



Chrysnews

May 2018

**Western Australian
Chrysanthemum
Society Inc.**

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Special points of interest:

- Show information and display preparation notes
- Upcoming meeting dates and a Social Gatherings in May, September & October
- Call to Arms - Help wanted for Show Week

President's Notes

We have had an enjoyable social program since the last newsletter with home opens at Michael and Judy Drake-Brockman's home in March and at Lina and my home in April. Both days were well attended and we enjoyed fine weather, good food and excellent company. Michael's new set up looks very impressive and I am sure he is already looking forward to next season when he will have ideal conditions for the whole season. I have visited a few other chrysie patches as well this season and seen some good looking plants. It is very encouraging to see the enthusiasm of members, both old and new.



Not long to go now before our show. I hope that your plants are looking good and your blooms will be at their peak to impress the judges on 10th May. Hawaiian Forrestfield are once again providing good facilities for our show for which we are very grateful. Hopefully no hiccups will occur. The agenda for show week is given below. Good luck.

Carl Glusarczyk

Cultural Matters

There is not a lot that you can do to improve your blooms now, but there are still plenty of things that can ruin them. Rain and wind are more dangerous the closer you are to full bloom. Hopefully you have all your stems tied on to something immobile and the blooms are under cover. If not, it is never too late to do it.

Aphids will occasionally strike late. There is a reason that sticky traps are bright yellow so keep a careful watch on your brightest yellow blooms as bugs will normally show up there first.

Spraying pesticide after colour show is always risky as some sprays will damage the petals.

Hopefully you have prevented problems by giving a good dose of a residual systemic pesticide while they were still in bud. However if there is a late attack then Imidacloprid (Confidor) or Acetamiprid (Defender Maxguard) applied to the soil may work.

I have in the past in desperation sprayed some half open blooms with Confidor on the basis that I had nothing to lose. It did not seem to damage them but don't blame me if you try it yourself.

Be on the lookout also for caterpillars, or more particularly tiny holes in the leaves and dark worm excreta. If any of these tell-tale signs are present carefully turn over the leaves in the vicinity and you will probably find the culprit. If there is a lot of worm activity then a careful low pressure spray of pesticide to the leaves below the blooms is possible as generally the caterpillars do the most damage to the foliage and if they have taken a chunk out of the bloom it is too late anyway.

Suitable pesticides for caterpillars are Malathion and spinetoram (Yates Success Ultra). I have never tried spraying them on the blooms, but if you have an eaten one you can do a test run on that.

With our relatively dry climate we are not greatly troubled by fungal attack on our blooms but keep a watch and if any brown spots start to show then remove those petals immediately. Unfortunately the hot dry climate is not all good news and sometimes the oldest petals at the base of the bloom will start to look thin and dull and even dead at the tips. In addition some cultivars are prone to odd shaped petals at the base of the bloom. All of these petals should be removed as they appear as you will probably be too busy during show week to do the job properly. Petals at the base are normally easy to remove but with those higher up in the bloom it is more of a challenge. In order to remove the petal cleanly it is often necessary to grab it close to the origin and a pair of smooth round end tweezers comes in handy. Pay particular attention to Spiders and Quills as they are prone to damp spots and dead petal ends which are not always easy to notice. Fortunately their petals are not too difficult to pluck out. If you find any small petals in the disc of Singles pluck them out as soon as possible so that the defect has the best chance of closing over.

While you have time go around your pots and make sure that the blooms match the name tag. I have a bright orange Kelvin Snowball. The stupidity factor is that I remember that the same thing happened last year so obviously I forgot to change the label. I also have a dark pink Intermediate Decorative Kellies Gold Anne. (I blame the dog.)

Closer to the show, if you have multiple pots of some cultivars, you should mark those plants with the best blooms as they are the ones that you should be taking next season's cuttings from. You should also have a list of cultivars that you are growing and annotate it somehow to record those that gave good results, not so good and poor. If some of yours are not so good or poor and most other growers' are good then you may have inferior stock and need to look out for someone else's at Distribution Day. If you have lots of not so good and poor then please take advantage of our mentors' expertise for next season. If your cultivar list also has details of rooting, potting on, stopping, bud securing, calyx split and full bloom dates as well as pot sizes, sprays and fertilisers used and when then they can probably tell you why they didn't turn out so well. It is worth mentioning that if you paid enough attention to your cultural routine to make such a list then your blooms will probably be mostly good, and better than mine.

Keeping Blooms in Show Condition

With our show being later in May than in an average year you may find that some of your blooms are likely to be at their best prior to the show. What is to be done? I have an old NCS (UK) Manual which addresses the subject. Things to try –

1. Retarding development.

When blooms are half open the pots can be removed to a location having a cool, dry atmosphere and partly excluded light. Only water when essential to prevent the leaves and petals from flagging.

2. Keeping blooms in water.

Blooms may be kept for ten days or so if they are cut early in the morning when two thirds open. The lower leaves should be removed and the stems kept in deep cool water. The container should be kept in a cool location and the blooms and foliage misted occasionally with cool water. The vase water should be changed and the end of the stem recut daily. A commercial flower preservative such as Chrysal added to the water is effective.

Alternatively a home brew of Milton ($\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon), Alum ($\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon) and Sugar (4 teaspoons per 2 litres) can be used, in which case the water does not need to be changed.

3. Refrigeration.

Blooms may be kept fresh at a temperature of 2 degrees.

Fun Fact

Chrysanthemums need a day length of less than 14:30 hours to initiate flowering. At the summer solstice on 21st December our Perth day length (sunrise to sunset) is 14:15 hours. Fortunately we have twilight which extends some daylight up to an extra hour. One professor suggests that you can add 15-20 minutes of effective daylight either side of sunrise and sunset. So checking the astronomical tables we can say that we have “long days” for a total of two months during summer and “short days” start around January 21st.

“Alternative Fact”

UK texts state that most late flowering chrysanthemums require between 8 and 13 weeks to reach full bloom from bud initiation at the start of short days. So an average ten week cultivar initiated on 21st January should be at its best on April Fools’ Day!

Something to Ponder

As our chrysanthemum buds are usually visible by the middle of March it is clear that bud initiation has occurred prior to the autumn equinox. As days on the summer side of the equinox are shorter the closer that you are to the equator then chrysanthemums grown at lower latitudes will experience “short days” sooner than those grown at higher latitudes and so should initiate their buds sooner and flower earlier. This is seen to be the case in the UK where the southern late shows are held in early November and the northern shows are held in mid November. So why then do chrysanthemums grown in Perth flower later than those grown in Bendigo and Melbourne? (The answer is given below.)

Bloom Heights for Exhibition (Measuring sticks will be available at show set up.)

Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 (Show) and 10 – **55cm**

Sections 6 – **42cm** (with the exception of the Forrestfield Championship which is **55cm**)

Section 8 (Blooms) – **35cm**

Sections 7 (Cuts), 8 (Cuts) and 9 – no set height. A few centimetres only between the top of the bottle and the origin of the lowest pedicel looks attractive. Sections 7 and 9 are staged in large bottles and Section 8 in small bottles.

ANZAC Memorial Vase

This class is in our Show Schedule and requires five blooms of New Zealand origin. They can be five of the same or a mix of cultivars. Eligible cultivars are all the Mechen and Cloverlea Anemones as well as the Singles Glad Eye and Eileen Dobie. Another NZ Single available interstate is Dorothy which I do not think is in WA.

Reminder

Gosnells Horticultural Society **will not** be holding an Autumn Show this year. The Society is not folding however and plans are still in place for a spring show as usual. Many members have exhibited at Gosnells in the past and it is disappointing to see it vanish, at least for this year.

It Pays to Get It Right

Many members will have the bright yellow Large Exhibition cultivar bred by Bruce Furneaux and named after his wife. Her name was Nancye Furneaux. So go outside and correct your labels to add the E to her name. Those who saw Ron Atyeo's Grand Champion Bloom from 2016 will know just how good it can be with a little extra E for effort.

Answer to the Ponderous Question

Date at which day length is 14:30 hours (= 13.50 hours from sunrise to sunset + 2x 20 minutes of twilight)

Perth - 23rd January Melbourne - 6th February

Ted King writing in various NCS(USA) publications noted a delay in flowering experienced at his location as well as other warmer districts of the USA.

Barry Machin writing in the NCS(UK) Chrysanthemum Manual 1991 indicates that although short days are essential for flower bud development they must be accompanied by the correct temperature regime. The optimum night temperature for the most rapid and uninterrupted bud development during the natural season is 16 degrees.

Barry recommends for commercial production that on dull days the temperature should be maintained at about 18 degrees but can be allowed to rise to 21 degrees on bright sunny days. There are differences between cultivars as to their responses to temperatures outside these ideals but flowering is delayed by higher temperatures in all cultivars whereas lower temperatures, down to 10 degrees at night, may or may not have a significant effect.

Examining the temperature averages we find –

	February	March	April
Perth maximum	31.6	29.6	25.9
Perth minimum	18.3	16.7	13.8
Melbourne maximum	25.9	23.9	20.3
Melbourne minimum	14.6	13.2	10.8

As Melbourne's temperatures are closer to ideal the chrysanthemums there develop faster and bloom earlier.

Sage Advice

Keep it simple. Grow cultivars known to be successful in WA and follow the cultural methods worked out by WACS members over the last fifty years. Keep the mind active by trying something a bit different each season, but only with a few plants.

Contacts

Treasurer – Colleen Ryall 9291 9257 (H) 0400089223 (M) colleenryall@westnet.com.au

Secretary – Michael Drake-Brockman 9293 7650 (H) michaeldb@inet.net.au

Newsletter Editor – Carl Slusarczyk 9272 1356 (H) carl.lina.slu@gmail.com

Mentors

Name	Location	Phone Number
Ian Blackwell	Kelmscott	9390 2608
Ralph Coombes	Maida Vale	9454 3373
Michael Drake-Brockman	Pickering Brook	9293 7650
Ralph Foster	Armada	9497 2420
Carl Slusarczyk	Mount Lawley	9272 1356
Richard Williams	Inglewood	9272 6120

Upcoming Events

WACS Annual Show

Thursday 10th to Saturday 12th May at Hawaiian Forrestfield 20 Strelitzia Ave, Forrestfield (corner of Hale Road)

Sunday 6th May Entries to the Show Secretary (Carl Slusarczyk) between 3pm and 7pm by phone – 9272 1356 or email - carl.lina.slu@gmail.com If emailing please phone also to confirm receipt of entry.

Tuesday 8th May Entry of display plants and filling of bottles from 6pm

Wednesday 9th May Set up of central display (in front of Woolworths) from 9am. Members set up blooms for exhibition from 6pm

Thursday 10th May Set up of exhibits possible prior to 9am.

Judging of the show starts at 9am.

Friday 11th May Official Opening of the show at 11am in front of Woolworth's.

Saturday 12th May Take down of show and sale of blooms from 3pm.

WACS Presentation Function

Tuesday 22nd May at 11:30am
The Social Room, John McGrath Pavilion
97 Hensman Street South Perth.



Garden Clubs and Societies Fair

Sat, Sun 8 & 9th September 2018
South Perth Civic Centre

WACS Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 11th September 2018 at 12 Noon
The Social Room, John McGrath Pavilion
97 Hensman Street South Perth.

Distribution Day

Sunday 28th October 2018 at 12 Noon
The Social Room, John McGrath Pavilion
97 Hensman Street South Perth



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Breaking News

Golden Retriever drops defamation action following out of court settlement.

The existence of strong forensic and circumstantial evidence linking Louis to the now infamous Kellies Gold Anne substitution racket, together with his failure to answer questions and history of previous “dog acts”, led Detective Chief Inspector Tracy Dick of the Dog Squad to name Louis as the prime and only suspect. The case against him was weakened however when Trixie the Poodle cross refused to roll over and totally collapsed when Wolfgang the de-barked Doberman was unable to give evidence, Usain the Greyhound was nobbled with a Family Block of Cadbury’s Dairy Milk and Bruiser the Bull Mastiff was ejected from the court room and charged with contempt for cocking his leg when asked to take the oath. Adding insult to injury, Public Prosecutor Breathless Mahoney complained after the trial that Louis and his ilk were thumbing their noses at the judicial system. Barrister for the Defence, Rumpole the British Bulldog, complained that this remark was appallingly insensitive and deeply offensive to all four legged friends, although he later conceded that a few Border Collies were in training in an effort to master the art of flipping the bird. Terms of the settlement are confidential but believed to include a carton of Chicken with Scrambled Eggs and Parsley V.I.P. Chunkers and a new tennis ball.



Exhibit A



Louis

— Call to Arms —

Every Grower Can Be an Exhibitor

There can be no show without exhibitors, so please make an effort to bring in as many decent blooms as you are able, especially as the show is a late one and many blooms will be past their best. There are opportunities in the Specimen Classes to exhibit a solitary bloom of any type, so do not let them go to waste. Remember that we grow chrysanthemums, not wallflowers.

Volunteers needed for Show Week

While exhibitors can look forward to various prizes for their efforts there is unfortunately little tangible reward for all the people that put in the effort to make sure that the show can go on. We do try however, with lunch vouchers for the Judges and helpers after the judging on the Thursday and a generous subsidy of the Presentation Luncheon.

Fortunately our Society has always had members that have put in the effort when needed and that is why after 50+ years we are still going. With this in mind the following tasks need to be done and help will be appreciated.

Tuesday 8th – filling of bottles from 6pm

Wednesday 9th – set up of central display from 9am, set up of show tables from 3pm

Thursday 10th – Stewards and Runners needed from 9am

Thursday, Friday and Saturday – staff the information table, engage with the public, keep an eye on the display tables and sell potted plants from 8.30am to evening. There will be three shifts: 8.30am – noon, noon – 4pm, and 4pm to whenever the crowds peter out

Saturday 12th – preparation for and help with bloom sales from 2 to 3pm, then assist with clean-up to 4pm.

If you are able to assist with any of the tasks listed then please contact the
Show Secretary on

Tel: 92721356 or Email: carl.lina.slu@gmail.com