due to an extremely busy pre-Christmas period we have too many empty benches, so we have bought a few more plants ex Brian Mooney of Otaki and ordered more flask Cattleyas from Fred Clark (California) and Roy Tokunaga (H&R) and from Taiwan, lots and lots of new Phally flasks, including many newer colours including oranges and greens. Watch for these to be released later this year.

Decorative Oncidiums:



Oncidiums in the decorative pots



Onc flexuosum



Onc flexuosum



Onc Sweet Sugar

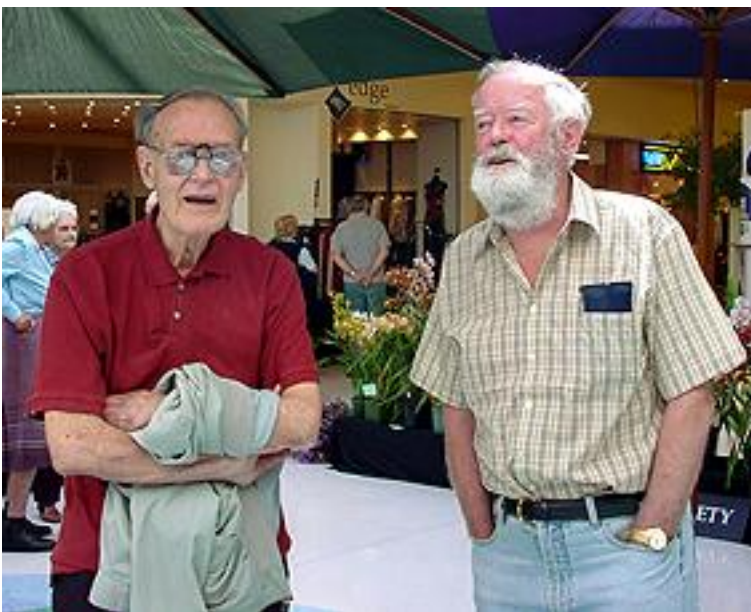
(Plants displayed in this section are for informational purposes only; we may not always have these plants in stock)

VALE
JOHN McCOLM (1933-2013)

John will be remembered for his dedication to his family and friends, and his work with orchids and orchid societies. He was an accredited judge with the NZOS and OCNZ, where he was also deputy chairman for the Auckland Region for many years, and a past president of the North Shore Orchid Society.

He has also worked for Tuckers Orchids for over 25 years, always preparing plants, repotting and growing the orchids. He will also be remembered as the older gentleman, who helped with the many questions about orchids, always giving freely of his advice on the culture and types of orchids available. I estimate that in his career growing orchids he would have potted up and cared for over 1 million orchid plants – not many growers can manage this feat of endurance and still look forward to seeing the newer orchids which are still being produced.

Ross Tucker



John in his element, discussing orchids at one of NSOS displays in Milford Mall



Dining with friends in France

CATS COMMENT:

I am very proud to have known John McColm. He has been a good friend for over 30 years. As a new member of North Shore Orchid Society, he and Joyce gave freely of their advice to this newbie, and I spent many days working with them on the trading tables at the orchid shows until eventually I had the courage to enter a few plants of my own. John was President of the society when I first joined the committee and I have many good memories of the annual Xmas BBQ. For the past two and a half years we have worked together at Tuckers Nursery and I will really miss his cheeky sense of humour and quiet dignity. He was a real gentleman. Rest in Peace John.



SPECIALS THIS MONTH:



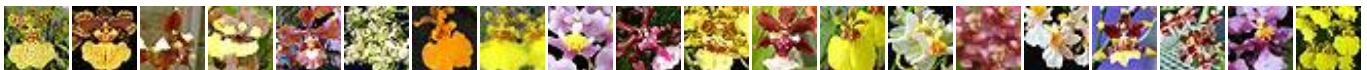
6 pack of Oncidiums size B	\$50 incl GST
6 pack of Oncidiums size C	\$90 incl GST
10 pack of Oncidiums size B	\$90 incl GST
9cm Ceramic pots – as pictured	\$10ea or set of 4 \$30 (mixed colours)
7cm oncidium in spike or flower & ceramic pot	\$30 incl GST
Dancing lady Oncidium in flower & ceramic pot	\$45 incl GST

These specials are now available for ordering through our website. Look for them in the Online Orchid Club category. Please let us know if you do not see this category option.

Included are free cultural notes and a special free gift (Delivery charges apply). To place an order you can email us at orchids@clear.net.nz or visit our website www.tuckersorchidnursery.co.nz to view our range. We are happy to send these orchids anywhere in NZ only.

ORCHIDWIZ

This is a computer program which is an alternative to the RHS Sander Books of all orchid registrations. It gives a breakdown of all the hybrid registrations in an easy to use format; species are also listed. Loads of photos are available for viewing as well. We are offering, on behalf of the NZOS, only 3 copies to our Online Orchid Club members (first come first served). The price is \$100 per copy plus postage. The usual price is \$US295 so it's a really good deal. If you are thinking about it - do it now as this is an excellent deal and they will go quick!



FEATURE OF THE MONTH – ONCIDIUMS

Oncidiums are one of the biggest genera, containing approx 750 species. Their range includes the whole of central and tropical America, from Florida to southern Argentina. Many of the species are found in Brazil, Ecuador, Peru and the Colombian Andes. They have a vast area of distribution, and an immense diversity of habitats, from sea level to about 4000m. Despite that, the majority of Oncidiums are tolerant plants and adapt to a variety of cultural techniques. As long as a few basic rules are followed it is quite easy to get superb results. Plants can vary in size from a few cm to more than a metre. The number of flowers is also highly variable, with a wide colour range, although yellow and brown predominate.

CULTURE OF ONCIDIUMS:

Oncidiums are another orchid which will grow along side your Cymbidiums. Generally, the culture of these plants is the same – small bark for small plants, and larger grades of bark for the larger plants. Water regularly every week with Tuckers Growing or Flowering Fertilizers.

Some plants, especially the *varicosum* or Dancing lady type, have the bulbs are joined together by a longish rhizome, and this can have the habit of each new bulb growing upwards. This gives the indication that these Oncidiums love to climb, either out of the pots or on slabs. Some growers are extremely successful with slab culture for Oncidiums and create magnificent displays. Our best effort has been with *Onc flexuosum*, grown on a slab for over 20 years and it flowers every year with over 20-30 stems and hundreds of flowers. It grows outdoors hanging on a plum tree and gets a little fertilizer now and again.

Keep the Twinkle types in small pots; they will flower in 7cm tubes in No 2 bark. Repot as the plant grows, but it will remain compact and flower its heart out.

Flowering times of Oncidiums are typical of other Odont alliance plants. When the growth matures, it flowers at any time of the year – sometimes several times a year.

Light: Oncidiums must be given plenty of light or flowering will be inhibited. Leaf colour should be light green and sometimes, may even have a pinkish tinge.

Watering: Oncidiums love it when there is a rapid alternation of wet and dry conditions. For this reason they often do well grown on slabs where they can be watered daily and dry rapidly. Most Oncidiums require a short rest period after flowering.

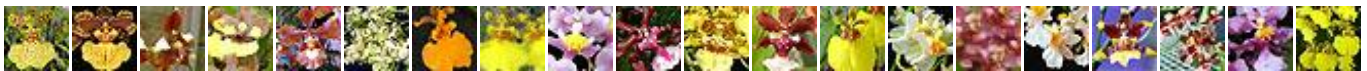
Feeding: They are not heavy feeders, but benefit from a weekly liquid feed of Tuckers Flowering Orchid food when they are growing rapidly. No feed is required during their rest phase.

Ventilation and Humidity: They like about 60% humidity and constantly moving air which quickly dries out their roots and prevents spotting of the flowers and leaves.

Temperature: Most will do very well in the intermediate greenhouse. A minimum night temperature of 12°C is average.

Repotting: Perforated plastic pots or clay pots are ideal as the roots can dry quickly. Bark mixes are usually satisfactory and keep the pots on the small side. Repotting can be yearly or every second year.

The above are general culture tips. The Oncidiums fall into four main cultural groups if you wish to be more specific.



Group	Characteristics or names	Light	Temps	Water	Examples
1	Oncidiums with Mottled leaves	Med	Warm	No rest period	<i>O papillio</i> <i>O kramerianum</i>
2	Onc with tender pseudobulbs like odonts	Med	Varies	No rest period	<i>O sphacelatum</i> <i>O varicosum</i> <i>O ornithorhynchum</i> <i>O macranthum</i>
3	Oncidiums without pseudobulbs or with atrophied pseudobulbs	Med	Int-Warm	Restrict severely after flowering	<i>O lanceanum</i> <i>O luridum</i> <i>O cavandisheanum</i> <i>O straminaum</i>
“	Equitant Oncidiums	Med	Cool-Int	Restrict severely after flowering	<i>O triquentrum</i> <i>O pulchellum</i>
“	Oncidium with rat tail leaves	High	Int	Absolute rest for 1 month at least after flowering	<i>O jonesianum</i> <i>O splendidum</i> <i>O stipitatum</i>
4	Oncidiums with hard round pseudobulbs	High- full sun	Cool-Int	No rest period. Essential to dry out between watering	<i>O cheirophorum</i> <i>O onustum (Zel)</i> <i>O tigrinum</i> <i>O maculatum</i>

SPOTLIGHT ON SPECIES: *Onc ornithorhynchum*

Onc ornithorhynchum is now also known as *Onc sotoanum* (much easier to say I reckon). Also called the Birds Beak Oncidium. It grows naturally in northern Central America in humid rainforests at altitudes up to 1500m. It is epiphytic and likes a slightly drier period in winter. The flowers can vary from white to varying shades of pink each with a bright yellow callus on the labellum. It is very easy to grow. Multiple spikes per bulb can be expected on a well grown plant. Strongly perfumed.

Notable hybrids of *Onc ornithorhynchum* are (courtesy of OrchidWiz):

Onc Twinkle (x *Onc cheirophorum*) – We have white, pink & red forms

Onc Rosy Sunset (x *Onc Pupukea Sunset*) – Apricot pink

Onc Jamie Sutton (x *Onc anthrocrene*) – Jamie Sutton is the parent of Onc Sharry Baby – We have red & white, red and orange forms available of this famous cross(Sharry Baby) – very highly scented

Onc Pacific Sunrise – (x Hawaiian Sunset) – Creamy pink

Onc Ruth's Rainbow (x *Onc Sphacetante*) – Pink and red some flowering size

Onc Gold Dust (*Onc Twinkle* x *cheirophorum*) – Varies from cream to bright gold

Onc Tsiku Marguerite (x *Onc Twinkle*) – Varies from cream to apricot to pink



Onc ornithorhynchum



Onc Twinkle
'Fragrance Fantasy'



Onc Twinkle
'Weston'



Onc Sharry Baby
'Sweet Fragrance'



Onc Pacific Sunrise
'Halakua'



Onc Ruth's Rainbow



Onc Gold Dust



Onc Tsiku Marguerite

WHERE WE ARE OUT AND ABOUT THIS MONTH:

Waitakere Orchid Club Ribbon Show – Whenuapai Hall

Home & Garden Show – North Shore Event Centre

23rd February

22nd - 24th March

HOW TO FIND US

Directions: Exit Northern Motorway at Oteha Valley Road. Turn east onto Oteha Valley Road, travel straight through two roundabouts. You will encounter a significant intersection with traffic lights – this is East Coast Road. Turn left or northwards onto East Coast Road. From this point we are approximately 4km on the left-hand side.

Next Month we will be focusing on: Cattleyas

Please note, the photos of plants shown in our newsletter are a mixture of breeding plants, plants we have seen in our travels and plants we have for sale. Not all of the plants that are displayed in our newsletter are available as plants for sale. Please check our website for details of what plants we have for sale. We do, however, welcome requests for plants that are not listed on our website as we may be able to supply them or something very similar.