



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

November is upon us and thus the end of the year is in sight. I'm hoping to have moved house to Brisbane by Christmas. There are definitely no decorations going up in my place in Melbourne this year.

We have a Christmas Party coming up so hope you can make it. This will be our last gathering for the year as a group. Details are in the newsletter but please let our secretary know if you are coming.

Have you fertilized your clivias? I placed some slow release osmocote on them in October. I debated if I would do so given I was moving. But healthy clivias in pots are much more resistant to diseases than struggling ones.

While you can repot clivias any time, I always try to repot my bigger plants around October/November. So many of mine are due for repotting but that work can be done after I move. The last thing I need is bigger pots to transport.

With repotting seedlings, I usually leave them in the pots or boxes for a year before transplanting. Generally, I repot my seedlings in the spring (ie the 1 year olds). While they do grow over winter in Melbourne the cold holds them back. I find that the young plants are healthier if repotted in spring rather than winter. A key tip in repotting is ensuring that the pot isn't too big for the root system. The key reason is that the potting mix can hold water for too long resulting in rot. So just potting up to the next size is generally the ideal.

My term as President is almost over and I won't be joining our AGM in February (16th). We have had a good year as a club with many new members and a steady 15-20 at our meetings. We had an excellent seedlist (just our 2nd) plus a

great Expo in September. This is our 6th newsletter for the year.

All the activities are run by our Committee, and whilst we have energy in the Committee, we do need more people involved on that level. As far as I'm aware we have someone willing to be our new President but more people are needed on the Committee. Half of the six Committee meetings were over zoom and so if you live too far away to come to every Committee Meeting you would be welcome to join over zoom for those meetings, even if you couldn't come to each meeting. Please interact with John Cochrane if you are interested. Contact him via secretary@melbournecliviagroup.org.au.

A warm welcome to new members! About 1/3 of our members do not live in Melbourne and the newsletter goes as far away as Perth and Brisbane. Membership is just \$20 a year so if you know someone keen on clivias then you might like to encourage their membership. Distance members get insights into growing clivias via our newsletter plus early access to the seedlist. Membership details are on the website if needed.

Allan Gibson





General Information

MEETING VENUE

Burwood Heights Uniting Church
Cnr Blackburn Rd &
Burwood Hwy, Burwood East
347 Blackburn Road if using a GPS
Meetings begin at 7.30

CALENDAR DATES FOR 2023/24

26th November Christmas Party
Feb 16th AGM and First Gathering for 2024

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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Christmas Gathering

Please come to our end of year wrap up at our Christmas gathering – Burvale Hotel (corner Springvale Road & Burwood Highway, Forest Hill). It will be on Sunday, 26th of November from 12.00. Please let our Secretary (Brenda) know if you are coming and she can reserve a seat for you. secretary@melbournecliviagroup.org.au

Dates for 2024

Friday 16th February – AGM plus
Friday 19th April
Saturday 15th June (day)
Saturday 20th July (day)
Friday 17th August
Saturday 21st September Clivia Expo
Friday October 19th

*Note: Our Friday night meetings
begin at 7.30.*



Summer Cultivation Notes (Di

Matthews) (*Ed. Note: This was printed in our last newsletter but still relevant for us. A big thankyou to Di Matthews who contributes this section!*)

We are now nearing the end of the *miniata* flowering season for another year. Even though flowering will soon be over, our clivias still need care during the coming months if they are to thrive and produce seeds and flowers for the next year.

Over the warmer months small seedlings and young plants will need regular watering, while mature plants, especially if grown in pots, will appreciate a good weekly watering in most cases. When watering your pots, it is important to give a good drench of water so that the water flows freely from the bottom of the pot, then do not water until it is needed again.

It is also preferable to water during the early part of the day to allow excess water to drain and help reduce the incidence of fungal attack which can be encouraged by water sitting in the leaf bases for extended periods.

The hot winds we often have at this time of year will often deposit a layer of dust on the leaves, so the clivias will appreciate a quick gentle spray with the hose to remove this.

Continue with your fertilising regime of choice. Small seedlings will thrive with liquid fertiliser at half strength applied regularly, while more mature plants will do well with a good quality slow-release fertiliser. Flowering size clivias start to produce their flower buds for the following spring in January, deep within the base of the plant, so it is important to ensure good nutrition at this time to promote a good head of flowers.

Potassium is essential for good flowers and strong peduncles, and one way to ensure both is to feed with some potassium sulphate over the summer. It can be applied as a weak solution in water, or simply sprinkle about a teaspoon of it around the top of the pot of your flowering size plants and water in well. This can be done monthly over summer.

Ensure that plants are well shaded during the very hot days. Clivias are prone to scorched leaves if left unprotected in the sun.

Continue to keep a watchful eye for leaf chewing pests, such as mealybugs, cockroaches, and snails, and treat as necessary.

Snails and slugs have been abundant for many of us with the damp winter and spring conditions and can cause a lot of damage to the new leaves. If spraying for pests, do not spray on hot days, but wait for a cooler and wind free day to use pesticides.

Do not apply in windy weather to avoid drift to other parts of the garden, and to prevent damage to beneficial garden insects.

Finally, spare a thought for our birds and wildlife during the summer months, and if you can, leave a dish of water out for them in a safe and sheltered part of the garden.

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 raffles.



October meeting

Our final group meeting of the year was held in October and was very well attended. It was our largest gathering. So it was great to see some new faces and many in attendance.

Our guest speaker for the night was Andrew from Richgro.

While his presentation wasn't specifically for clivias, he definitely knew his products enough to field our specific clivia questions.



Above: Some of the products he brought along that those in attendance took home.



A general summary of his presentation was

1. Get your soil/potting mix foundations right to begin with. So no amount of fertiliser or sprays can make the plant grow if the soil or potting mix is unhealthy. In the garden he'd always recommend adding some compost or fresh soil for a new planting.
2. Drought is coming this year so adding a product that holds water will greatly assist the water bill and plant health.
3. Cover your soils rather than just leave bare.
4. Buy the best potting mix you can afford.
5. With clivias, Bug Killa is a granular product from Richgro that is sprinkled on top of the soil, watered in and taken up by the roots. So it takes a couple of days to work and kill the sucking insect. The product then lasts about two months. This is great for clivia people regards controlling the mealy bug. It should be at Bunnings! (But I visited two Bunnings



on the weekend and no product was available. On-line the 250 g version is available from about \$14.00 to \$25.00. I have bought three and paid postage which was cheaper than what I could buy through Bunnings or Amazon on line. Just search the product on-line.



A granular fungicide has also been released that may also be of assistance to clivia growers. Search Richgro products on-line.

He also had a raffle with several people taking home a good bag of goodies. But everyone present received a product!!!!



Several members brought along plants of interest to the meeting.



Above: A beautiful late flowering miniata from John Cochrane bred by Peter Haeusler. Note the flower colour on the inside is different to the colour on the outside. It is known as a versicolour.

There was a beautiful Nobilis from Brenda Girdlestone brought along to the display also. See picture below. Nobilis have pendular flowers in Spring. Most other varieties and crosses flower outside of the September/October period.





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