



ASA Newsletter

MARCH 2020

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

ASA News 2

Upcoming Events 3

February Meeting 5

Christmas Parties 6

South QLD Bus Tour 7

Aroid News 9

ASA Calendar 11

Some prizes up for grabs at the recent NSW Meeting



ASA COVID-19 Response

The ASA is taking the COVID-19 threat very seriously and so we have cancelled upcoming meetings, including committee meetings. This means that the April 8th meeting in Brisbane will not take place. This also applies to interstate meetings. We are optimistic that the August meeting will go ahead, but are prepared for the event that this may also need to be cancelled.

We understand that this is upsetting for our members, as meetings (and the plants attending) are one of the best things about being a member. Still, the safety of our members is paramount and so we must take all necessary precautions.

All of our online activities will continue, and we will find ways to ensure that some of the elements of the meeting can be delivered online. More details on this to come.

This is a difficult time for everyone. As well as the obvious health risks, many of our members will feel the social and economic effects of the virus. Please be sure to be kind and help each other in any way that you can. In particular, many of our members are in high risk groups, so please keep them in mind and, if you can, share your compassion and assistance.

Despite these risks, life still goes on and so we urge all members to keep a level head, to maintain social distances, not to hoard or panic buy. We can get through this if we all work together.

Even though we are isolated, it is important to stay healthy and stay connected. Get out into your garden, go for a walk, and remember that all of our online communities are there for you to talk and share your passion with others. We can do this together.

Open Committee Position

Keeping the ASA running is very exciting but also requires a lot of work. We need your help to do the important jobs that make being an ASA member fun and interesting.

General Committee: There are odd jobs that don't fit into other roles, if you're eager and handy, let us know.

Founding Member

Many of you may not know but it was a lot of work to get the ASA off the ground. Much of this hard work was done single-handedly by Sally Wilson. We recently created a special 'Founder' membership, and Sally has been nominated for this honour. You will soon receive an email with a vote to approve this decision..

Call for Contributions

The ASA committee love Aroids, and some of us have been growing them for many years. This being said, none (or not many!) of us are experts.

For this reason, we would like to ask you, our members, to contribute your own knowledge and experience to the newsletter.

We know that some of you are seasoned growers, and maybe you have discovered a fun fact, a growing technique, a tool, or a practice surrounding aroids that no one else knows. We would love if you would share these with us!

Similarly, many of our members are new to

roids, or gardening in general, and would greatly appreciate some general insight to help them get started.

Either way, the ASA would love contributions from our members to publish here. If you would like to contribute, please get in contact with our Editor,

Aaron, or email:

secretary@aroids.net



ASA News

ASA APRIL MEETING IS CANCELLED

It is with heavy hearts that we must cancel the approaching April meeting. Sorry to anyone who organised flights, accommodation, or transport to attend. This is something that we must do to ensure everyone's safety. Thank you for understanding and we hope to have everything back to normal soon.

ALL MEMBERSHIPS WILL ROLL OVER

The ASA is built on connecting people with a shared love of Aroids. We can't do this with the current COVID-19 crisis, and so, as a show of good faith to our members, all current memberships will be rolled over to next year. This means that if you are a financial member for 2019-2020 (which you likely are because you are reading this newsletter), then your current membership will expire at the end of June 2021. If you have already paid for the approaching year, then your membership will expire in 2022. It's not much, but hopefully it will lighten the strain on members who are having a hard time at the moment.

UPCOMING AGM

If all goes well, our upcoming Annual General meeting will be held on the 12th August 2020. This is a significant event because, during the meeting, the committee is disbanded and all positions become vacant. Following this, the committee for the proceeding year take over. Shortly, we will start taking committee nominations.

The end of this financial year marks the end of Michael Pascall's tenure as President, as he has served the maximum number of 3 terms. Thank you to Michael for your long service. Jordan Ives and Steven Best are also ending their tenures as Treasurer and Secretary, respectively. They have both done an incredible job in a short amount of time, thank you to both of them.

Considering that we are an Australia-wide society, we welcome nominations from all states, and will run an online election prior to the AGM if a vote is required

EVENTS COORDINATOR

We are very excited to welcome Meddii Blackburn on to the committee as our new Events Coordinator. The events are the best part about being involved in the ASA, and it is great to have someone with Meddii's passion to spearhead this portfolio. To chat with Meddii about events, email to events@aroids.net.

Juicy fruit!

A massive Anthurium infructescence seen on the recent ASA South East Qld Bus trip





Upcoming Events

IMMINENT IN-PERSON EVENTS ARE SUSPENDED

As mentioned in the previous page, in the interests of keeping everyone safe and halting the spread of COVID-19, the ASA has suspended all upcoming events, both Queensland and interstate. We are hoping that the AGM scheduled in August will still go ahead, though we will reassess as we get closer.

STREAMING PRESENTATION ONLINE

As with previous presentations, we are planning for the presentation on Columbian Anthuriums that Bruce Dunstan was planning to give at the upcoming meeting to be streamed to our [Members Only Facebook group](#). We will keep you updated on when this will happen.

ONLINE RAFFLE WILL GO AHEAD

We had some extra special goodies set aside for the online raffle that would have coincided with the April meeting, such as a Philodendron 'Jose Buono' for the first prize. Just because we aren't having a meeting, this doesn't mean that we miss out on all the fun, so the online raffle will go ahead. The prizes, draw date, and how to buy tickets will be announced soon. Don't miss out!

A gorgeous Philodendron 'Jose Buono', like the one for up grabs in the upcoming ASA raffle.

ONLINE DOOR PRIZE

One of the most fun things about our meetings are the door prizes, where everyone gets a ticket on entry and one lucky ticket is drawn to win a prize. We have decided to go ahead with a door prize, with every member included in the draw! You don't have to do anything to get a ticket, just keep your eyes out for the details of the draw and the announcement of the winner!

MORE TO COME!

With the suspension of in-person events, we are going to try to do more to involve our members online. We are not sure what format this will take, but we look forward to getting everyone involved.





Aroids at the Cairns Show

The Cairns Show is the largest regional show in Queensland. This year the Cairns Show Association is making a special effort to attract exhibits of aroids. The Schedule, Section 22 - Horticultural, will be amended and expanded.

A special category has been created for Aroids: an additional Class for 'Any other Aroid' has been added - to help the judges this plant must be identified. A trophy and sash will be awarded for the 'Best Aroid'.

Classes for 'Aroids' includes:

- Aglaonema, erect type
- Aglaonema, rhizome type
- Alocasia or Colocasia
- Anthurium
- Caladium
- Dieffenbachia
- Monstera or Philodendron (any variety)
- Syngonium
- Spathiphyllum or Schismatoglottis
- Xanthosema

Any other Aroid (plant must be identified)

Exhibits must be accompanied by completed Entry Form and delivered between 2pm and 6pm Monday 13 July.

Please consult the Schedule for "Hints and definitions of Exhibiting" and conditions. The Schedule is usually published about April.

Website: www.cairnsshow.com.au.

PRIZES:

BEST AROID

Prize Money \$20.00 + Trophy + Sash

SECOND PLACE BEST AROID

Prize Money \$10.00

THIRD PLACE BEST AROID

Prize Money \$5.00

Entry Fee: Nil.

Plants must have been in possession of the exhibitor for two months and must be exhibited in plastic pots, or baskets.

Size of plastic pots must not exceed 9 litres. Concrete, ceramic or earthenware pots will not be accepted. Baskets must not exceed 350 mm in diameter.

Plants normally single-stemmed should be planted singly - plants normally of suckering habit may have multiple stems, provided the parent stem is in good condition.

The show is deciding on the new show date and will advise you accordingly. They ask you to be kind and take care of each other as we navigate through these challenging times.

The Show will go on though, so feel free to use your spare time at the moment to choose a favourite Aroid that meets the above criteria and get it into show-ready condition.



February Meeting

Everyone had a great time at the February General Meeting held in Brisbane last month. Erik gave a fantastic presentation on vertical gardens that can be viewed on our Members only Facebook page.





ASA Christmas Parties

Yes it seems like forever ago now, but in December we held Christmas parties in all of our states. From backyards, to restaurants, to plant shops, and botanical gardens, the parties were as varied as us, but the common theme was that many plants were given away and everyone had fun.

Fun and stunning ambience at the SA Christmas Party



Winners and snacks at the NSW Christmas Party



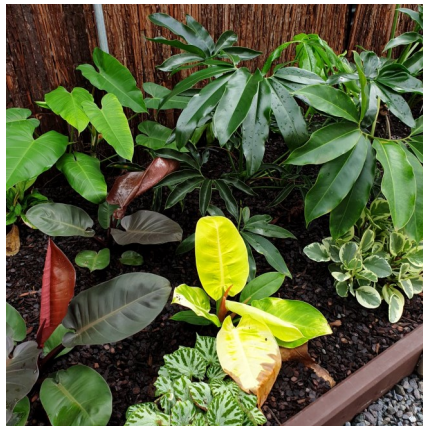
Santa and a selection of plants for sale at the Victorian Christmas Party





South East QLD Bus Tour

On Sunday February 9th, the ASA went on a bus excursion to the northside of Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast area to visit some excellent nurseries and private collections.





Who is the ASA?

It is a lot of work to keep the ASA running, and it is helmed by a dedicated and hard-working committee and numerous invaluable volunteers.

Management Committee

President	Michael Pascall
Vice President	Lee Thorneycroft
Secretary	Steven Best
Treasurer	Jordan Ives
Membership Officer	Mim Stocks
Editor & Web/Tech Support	Aaron Grinter
Events Coordinator	Meddii Blackburn
General Committee Member	Neil Crafter
	Jim Edwards

Interstate Representatives

NSW	Tammy Huynh
VIC	Karissa Baddeley
SA	Neil Crafter
North QLD	Michael Pascall
WA	Iain McGregor
TAS	Looking for volunteers!

Volunteers

Marketing	Sarah Boyle
Membership Assistant	Kris Arkins
Popular Vote	Bec Kos
Audio-visual Assistant	Jace Cowan
Auctioneer	Trevor Crawford
Raffle Tickets	Doug Spring
Plant Sales	Margaret Kraa
Refreshments	Leanne Bennett
	Kira Teasdale

Special Thanks

The ASA would like to say a special thanks to others who volunteer their time and resources.

We thank Steven Flood, David Burnett, Robyn Ganly, Greg Oldano, Peter Boyce and Trevor Crawford for their kind contributions and ongoing donations to our online raffle and auctions. We would also like to thank Chris Hall and Arden Dearden for assisting the ASA with hard to find plants. Thanks to Matt Bogart for writing excellent pieces for the newsletter.

One of the gorgeous climbers seen on the recent Qld bus trip.



Undescribed Aroid Found In Sydney Botanical Gardens

Botanists often talk of new species “hiding in plain sight”, but this has never been more true than with the recent discovery of an undescribed species in the Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens.

There has long been a robust pinnate-leaved *Rhaphidophora* cultivated under the name *R. decursiva* in the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney, which former RBGS Horticultural Botanist Tony Rodd recalls being planted around 1970.

Hay describes being embarrassed when, while drafting an account of *Rhaphidophora* for his new book on aroids, he noticed that

it did not match *R. decursiva*, or any other species, despite him knowing the RBGS plant for around 25 years.

Hay and Boyce classify the new species as *Rhaphidophora neglecta*. A humorous name signifying that it had been overlooked for 50 years.

A robust evergreen climber, the new species differs from *R. decursiva* (Roxb.) Schott, which it most resembles in general aspect, in the internodes soon becoming brownish grey (versus persistently green), the fully pinnate leaf blade with rounded



Above: *Rhaphidophora neglecta*, resting cataphyll-bearing shoot extending beyond last leaf, and the very small leaf sheath.

Left: *Rhaphidophora neglecta*, leaf blade, adaxial side. Photos A. Hay.

sessile but pulvinate leaflet bases (versus pinnatifid or pinnate but with broad, decurrent leaflet insertion), the extremely short leaf sheath (vs. sheathing for about two thirds the length of the petiole).

The plant is so far known only from cultivation in the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney and unfortunately its provenance is not recorded. *Rhaphidophoras* are distributed across Asia and Australia, but this plant does not match anything recorded in Australia. The fact that it survives in Sydney down to temperatures of 5°C suggests that it is not equatorial. Its resemblance to *R. dulongensis* and *R. decursiva* suggest that its origin is in the region between Himalayas and Indochina, though no matching specimens have been found in available herbarium data.

Hay, A and Boyce PC 2019, 'Rhaphidophora neglecta – A long-overlooked new species of Araceae-Monstereae growing in the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney', *Aroideana: Journal of the International Aroid Society*, 42(2/3): 4-17.



Right top: Rhaphidophora neglecta, inflorescence at male anthesis, with curtain of thick pendent stems behind.

Right below: Rhaphidophora neglecta, detail of sub-mature fruits showing persistent raised stigmas and bluish colour. Photos A. Hay.

Now Not The Time For Thaumatophyllum

In a recent article by Canal et al, the biogeographic history of the *Philodendron* genus in the Americas is re-examined.

The authors point out that *Philodendron* is widely distributed across the continent, but that, during the last 60 million years, geological processes resulted in two major changes in the Neotropics: (1) the formation of the Andes, and (2) the massive land connection between North and South America

through the Isthmus of Panama. They suggest that it is likely that these geological changes (and the associated ecological effects) are the reason for the diversity and distribution in each of the *Philodendron* subgenera.

The authors point that, morphologically, the subgenus *Philodendron* is extremely variable and essentially defined only by the absence of the morphological attributes characterising the other two subgenera. They go on to argue that, because of

the immense diversity within *Philodendron*, it is not advisable to separate the *Philodendron* subgenera, as has happened already with *Meconostigma*, (*Thaumatophyllum*) as it leaves the remainder of the genus *Philodendron* (the subgenus *Philodendron*) without clear morphological characters to define it taxonomically.

Canal D, Köster N, Celis M, Croat TB, Borsch T, and Jones KE 2019, 'Out of Amazonia and Back Again: Historical Biogeography of the Species-Rich Neotropical Genus *Philodendron* (Araceae)', *Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden*, 104(1): 49-68.

Calendar of ASA Meetings

PAGE 11

General Meeting (CANCELLED)	8th April 2020
Annual General Meeting	12th August 2020
General Meeting	7th October 2020

Thanks for reading and we wish our members all the best during these uncertain times.

Yours sincerely

The Aroid Society of Australia Inc.

Committee

