



# Tuckers Orchid Nursery

*Presents...*

## Orchids for Everyone



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### FROM ROSS THE BOSS

#### Welcome back –

Well, the weather has finally broken and the rain has arrived. The weather is getting cooler so slow down your feeding and watering regime.

I have to say, I really enjoyed this weekends' show, and the lectures given by Roy Tokunaga from H & R Nurseries in Hawaii.

He presented so much useful information, on how to improve your growing of orchids very easily and quickly, from his over 30 years of research and development at his world class nursery.

During his lectures, information was passed on to whoever was prepared to listen, and around 80 people took advantage of the free lecture programme presented by the New Zealand Orchid Society. At the same venue and time we held our annual one day Autumn show. At several times during the show I decided to count the attendance, and at one time there was over 100 in the hall and when the lectures were on, over 50 public were admiring the orchids – around 200 plants on display, and purchasing Roy's flasks and plants from our members.

Well, now it is your chance to take advantage of all that free information and even some of Roy's Special flasks. For this month only some of Roy's flasks will be offered to Orchid Club members before being deflasked, and then we will have plants to offer later in the year.

Now, the latest results of Roy's research are that bark mediums change their pH as early as 3 months and then by 9 months they can be toxic to the roots. At a pH of 4.5 the roots of orchids slow down absorbing all that fertilizer you are applying. So the very easy answer to your problem is – if you do nothing else this year to your orchids – apply 'the right grade' Dolomite or Dolomag lime to your plants. Just a sprinkle around the top of the pots then you water it in, once now and maybe once again in 6 months time – even just applying it to the roots if your plant is on a slab or tree etc. We are able to supply you with the miracle grade Dolomag – enough to fertilize most small collections once or twice. See our special offer along with Roy's flask offer.

This Autumn Show weekend will be one of the highlights of the orchid calendar, so book yourself in for next year's event, and as it was a successful one, it will be sure to be on again.

As promised, this months' newsletter is on Miltonias, a genera that is usually extremely hard to obtain, so is in tremendous demand. Now we have a great range of clones to choose from. We have good numbers of most clones so don't hold back waiting and plenty for all our orchid club members. Some of the attractive Brazilian Miltonias flowering at the moment



Milt clowesii



Milt spectabilis  
var morliana



Milt regenellii



Milt bluntii



Odtina Marie Elle

## CATS COMMENT:

I've always liked Miltonias, and have mostly found them relatively easy to grow and flower. They usually produce two spikes per bulb with 2-5 flowers per spike. The flowers last a really long time on the plant, but never try to cut them and put in a vase as they will collapse very quickly. The flowers are usually highly scented during the daylight hours. In the good old days when CITES and phytosanitary certificates were not heard of, I imported 3 tiny flasks of Miltonias from Jungle Gems in the US after seeing the adverts in the AOS bulletins– I think they were US\$10 each, and I eventually flowered most of them, and they were just lovely, a deep red Jean Sabourin 'Vulcain', soft pink Emotion 'Monte Carlo', and brighter pink Gascogne 'Vienne'. The Columbian Miltoniopsis (Mps vexillaria types) can be grown with other Odonts/Oncids in the summer, keeping them well watered, but in winter I grow them a little warmer and brighter, more like a cattleya. Brighter light encourages good flowering. Some varieties will flower twice a year. The Brazilian Miltonias (Milt spectabilis types) like a short winter rest after flowering which is usually in the autumn.

# Happy Mother's Day

## SPECIALS THIS MONTH:

6 pack of Miltonias size B  
10 pack of Miltonias size B

\$50 incl GST  
\$90 incl GST

Dolomag 300g 'The right grade'

\$8 incl GST

Calcium and Magnesium for orchids – larger quantities on application

Slug Out also available on request.

See our website for Roy's list of flasks – NB only 1 or 2 flasks of each type available

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](mailto:orchids@clear.net.nz) or visit our website [www.tuckersorchidnursery.co.nz](http://www.tuckersorchidnursery.co.nz) to view our range. We are happy to send these orchids anywhere in NZ only.



## FEATURE OF THE MONTH – MILTONIAS

There are two main types of Miltonias. The Brazilian Miltonias have bright green leaves and a med to long rhizome between bulbs. The Columbian Miltoniopsis have softer leaves and bulbs of a light apple green or grayish green colouration.

Miltonias (Milt) - There are 20 to 21 species in this genus ranging through Brazil and into Peru. They have 1 or 2 leaves on the pseudobulbs and the spike arises from between the leaf sheaths. They have large flat flowers with no calluses or spurs on the lip. They can grow well in pots or they can be mounted to tree fern. They are a part of the Oncidium Alliance and are often used in breeding.

Miltoniopsis (Mps) – Commonly known as the pansy orchids - These are 5 to 6 species taken from Miltonia that all come from Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Venezuela and Peru and differ from Miltonia by its one leafed pseudobulbs and its short column which is united to the lip through a keel. Also, the flattened pseudobulbs of Miltoniopsis are tightly clustered while those of most Miltonia are widely separated by a long rhizome. For hybridizing purposes Miltoniopsis is listed under Miltonia. They should be given good shade and humidity and watered often while growing and less as growth slows.

The three species that have been primarily used in developing the modern hybrids are found in Colombia, Ecuador, and Panama. They grow in locations that range from hot, humid lowlands for *Mps. roezlii*, to relatively cool, humid cloud-forests for *Mps. vexillaria*, while *Mps. phalaenopsis* is found in humid forests about halfway between these extremes. The important word in all cases is humid, as moisture is available most of the year from rainfall, mist, or heavy deposits of dew. Moisture must be supplied at all times.



## CULTURE OF MILTONIAS:

**Light:** Miltonias must be given plenty of light for flowering to be optimum. Leaf colour should be light green and sometimes, may even have a pinkish tinge.

**Watering:** Water must be supplied at all times. Do not let them dry out completely even when resting. A light misting will be beneficial at these times. Aim to keep the mix evenly moist if at all possible. A sign that you have under watered is the accordion like pleating of new leaves. This may also occur if the root system is damaged. Either way it is a sign that the plant is not able to get enough water.

**Feeding:** They are not heavy feeders, but benefit from a weekly liquid feed of Tuckers Flowering Orchid Food.

**Ventilation and Humidity:** They like about 60% humidity and constantly moving air which prevents fungal spotting of the flowers and leaves.

**Temperature:** Most will do very well in the cool - intermediate greenhouse. A minimum night temperature of 12°C is advised in Winter.

**Repotting:** Plastic pots are fine for the Miltonias. Bark mixes are usually satisfactory and keep the pots on the small side. Repotting is advised yearly to keep the mix fresh.



## ROY'S HELPFUL TIPS

1. Use the 'right grade' of Dolomag as a sprinkle around the top of your pots or half a teaspoon per litre of water (this will settle very quickly so keep stirring).
2. You will notice a change of colour in your plants in 3-4 weeks, and an increase in root production up to 4 times the amount of root growth, and much longer green root tips.
3. These juicy green tips will attract our NZ bush snail and garlic snails. They will harvest (eat) your root tips overnight – there one day and gone the next – so purchase some small snail bait of Measuroil and crush it up (careful it's poisonous) or use Slug Out – these are very fine granules so use about 6-8 grains per 13cm pot. 'Prevention is better than a cure'. Ask about small quantities if you need it.
4. Keep your normal fertilizer programme going all year using either Tuckers Growing Orchid Tucker for small plants, or Flowering Orchid Tucker for flowering plants, or Moth Orchid Tucker for Phallies.
5. When you have a very large, healthy plant with mature bulbs etc, and you think your plant is ready to flower. Give it a shot of Calcium Nitrate ( $\text{CaNO}^3$ ), again at the rate of half a teaspoon per litre just once on all plants that are ready to spike. This apparently helps in spike and flower production.
6. The main technical reason why calcium is now recommended at 8% (look for a fertilizer N,P,K Ca 8), is that Roy's research had found that simply, the plant uses Calcium as a building block for cells, but can't recover it and move it around the plant freely, so it always has to be available to the plant for new cell building.

Maybe over the next few months we will discuss more of Roy's important knowledge in growing better and better orchids.

Thanks very much to Roy for all his excellent information freely given.

## SPOTLIGHT ON SPECIES: *Mps vexillaria*

This is the species that all the Miltoniopsis breeding is based on. It is an upright, small sized, cool – int growing epiphyte found in Columbia and northern Ecuador. It is found predominately at 1000-2200m altitude at the edges of very wet cloud forest. The bulbs and leaves are pale grey/green and it flowers in spring and autumn carrying 3-6 flowers per spike in a colour range from purest white to deep rose pink.

We have a number of Miltoniopsis and related genera mericlones to tempt you with this month. They can be ordered through our website in the member's only section. Please note these are only in B size at the present time. See photos below. (*Mps vexillaria* not available)



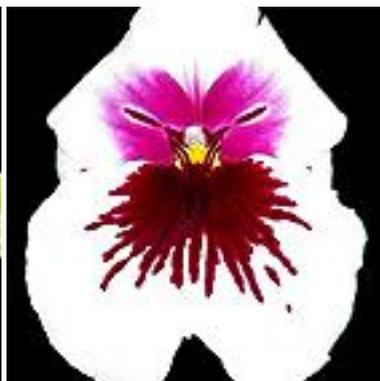
Milt vexillaria  
(Not for sale)



Mps Rene Komoda  
'Pacific Clouds'



Mps Andrea West  
'Wild Wild West'



Mps Robert Jackson  
'Wild Thing'



Mps Bert Field  
'Crimson Glow'



Odtna Papageno  
'Mi Amour'



Vuyl Esprit  
'Big and Bold'



Bllra Big Shot  
'Kitty Kat'

## WHERE WE ARE OUT AND ABOUT THIS MONTH:

All quiet for the next few weeks. Time to concentrate on growing the plants well.



Next Month we will be focusing on: Phalaenopsis

Dtps Chian Xen Pearl

*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.*