

President's report

Hi Members

The hot weather is upon us, hopefully your collection is handling the conditions and putting on lots of new growth. We started off the new year with **a great New Growers meeting at Ruth and Peter Griffiths** (page 7). Ruth has a small collection (at this stage), with plans for expansion. We all enjoyed ourselves looking over their property in Tewantin, with lots of advice and ideas. In fact, they were heading off after our February meeting to buy another shade house! Looks like Ruth has caught the orchid bug.

Our **February meeting** was well attended, with lots of beautiful plants benched. We were fortunate to have **Jennifer Ison from Red Fox Orchids** (page 10) give us a **demonstration of cattleya re-potting** which was followed by **a hands-on workshop with each member receiving a plant to be re-potted and taken home**. Looking at the labels, it appears there was a wide variety of interesting crosses; we can look forward to seeing some beautiful flowering plants at future meetings.

Our **next meeting on March 7** will also feature **a re-potting workshop**. This will be the opportunity for you to **bring those difficult re-potting problems for the 'experts' to help you decide what to do, and then to have the courage to do it**. We all face that quandary – do I divide it? And if so, where and how? Should I cut off those roots that have escaped the pot? How many of the back bulbs should be left? How do I decide which roots to remove? etc. etc.

Bring along your plant(s), pot(s) and secateurs, stakes etc. The club will provide the potting mix. And see Julie's research on **experts' potting mix blends** (page 8-9).

The **next New Growers and Species meeting** will be held at **our place on Saturday March 21st**. Julie will send out details by email, but as always this will be an opportunity to **bring those problem plants for advice** – why do the leaves look so sick? Why does it appear to be rotting? Why won't it flower? Can it be salvaged and if so, how? Etc. As well as my orchid collection, **Cheryl is happy to show her collection of foliage and succulents**, and David his collection of aroids and anthuriums.

If you would like to host a New Growers meeting at your house Julie would love to hear from you. The host always benefits from the ideas and suggestions of the members, and likewise the visitors always pick up a handy idea or two. It truly is a win: win.

Regards,

Trevor Cook



Calendar of events 2026

March

7	NDOFS meeting – repotting your problem orchid – bring plant, secateurs, new pot (mix supplied)	Tinbeerwah Hall
7-8	QOS Autumn Orchid Show	Belmont International Shooting Complex, Old Cleveland Road
21	New Growers & Species meeting Bring chair and mug	Trevor and Cheryl Cook TBA
21	Maroochydore Orchid Society (closed) Show	Buderim Uniting Church

April

4	NDOFS meeting – Rob Trost from RoLin Orchids, on growing orchids on mounts	Tinbeerwah Hall
11	Glasshouse Country Orchid Society Autumn Show	Glasshouse Community Hall, 8 Coonowrin Road
17-18	Sunshine Coast Orchid Society Show	Uniting Church Hall, Queen Street, Caloundra
17-18	Childers & Isis District Autumn Show	Isis Cultural Centre, Churchill Street Isis
18	New Growers & Species meeting	Ian Skipworth TBA

May

2	NDOFS meeting – preparation for Mother's Day Show	Tinbeerwah Hall
2-3	Gympie & District Orchid Society Show	Indoor Bowls Club Hall
7	(set up, benching)	Cooroy Memorial Hall
8-9	Mother's Day Show	
9	Maroochydore Orchid Society (closed) Show	Bli Bli



**Welcome to new member
Marian Postma**

JUDGES' CHOICE February 2026

Mini Cattleya under 70mm
Rlc. Dendi's Perfection 'John'
 J Simmons



Cattleya Interm. 70-100mm
Lc. Cariads Mini Quinnie
 L Walters



Cattleya Exhibition over 100mm
Rlc. Chief Journey 'First Choice'
 T & C Cook



Cattleya Cluster
Pcv. Golden Peacock
 J Cruici



Cattleya Novelty
Rlc. Jungle Jimbalaya 'Troppo John'
 J Cruici



Dendrobium Alliance
Den. alexand X Den. spectabile
 D Hunter



Species Asian
Coel. macrantha
 L Walters



Species American
Rdza venusta
 T & C Cook



Vanda Alliance
Aranda. Madame Panni
 K & A McGregor



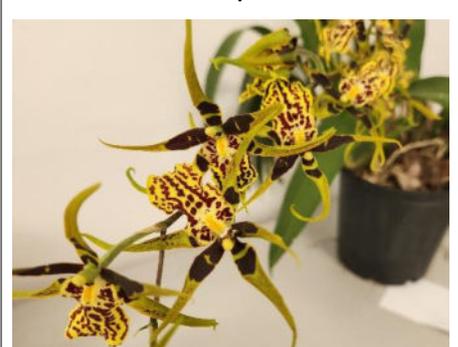
Oncidium Alliance
Onc. Everglades 'Elegance'
 D Phillips



Other Genera
Cl. Thylaciochila X Ctsm Tigrium
 J & G Menkens



Novice
Brat. Unknown
 J Blyth



Bromeliad

R. Sincoreglia Ralf Davis
J & G Menkens



Anthurium

Anthurium Black Beauty
T & C Cook



Ferns

Phlegi Mt Hagen PNG
D Hunter



Foliage

Syngonium 'Mini Pixie'
T & C Cook



WELCOME TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

We couldn't operate without members stepping up to help with running the society, setting up and working during our shows, bringing cakes and making our afternoon teas after meetings and morning teas for growers' meetings, carrying in library books to share information, cleaning up after meetings and the many other ways that keep us operating.

Thank you all.

NDOFS Committee Position 2026	Incumbent
President	Trevor Cook
Vice-President	Bev Prideaux
Secretary	Julie Menkens
Treasurer	Ian Skipworth
Newsletter Editor, Publicity	Fay Knight
Show Organiser	Gav Menkens
Committee Member	Dave Lyons Don Black
Events Coordinator (bus trips etc.)	Dave Lyons



ABOVE: At Ruth Griffith's New Growers' morning, John Simmons brought in a number of plants, including this little phaius he rescued as a tiny shoot from the Noosa Botanic Gardens, and will grow on until it's big enough to return.

POPULAR VOTE February 2026

CLASS	1ST	2ND	3RD
Mini Cattleya Under 70mm	<i>Rlc. Dendi's Perfection 'John'</i> J Simmons	<i>Bc. Yellow Bird</i> T & C Cook	–
Cattleya Intermediate 70-100mm	<i>Lc. Cariads Mini Quinnie</i> L Walters	<i>Bc. Jairak Kiku</i> J & C Cook	<i>Bc. Morning Glory</i> T & C Cook
Cattleya Exhibition over 100mm	<i>Rlc. Chief Journey 'First Choice'</i> T & C Cook	<i>Rlc. Pine Valley Perfection</i> B Quinn	–
Cattleya Cluster	<i>Pcv. Golden Peacock</i> J Cruici <i>Rlc. Hawaiian Passion</i> J & G Menkens	<i>Ctt. Towering Inferno</i> T & D Lyons	–
Cattleya Novelty	<i>Rlc. Jungle Jimbalaya 'Troppo John'</i> J Cruici	<i>C. Caudebec Candy X B. Nodosa</i> L Walters	<i>Pcv. Golden Peacock X Bc. Richard Meuller X Psh. Vitellina</i> S Morrell
Dendrobium Alliance	<i>Den. alexand X Den. spectabile</i> D Hunter	–	–
Australian Natives	–	–	–
Species Asian	<i>Cym. dayanum</i> D Phillips	<i>Coel. macrantha</i> L Walters	<i>Dendrochilum latifolium</i> B Prideaux
Species American	<i>Rdza venusta</i> T & C Cook	<i>Gur bowringiana 'Blue Angel'</i> T & C Cook	–
Phalaenopsis	–	–	–
Vanda Alliance	<i>Rhy. Coelestis</i> J Cruici	<i>Aranda. Madame Panni</i> K & A McGregor	<i>Ascda. Mokara Ruby</i> K & A McGregor
Oncidium Alliance	<i>Onc. Tsiku Marguerite '</i> T & C Cook <i>Onc. Everglades 'Elegance'</i> D Phillips	<i>Brat. Royal Robe</i> D Phillips	<i>Odontonia Pacific Paranoia</i> T & D Lyons
Cymbidium	–	–	–
Other Genera	<i>Cl. Thylaciochila X Ctsm Tigrium</i> J & G Menkens	–	–
Epidendrum	–	–	–
Novice	<i>Brat. Unknown</i> J Blyth	–	–

Bromeliad	Cryptanthus Zebra Earthstar G & A Gibson	Tillandsia Juncifolia Red J & G Menkens	Tillandsia J & G Menkens
	R. Sincoreglia Ralf Davis J & G Menkens		
Anthurium	Anthurium Black Beauty T & C Cook	Anthurium J & G Menkens	Anthurium Andreanum T & D Lyons
Ferns	Nephrolepis Cotton Candy T & C Cook	Nephrolepis Cotton Candy S Morrell	Polypodium Fallax J & G Menkens
	Phlegi Mt Hagen PNG D Hunter		
Foliage	Syngonium 'Mini Pixie' T & C Cook	Begonia Eyelash G & A Gibson	Caladium G & A Gibson

Plant of the month: Syngonium Mini Pixie

This is Cheryl's plant which she has had for seven years now. She has made a number of divisions during that time, but kept the original plant which has filled out this large pot as a specimen.

She says it is very easy to care for, and unlike many syngoniums, it is well behaved and does not take over. The particular clone Cheryl found is very low-growing, making it an ideal pot plant or understorey grower. Other clones of this variety tend to be taller, up to 300mm.

She grows it in a bush house under 50 per cent shade cloth, and gives it very little attention. It seems to be free of the usual pests and diseases we find here on the Sunshine Coast.

I fertilise it each week (twice a week in summer) when I am feeding my orchids with very diluted orchid food and Seasol.

Cheryl uses the same potting mix as for her anthuriums. We buy bulk potting mix from The Yard, to which I add 20 per cent coir peat, 10 per cent medium Perlite and a good dose of six-months Floracote. I make this up for her for all her pot plants, except the succulents and begonias.

Trevor Cook



A new grower starts the year with lots of advice

The first New Growers meeting for the year was popular despite the hot day, and members sat in the shade at Ruth (centre) and Peter Griffith's Tewantin property.

Ruth is a relatively new member and is keen to know more about orchids in a sub-tropical climate. She had to leave the big southern cymbidiums behind when they moved north, and just had her small collection on the day, but we predict orchid numbers will soon multiply,

We all enjoyed the species and problem plant talks and the morning tea. Thanks Ruth. **Fay Knight**



What is the BEST Potting Media to use? - The most asked question by orchid growers!

(Comments and summary by **Julie Menkens Feb 2026** are my opinion only from my experiences.

TIP – always talk to different experienced growers)

I asked some experienced growers and nurseries what mix they use:

John Green

I use 6 parts 25mm Kiwi bark, 2 parts the same size charcoal and 2 parts clay balls. That is for all pots over 125mm. Pots smaller than 125mm I use a 15mm mix at the same rates. For the Bulbophyllums I use 15mm composted bark as it retains more moisture. I use slow-release fertiliser on all pots. The majority of our plants get reported every 2 years.

Darryl Banks

Mostly its kiwi orchid bark 3 parts and perlite 1 part...size of bark varies on two factors

Size of pot...as pot gets bigger bark increases in size

Size of roots...the finer the roots the finer mix.

Cym and zygos

3 parts coir 1 part perlite

Also used for some oncidids that want more moisture

Paphs and phrags

3 parts bark 1 part perlite 1 part charcoal....again size of bark and charcoal varies with pot size

Orchid Mania

All vanda types go into Orchid bark 18-25mm, everything else goes into a mix of 50% Super Coarse Perlite & 50% 12-18mm Orchid bark.

We are lucky that our shade house gets lots of natural light and good air flow. Most plants are under 50% Hailguard, the seedlings are under a Solarweave roof.

When we de-flask, most seedlings go into the Quick Plugs, but we find the vanda types are just as good going straight into 70mm squat pots.

John Robertson

When we visited John's nursery, he demonstrated repotting cattleya, dendrobium and phalaenopsis. He uses a basic bark mix with some coir chips added for the orchids that need a bit more moisture, such as soft cane dendrobiums.

Sam Cowie

For all those members who attended the special meeting at Trevor and Cheryl Cook's place, you would have seen Sam's mix we used to repot oncidiums. It was a mix of 60/40 coir, coir chip and perlite.

Keith Gowlett

Coir chip and perlite mix for his soft cane dendrobiums.

Red Fox

For all members who attended our February meeting you would have seen Jen mix up the potting media for repotting cattleyas. >>> over

50/50 bark perlite

Bark – 12-18 or 18-25

Larger bark = better drainage

Perlite - Super course

- increases aeration and drainage, Aids in drainage
- Absorbent -absorbs the fertilizer and releasing it *slowly* back to the plant
- Balances Acidity – neutralizing agent
- Eliminates bacteria and odours
- prevents the buildup of excess salts
- prevents compaction

Charcoal – 10% of your mix (optional)

- Aids in drainage
- Absorbent -absorbs the fertilizer and releasing it *slowly* back to the plant
- Balances Acidity – neutralizing agent
- Eliminates bacteria and odours
- prevents the buildup of excess salts

David Hunter

NOTE ALL RATIOS ARE BY VOLUME **NOT** WEIGHT

Tassel Fern Potting Mix

1 x Jumbo Perlite. 25%

1 x Coco Peat Chunks, no fines. 25%

2 x Pine Bark (50/50 medium/small). 50%

Summary

A good place to start is a basic kiwi bark, perlite & charcoal mix then from there you will discover what suits YOUR growing conditions (light & position) + YOUR watering & fertiliser regime AND what genera of orchid you are growing.

Julie's comment

As most of you know I have switched to growing some of my orchids in LECA balls because they suit my regime (I am a self-confessed over waterer). At first, I killed oncidiums, in frustration I took them out of the perfect place, my shade house or so I thought and put them outside underneath my vandas and wow I was surprised how well they grew there! It's all trial and error.

Where to buy supplies

Orchideaceous sell bagged potting mix & the ingredients to mix your own – They attend Orchid Shows on the Sunshine Coast.

Brisbane Orchid Supplies sell similar products – They attend Orchid Shows in the Brisbane area.

Red Fox Orchids sell 10l bagged potting mix for different genera.

Fernlands sell bulk quantities of bark, charcoal & perlite plus all other supplies needed for orchid growing. *Tell them you are a member of NDOFS and you will receive a discount.*

Club members pot on Red Fox cattis to take home



Jennifer Ison (*above*) from Red Fox Orchids gave a repotting demonstration at our February meeting, and then every member potted up their own new cattleya to take home and grow. Jennifer also demonstrated a couple of ways to keep cattleyas firmly in their new pots (*top right*) with stakes.

Fay Knight

