



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We have had two good winter meetings on a Saturday at 2.00pm. I was encouraged that on both occasions we had 15-20 people present. It has been encouraging having so many new faces in the room. We have had interesting flowering interspecifics and a few out-of-season flowering variegated miniatas on display. There also have been some great plants for sale. So a big thanks to those who have been helping make this happen.

In July I presented on the topic of “what disease is it?” We all know how tough it is sometimes to work out just what is wrong. Is it fungal, environmental, genetic, insects or something else? Fortunately, or unfortunately, I could provide real examples of each one – some on a PowerPoint and some in real life.

I think this topic is one of the positives of belonging to a club. Some people have much experience and even though we have such a wide range of growing conditions, someone is likely to identify the issue. I learnt several things as audience members participated.

A key comment was made during the meeting that plant hygiene is key in preventing diseases. So remove sick plants, take off the lower leaves of your plants, and leave some airflow between them. The day after the meeting I lopped off the bottom leaves off quite a few plants. I had done it in early summer but there were plenty to again remove. I didn't discover any mealy bug but did find a cockroach, some earwigs and a couple with some rot.

Here's a short video on general plant problems which we showed during the meeting. It is just 6 minutes and provides a healthy framework for thinking about diseases:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7HnLVYhvars>

It is just six weeks till our Clivia Expo. There are important announcements in this edition about the Expo. We know across greater Melbourne that clivia flowering times vary considerably. We need your clivias if they are flowering in the display please. It is possible that other club member's clivias are finished or still coming.

So if you live around Melbourne please bring some plants to the Expo. The mass of colour and variety is really appreciated by the public. A good orange or yellow is spectacular!!! If you think your plants are going to flower too early, remember the 6 week principle, and keep them in a cool spot for as long as possible. But if they are slow in coming through then it is warmth that is needed. With the latter you can flower them indoors successfully. The higher up in the house they sit, the warmer the room temperature.

I can't wait for September to see the miniata flowers and a few nobilis in bloom. I can't wait to see how my crosses went four and five years ago.

Allan Gibson





General Information

MEETING VENUE

**Burwood Heights Uniting Church
Cnr Blackburn Rd &
Burwood Hwy, Burwood East
347 Blackburn Road if using a GPS**

CALENDAR DATES FOR 2023

Friday 18th August 7.30pm
Expo 23rd September 10-4pm
Friday 20th October 7.30pm
Late November Christmas Party

WEBSITE

www.melbournecliviagroup.org.au

FACEBOOK GROUP

To keep up to date with activities and tips from the Melbourne Clivia group please join us on Facebook:<https://www.facebook.com/melbournecliviagroup>

POSTAL/EMAIL CONTACT

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May and June meetings

We had two really good meetings during May and June. Both were held on Saturday afternoons at the usual place. We have had some great raffle prizes thanks to Richgro, Hugh Williams in South Australia and some generous club members. Most months we have 3 or 4 prizes to snaffle up. Absolutely worth the \$2.50 a ticket!!!!

We have also had a range of plants for sale. Not all have been clivias but there has been variegates, peaches, gardeniis and interspecifics available. Thanks club members for bringing some along. It is great pocket money for those who sell but it is an easy way for our members to source interesting plants.

We have had quite a range of display plants. Mostly they have been from the flowering pendulous varieties and interspecifics. There have also been a few out of season miniata variegates on the tables as well. It has been really pretty. So a big thanks to those bringing the plants. Members please free to bring any clivia in flower. It is great to have the colour and interest in the meetings.



Above: A rather nice interspecific on display



*Above: "Daydream" was spectacular and is a *miniata x caulescens*. It is an imported plant, so it was very special to have at the meeting.*

Below/across: Our raffle winners with their treasures:



Above: We do have plants for sale each meeting!



Spring Cultivation Notes (Di Matthews)

Spring will finally arrive soon after what has been a fairly cold and wet winter. Many clivias will now be showing signs of flowering, either with flower buds becoming visible deep within the leaves, or with flower spikes starting to emerge. Some people have noticed an early spiking this year, while many have noticed the opposite, with buds only now starting to appear.

Clivias are very heavy feeders, so if you have not fed your plants for some time, now is the perfect time to do it. Many growers prefer to use a slow-release fertiliser, but young plants will also greatly benefit from liquid feeding at this time as well. Use a fertiliser with plenty of potassium (K) in it to boost flowering. Remember, if you use a liquid fertiliser, frequent half strength feeds are preferable to occasional full-strength feeds.

We have had some significant rainfall over recent months, so if your plants are container grown and under shadecloth or under trees, etc, check that the pots have not become too wet. Frequently the first sign of a waterlogged pot is that the plant wobbles slightly in the pot when touched, or you may find the outer leaves suddenly turning yellow. If this happens, remove the plant gently from the pot and check the roots for any signs of rot or soggy roots. If there are signs of rot, remove any soggy or rotting roots, dust with a sulphur powder or mancozeb powder if necessary, and repot into a drier mix. Do not over-pot your plants. Use a pot big enough to allow for some root growth, but not so big that the roots are surrounded by too much potting mix, which can become over-wet quickly.

If you find that your plants have outgrown their pots and are very root-bound, it is safe to repot them into a bigger pot, but again, do not over-pot. Use a potting mix that drains quickly when the pot

is watered. The shape of your pot is important too – use one that is not too wide. Wide shallow pots do not drain as well as a deeper pot, due to what is known as a perched water table in the pot. This is water that occupies a layer of soil that is always saturated and will not drain at the bottom of the pot. It can evaporate or be used by the plant, but physical forces will not allow it to drain.

Many people have also had outbreaks of mealybug in recent months which seem to thrive throughout the seasons. Keep a watchful eye out for these and treat at the first sign. Mealybugs can decimate a plant very quickly by causing damage to the leaves deep down in the base. The damage to the leaf surface then allows the entry of fungi and bacteria, and the plant can quickly succumb to rot. Keep a lookout for other chewing pests, such as snails, slugs, and cockroaches, which have thrived in the cool and damp conditions, and treat accordingly. It is a good idea to start a preventative spraying program as the weather starts to warm up over the coming months. Neem oil solution is a safe spray to use around the garden, but whatever you choose, do not spray on windy days. An ounce of prevention is worth a ton of cure when it comes to dealing with pests.

A safe neem oil formula is 20 mls of neem oil to four litres of water. To emulsify the oil, mix it with a small squirt of dishwashing liquid in some warm water, and then dilute it with the rest of the water. The change in seasons also means more sunshine, so ensure your plants are well protected from the sun. Early morning dappled light is fine but do protect from the sun's rays during the day.

Lastly, enjoy your flowers. I hope we all have a wonderful flowering season, which is always a boost to our spirits. It is always wonderful to see our old favourites flowering, but very exciting to see what unfolds with a first flowering plant. There will be inevitable disappointments, but also hopefully some delightful surprises.



SEEDLIST PROCESS 2023

Almost 30 people have purchased from our seedlist this year. So that has been wonderful. If you ordered them, you will receive an invoice from the treasurer. Seeds that are being posted need to be paid prior to the August meeting so then they can be sent the following week. Members who have nominated to collect seed at the August meeting can either pay by direct debit prior to the meeting or can pay on the night prior to collecting the seeds.

Just an encouragement to consider selling a few of your seeds next year. You only need 3-5 seeds of one cross plus a photo to participate. But that means being organized this September. Please take a photo of the parent plant and pollen plant (assuming it isn't selfed) and do so with a horizontal shot on your phone.

A big thank you to the seed sellers, to Lisa Fox for compiling and to our secretary (Brenda) and treasurer (Rae) who have all contributed many hours to make it all happen.

RAISING YOUR SEEDS

There are many methods to successfully raise your seeds. Just search You-Tube. There is also an article on our website with some tips. It can be found under the title of "articles". But a few key principles are:

- the seeds need moisture and heat to begin to shoot
- ensure airflow to avoid fungus (so be careful about leaving lids on containers)
- seeds have a mind of their own and some might take a week while others six weeks.

I know some of us put some of our seeds on heat in June and these are up. A tip on planting them up is to ensure that the compost isn't too coarse. It is also fine to plant several in the one pot or dozens in boxes.

NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting is Friday August 18th at 7.30 at the usual venue. As usual bring any flowering plants for display and any spares for sale. And remember the seeds you purchased will be available for collection. We'll be hearing much more about our September Expo. As usual if you have anything in flower please bring it along.

BREAKING NEWS!!!!!!

We have two competitions running so please bring your plants to these categories:

1. Widest leaf
2. Best looking widest leaf.

Prizes to drool about will be given out (and probably eaten on the way home). So we hope you'll bring a friend, bring a plant or two and enjoy viewing the plants.

Below: a broad leaf Chinese in the running for widest clivia!



Editor's confession "Photo was doctored"!



RICHGRO
Bring your garden to life

We are grateful for the sponsorship of Richgro with our club. Many have enjoyed the bag of goodies won in the raffle.

C lub Polo Shirts

The t-shirts are available again. Rae Begg will take orders at the August meeting with samples of different sizes available to try on. Payment up front of \$20 must accompany orders. Colours are with red, yellow or orange trimming (as per the photos)

There are also hats for sale (see photo below) and Clivia Colour Charts. The latter is super helpful in spring as you try to objectively describe your flower.





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CLIVA EXPO Update and Help Needed

The 2023 Melbourne Clivia Group Inc will be held on Saturday September 23rd 10-4pm.
A successful EXPO requires a lot of members to volunteer their time.

We will be setting up the hall on Friday night between 5-pm. We will be packing up the Expo on Saturday 4pm. During the Expo we need a string of volunteers to assist in the below activities.

If you enjoy attending the club meetings then please seriously consider contributing your time to ensure a successful Expo. Even two hours of your time will help us immensely. The EXPO has always proven to be a fun way of interacting with members on a different level to that of the meetings. The simplest but very necessary jobs are door stewards and selling raffle tickets.

If you are new and not sure these are the jobs for you. Find a friend and do it together.

Sales Hall

2 x Cashier – Sales Hall

1 x Sales Hall Door Checker

-Ensures all plants/seeds leaving the room have a paid sticker on them.

-Ensures all people entering have a paid sticker/stamp on them.

Display Hall

1 X Cashier- Display Hall

1x Raffle ticket seller-a) sitting directly beside the Cashier-Display hall person

b) survey form ‘ how did you hear about EXPO?’

1 x Display Hall Door Checker

- Ensures NO plants are taken into or out of the hall.

-Ensures all people entering have a paid sticker/stamp on them

1 x Information stand- Providing information on membership, enrolling new members, club meetings, cultural notes and advice.

1 x Demonstration Table- podding seeds & propagating plants.

1 x Roving security Display Hall

1 x Tea/Coffee/Cake

**Please volunteer at the meeting or contact John Cochrane of your intentions: Mobile
0417 780 023 or john.cochrane33@gmail.com**



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EXPO PLANT & SEED SALES

- All current members of the MCG** are offered the opportunity to sell their *Clivia* plants and seed through the club's Trading Table *or* to sell their plants & seed as independent sellers. All plants will be sold in the Fellowship Room.
- All payments for plants** and seed sales will be made by the customer at a single point of payment at the door before exiting the building.
- A commission of 15%** is payable to the MCG for all plants and seed sold at the Expo. Sales commission will be calculated and the payments made to sellers within 10 working days after the Expo.
- All members** who offer plants and/or seeds for sale at the Expo are expected to assist, in all areas as required, with set-up, and clean-up at the finish. When available, they may also be requested to assist in other areas during the expo. This can range from assistance with rostered time on reception, assisting with catering, or serving as a steward for instance.
- Each seller** is also expected to provide plants for display if possible. If any sellers have any problems or questions about these requirements, please let any committee know well in advance of the Expo.
- Plant limits.**
- Sales through the Trading Table** are limited to 30 per member.
- Independent Sellers** are limited to 200 small pots up to 125mm OR up to 100 X 200mm pots (a mix of both is accepted not exceeding a total of 200 pots) At the time of writing, a limit of 3 tables per seller applies due to the smaller sales area. This may change depending on the number of sellers, the quantity and size of plants presented for sale and the number of tables available.

If possible, a small area may be available under tables to hold extra stock for later sale otherwise extra stock will need to be stored in sellers vehicles.

There are no limits relating to the amount of seed offered for sale.

- Independent Sellers.** Members are responsible for staffing their stall (note that any non-members assisting a member with their sales will be required to complete before the Expo day an *Application for Volunteer Membership*). More than one member may share a given stall site.



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Independent Sellers are required to register their intention to do so with the Sales Coordinator, **Rae Begg 0407510273** (phone call or by SMS. *Not by voice mail*) by August meeting, and pay a non-refundable deposit of \$50 at that time (deposits paid will be deducted from commission owing on sales. However if the member does not proceed with plant sales the deposit is forfeited).

A ballot will be conducted at an appropriate time to determine the order in which Independent Sellers can choose their stall site from among the designated spaces.

All sellers are asked to advise the Sales coordinator, **Rae Begg 0407510273** (in person or by SMS. *Not by voice mail*) on Wednesday or Thursday before the Expo of the approximate number of pots that they will bring for sale. Information regarding pot sizes would also be of assistance.

The sales areas will be prepared on Friday evening (**5:00pm to 7:00pm**) Sellers are to bring their sale plants & seed in on the Friday (6:00-7:00pm) or on Saturday morning (**8:00-9:00am**)

The point of payment for ALL purchases will be at the exit of the building

If possible, a small area will be arranged for a few plants to be held in a plant crèche, as no plants will be allowed in the main display area.

Purchasers should be encouraged to place purchased plants in their own vehicles.

SALES STOCK PREPARATION ALL SELLERS

It will be necessary for each plant to clearly identify the seller and the sales price. Raffle book tickets will be used as 'sale tags' for this purpose and will be available at the August meeting. If you cannot get to that meeting please contact **Rae Begg 0407510273** (in person or by SMS. *Not by voice mail*)

The seller is to print his/her name and sales price *clearly* on each section of the 'sale tag' which is then fixed to the plant with sticky tape (stick one side of the 'sale tag' so the other side can be removed at payment) to the pot or one of the upper leaves, or to the seed packet. **Both sections of the ticket MUST remain on the plant until payment is completed at the point of payment.**

At point of payment, one half of the tag will be removed (tearing along the perforation) This will show seller and price, and will be used to calculate payments to sellers within 10 working days of the Expo.

Plants are expected to be presented clean in sound, clean pots. Examination will also be made for any obvious sign of disease or insect infestation. Any problem plants will be rejected.



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- **The Treasurer** will calculate the commission of 15% payable to the MCG to be deducted and the balance paid to the seller within 10 working days
- **Sellers** are expected to remove their remaining plants as soon as possible after 4.00pm and assist with the clean-up around the hall.

Here's two photos to conclude the newsletter which are relevant to many of us at this time of year – beautiful berries to pick and buds that are emerging.





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