



## Message from the President

Happy New Year to everyone. I do not recall making any Clivia-related New Year resolutions, but quite a few possibilities spring to mind: producing better flowering umbels and exciting first flowers, growing healthy plants and seedlings, and growing more shade shrubs and trees for the Clivia on the one hand, and, on the other, experiencing fewer problems and maybe even growing fewer seeds. Hybridizing Clivia is exciting and actually quite easy, so one can soon end up with countless number of seedlings and plants. I have continued to enjoy a few flowers over the summer period to date of the odd *C. miniata* or interspecifics involving *C. miniata* with *C. caulescens*, *C. nobilis* or *C. x cyrtanthiflora*. The temptation not to do a little pollination is too great once nice flowers emerge.

I usually enjoy leisurely reading and re-reading the yearbook of the South African-based international Clivia Society over the Christmas break period, but this year its late arrival meant that this pleasure did not occur. I hear that it is an interesting volume and that it is expected to arrive late January. Anyone interested in joining this worthwhile society should contact Ken Smith by email ([cliviasmith@idx.com.au](mailto:cliviasmith@idx.com.au)) or ask us for Ken's phone number.

The MCG looks forward to the active participation of a growing number of members, and especially hopes that more people can attend our bimonthly (then monthly) meetings, especially those living in or near Melbourne. There are various tasks to undertake during the year, including attending other garden clubs as speakers and of course extra preparation for our own CLIVIA EXPO, scheduled for Saturday 22 September.

Cultural practices relating to Clivia seem to vary quite dramatically, and we have even seen this within our small group. On hot days, I often wonder if it is best to give the plants in pots a light spray of water on their foliage (as some people recommend) or else keep them dry and water only as "normal" (as others say). One of the benefits of a group such as the MCG is that members can network with others who possess a wide variety of expertise and experience. Even so, most of us engage in quite bit of "trial and error", sometimes forced upon us when regular supplies, such as potting mix, changes. Last year I had many problems with a new brand of sphagnum moss in which I germinated my seeds, so am now trialing a method of sowing directly into potting mix, following the advice of one of our long-term growers.

Our membership is a diverse group and we are delighted to welcome back a commercial grower of Clivia, Chris Christou, to address the 17 February meeting (7:30pm, Uniting Church, cnr Burwood Highway and Blackburn Road, Burwood) on Clivia breeding. This meeting is the Annual General Meeting of the group and procedures for nomination of committee members was contained in the last newsletter of 2011. Bookings for the special tour of the nursery of the Royal Botanic Gardens on 30 March at 11:00 should be made at this meeting with the secretary.

We look forward to seeing many of you on 17 February.

Helen Marriott



## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL PROCEDURE

Fill out a membership renewal application form.

Please choose either \$15 for emailed newsletter or \$20 for posted newsletter.

Membership forms will be sent to those who receive this newsletter by post.

Membership forms can be downloaded from the website for those that receive their newsletters electronically.

For payment by cash, cheque or postal order.

Post completed application with payment to Melbourne Clivia Group

PO Box 811

Lilydale

Vic 3140

For payment by Direct Bank Deposit

Email completed application to [bbrigade1@hotmail.com](mailto:bbrigade1@hotmail.com)

Deposit payment into account Melbourne Clivia Group BSB 083 657 Acc No 829745477

Renewals will be accepted at the AGM.



## Editor's Message

## Events & Contacts

The committee would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year and a wonderful 2012.

We are looking forward to a great year with the MCG, and we hope to provide a wealth of interesting topics for you all this year.

The AGM will be held on February 17<sup>th</sup>, our first meeting for the year, and we encourage as many as possible to attend.

### VALE

Nick Primich, one of the original founders of the Clivia Society in South Africa passed away in September 2011.

His family kept the news private until recently.

Nick Primich published the first issue of the Clivia Quarterly Newsletter in 1992, and by September 1994, the Clivia Club had 94 members. The Clivia Society, as it now is called, has blossomed into clubs all over the world, and the club is now the International Register for Clivia cultivars. This was surely beyond his wildest dreams, when he and a few friends, who included Kevin Walters from Toowoomba, began with a small coterie of enthusiasts only twenty years ago.

### FEATURE FLOWER



A beautiful green throat clivia owned by a member of the Melbourne Clivia Group.



**Pine Mountain Nursery**

For quality clivias for the discerning buyer and collector, from seed to advanced plants, visit [www.pinemountainnursery.com.au](http://www.pinemountainnursery.com.au)

### FROM THE TRADING TABLE

If you have any spare seeds, seedlings or plants that you would like to sell, just bring them to the meeting so I can try to sell them for you. Seeds can be in lots of 5 in small bags or any other way you like, but these must be labelled. Seedlings and plants need to be labelled as well. If you don't have a TT-form, I will have plenty of spares on the night.

George



The Trading Table run by George, with an array of clivias for sale.

OUR ADDRESS  
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[www.melbournecliviagroup.org.au](http://www.melbournecliviagroup.org.au)  
[secretary@melbournecliviagroup.org.au](mailto:secretary@melbournecliviagroup.org.au)

**NEXT MEETING**  
Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2012  
7.30 pm  
Uniting Church,  
Cnr Burwood Hwy & Blackburn Rd,  
Burwood

**AGM**  
Chris Christou - Clivia breeding

30 March 2012 - 11:00 - 12:00 hours - Tour of Royal Botanic Gardens Nursery led by Dermot Molloy. Limit of 12 members - book at February meeting.

20 April 2012 - TBC

15 June 2012 - Interspecific Workshop

20 July 2012 - Potting Mixes

17 August - Workshop for CLIVIA EXPO

22 September 2012 CLIVIA EXPO

19 October 2012 - Talk by Stephen Ryan TBC

November End of Year - TBC

**COMMITTEE**  
Helen Marriott  
- President  
Di Mathews  
- Vice-president  
Erika Van Der Spuy  
- Secretary  
Rae Begg  
- Treasurer  
George Simmler  
- Committee member  
Brenda Girdlestone  
- Committee member

Melbourne Clivia Group Phone Number - 0410 929 510

Please let us know if you have any other news or items of interest to share. Deadline for next issue - 15 March 2012



<http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Melbourne-Clivia-Group-Inc/130556943692834>



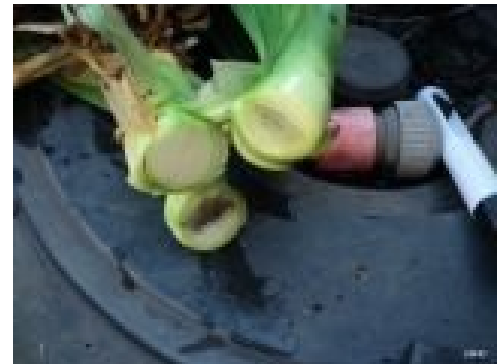
There is nothing that quite breaks the heart of a clivia grower more than seeing a previously healthy plant suddenly fall over. The rule of thumb also seems to be that the plants that are infected are your favourite or prized ones, or the ones that hold the most sentimental value.

This is usually caused by a bacterium called *Erwinia carotovora pathovar carotovora*.

This bacterium will attack any fruit or vegetable with a sugary head or stem, and also attacks bulbs of the Amaryllidaceae family, especially if the plant has also been previously attacked by any chewing insects or larvae that have made a wound through which the pathogen can enter.

Initially it may go unnoticed, as the first symptoms are often just a yellowing of one or two of the bottom leaves. However, on further probing, there will be a dark, water-soaked, and often smelly lesion at the base of the plant, which may spread right up into the leaves. The progression of the disease causes the base of the plant and the root crown to dissolve, so that the plant then falls over.

A plant showing the diseased brown tissue deep within the centre of the leaves. – Right



The ideal condition for this to occur is hot and wet weather.

The bacterium lives in the soil or in plant debris between attacking host plants.

Plants are infected often through wounds made by insects, caterpillars, snails, birds, and people, but under ideal conditions, it can infect the plants even without injuries.

The use of pruning secateurs can also transfer this pathogen, and houseflies are also very common vectors. The rotting plant attracts flies, which feed on the plant material, and then fly off and settle on another nearby plant, where they regurgitate thousands of bacteria onto this plant and thereby initiate another infective process.

Snails feed on infected plants, and then move onto another plant, where they defecate thousands of bacterial cells onto this next plant.



Left - A plant owned by Lionel Bester from South Africa. He treated this plant by removing all of the foliage, and has cut a cross into the centre of the stump, then dusted it with a fungicide.

The cross is optional.



Heavy rain can also cause the bacteria to splash onto nearby plants.



In clivias, it is important to use a very porous plant medium to prevent waterlogging, even in heavy rain. Waterlogging is most likely the biggest cause of this, causing the plant to become stressed with lack of oxygen causing the roots to die.

The plants must be kept shaded, and under trees is ideal. Shade cloth increases heating, in particular black shade cloth, and this heating favours soft rot.

Left - The same plant as the previous picture, which is now starting to produce new green shoots, which will form the offsets.

Insect control is essential, and also the control of houseflies is important, and can be achieved with a pyrethrum spray to limit the spread of pathogens.

Diseased plants must be isolated and their debris disposed of.

This pathogen seems to prefer plants which are fed with a high nitrogen fertilizer, so use a balanced fertiliser which has a good content of magnesium, calcium and potassium.

Calcium, magnesium, and potassium strengthen the cell walls, making it harder for the pathogens to break them down.

Dolomite is a good source of calcium and magnesium, and Sulphate of Potash is a good source of potassium.

Clivias that are lightly infected should have the infected leaves removed using a blade or scalpel, and the blade should be sterilized with alcohol or bleach between cuts. Dust the cuts with Dusting Sulphur or Mancozeb.



A plant that has been treated with the stump visible in the middle of the plant. The plant has now put out offsets from the stump of the plant. ( Left )

If the plant is severely infected, remove from its pot, and wash it thoroughly with clean tap water, before cutting away all soft and dead tissue from the base of the plant.

Remember to wash your hands and all your pruning implements both before and after treating diseased plants.

Dust with Mancozeb or Sulphur Dust, making sure that it covers the entire wound, and place the plant into sand, and treat it like a cutting, watering it only very lightly, and keeping it in the shade.

Clivias are quite resilient, and many plants with this will recover quite well.

References – Dr Mark Laing – Bacterial Soft Rot of Clivias - April 2000.

Photographs courtesy of Lionel Bester, Hilton's Clivias, South Africa.



This is for those who wish to try some organic remedies for their plants.

## MEALY BUGS

Coffee has been trialled now with good results overseas.

A coffee 'tea' can be made by soaking used coffee grounds in water and leaving for a few days in the sun until the water is very dark.

Dilute to a light brown colour before spraying.

A simpler method is to simply put used coffee grounds around the base of the plant and leave them there – this was first done with cycads overseas – it was used as a mulch, and the mealybugs disappeared entirely.

Neem Oil is also very effective, and has been discussed in a previous article.

It is not a "knockdown" spray, but is absorbed by the plant, and the insects will then not chew the leaves. It is harmless to beneficial insects such as bees and ladybirds.

The dilution is 30 mls of Neem Oil to 4.5 litres of water. Mix the oil with a small amount of very warm water with a few drops of dishwashing detergent, and then add the rest of the cold water.

Avoid spraying on very hot days.

## FUNGUS GNATS

Cinnamon is a natural fungicide, which kills the fungus on which the fungus gnats and their larvae feed.

Apply cinnamon powder to the top of the pot or around the base of the plant.

Chamomile Tea spray has a similar effect.

These do not harm any beneficial bacteria present.

## FUNGUS AND POWDERY MILDEW

Baking Soda – mix one teaspoon with 1 – 1.5 litres of water – add a few drops of dishwashing liquid, and spray your plants.

Milk is also a very effective fungicide – the ratio is 1:10 milk to water i.e.: 1 part milk to 9 parts water. Used as a spray.



The desire in recent years for clivias in the less common colours of peaches and creams has in some cases obscured the rich array of the different oranges and bronze clivias that are now available.

This is not referring to the “common “ orange clivia often found in older gardens, but a much improved, more showy form of flower, which, in many cases, has a real ‘wow’ factor and demands your attention.

Spring Carnival, bred by David Banks. – Right



The colours in the orange form can range from the softest pastel orange, through to the deep orange/reds, and then to the very dark bronze flowers.

Triplet, owned by Jeanne Marten – Left

The bronze clivias are now highly sought, with offsets from clones such as Bronze Green Boy fetching very high prices.

The colour intensity can vary according to the amount of light the flower receives, and also to the age of the flower, with the colour often darkening with the age of the flower.

The orange, red, and purple colours in most flowers are due to pigments called anthocyanins. These are water-soluble and often formed only in the upper-most layers of cells in the flower petals. The yellow and some orange colours are due to carotene pigments and these are oil-soluble. Caretenoids are found in the deeper cell layers within the petals.

A green-throat bronze - Right



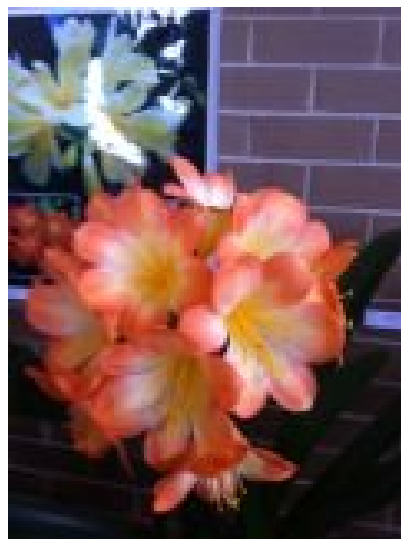
Red flowers have high concentrations of anthocyanins and also caretenoids.

Orange flowers have less anthocyanin, and still have caretenoids.

Bronze flowers have chlorophyll which is overlaid with anthocyanin and/or caretenoids.

The throat of the flower is normally a contrasting colour to the rest of the flower, and may be white, cream, yellow, or green. The throat can be very large, leaving only a small rim of colour, called a picotee, or be so small that it is barely discernible, such as Apricot Queen,

Right - Apricot Queen, bred by David Banks, and owned by Brenda Girdlestone



In cases where there are a lot of green chloroplasts in the flower underlying the orange, the flower may be bronze, terracotta, or even a chocolate brown colour, often with a deep green throat which provides a wonderful contrast to the rich colour of the petals



Left - A deep orange-red with only a very small white throat.

The photographs above demonstrate only a small variety of the types of orange flowers that are now being bred, and are now highly desired by breeders and enthusiasts alike.

The bronzes with their deep green throats make a superb show, as do the lighter pastel oranges with the huge white throats, such as Apricot Queen.

The so-called “common” orange clivia may not be so common after all, and the diversity and richness of colour of some of the magnificent orange varieties make them hard to beat.





# Melbourne Clivia Group Inc.

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Tel: 0410929510

## APPOINTMENT OF PROXY 2012

The process for the appointment of a proxy as found in the Model Rules adopted by the Association are summarized here and followed by an appointment of proxy form below.

Any member unable to attend the AGM is entitled to appoint another member as proxy by submitting to the Secretary (at the address given above) a nomination form no less than 24 hours before the time of the meeting in respect of which the proxy is appointed.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_  
(name) (address)  
being a member of the Melbourne Clivia Group Inc. appoint \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_  
(name of proxy holder) (address of proxy holder)  
being a member of that Incorporated Association, as my proxy to vote for me on my behalf at the annual general meeting of the Association to be held on Friday, 16 April and at any adjournment of that meeting.

My proxy is authorised to vote in the case that a ballot is held for the election of an office bearer.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SECRETARY USE ONLY: Date & time received



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## ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND ORDINARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS Nomination form 2012

The election of office holders (president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer) and 2 ordinary members of the Committee will take place at the AGM on Friday 17 February.

Following the Model Rules adopted by the Association, nominations should be sent to the Secretary by 10 February, on the form below. A candidate can be nominated for only one position. If insufficient nominations are received to fill all vacancies, the candidates nominated shall be deemed to be elected and further nominations may be received at the AGM. If the number of nominations exceeds the number of vacancies to be filled, a ballot will be held at the AGM.

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I, \_\_\_\_\_ being a financial member of the Melbourne  
Clivia Group Inc, nominate \_\_\_\_\_ for the position of  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of nomination: \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_ also being a financial member of the  
Melbourne Clivia Group Inc, second this nomination.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date nomination seconded: \_\_\_\_\_

Nomination accepted:      Signature: \_\_\_\_\_      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

SECRETARY USE ONLY: Date nomination received: