



CLIVIA CONNECTION

CULTIVATING KNOWLEDGE • INSPIRING GROWERS • SHARING PASSION



SPRING ISSUE

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ISSUE 029/2026



A message from our President

It is both an honour and a privilege to write my first President's Report for the Clivia Society of NSW. I would like to thank our members for the confidence you have placed in me, and I look forward to working alongside the Executive Committee as we continue to build on the Society's proud history.

Since taking on the role, our focus has been on strengthening the Society's foundations while ensuring we continue to deliver the activities and fellowship that members value. Over recent months, we have introduced several initiatives aimed at improving governance, financial accountability, and record-keeping, including a new Asset Management System, enhanced expenditure approval procedures, and the commencement of a comprehensive review of our Constitution.

These improvements are designed not only to support the current committee but also to provide future committees with clear systems that will serve the Society well for many years to come.

At the same time, we remain committed to promoting Clivias through education, exhibitions and member engagement. Preparations for this year's Spring Show are well underway, with new digital QR code technology being introduced to enhance the visitor experience and provide greater information about the beautiful plants exhibited by our members. I believe this represents an exciting step forward while preserving the friendly atmosphere and traditions that have always made our show so successful.

None of these achievements are possible without the dedication of our volunteers. I would like to sincerely thank the Executive Committee and all members who continue to contribute their time, knowledge and enthusiasm to the Society. Whether assisting at meetings, writing articles, growing outstanding plants, volunteering at our shows or working behind the scenes, every contribution is valued and appreciated.

As we move forward together, my vision is simple: to preserve everything that has made the Clivia Society of NSW successful while embracing sensible improvements that strengthen our Society, support our members and ensure that future generations can continue to enjoy these remarkable plants.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming meetings and, of course, at the 2026 Clivia Society of NSW Spring Show.

Happy growing!

Adrian

*Adrian Bligh
President
Clivia Society of NSW*



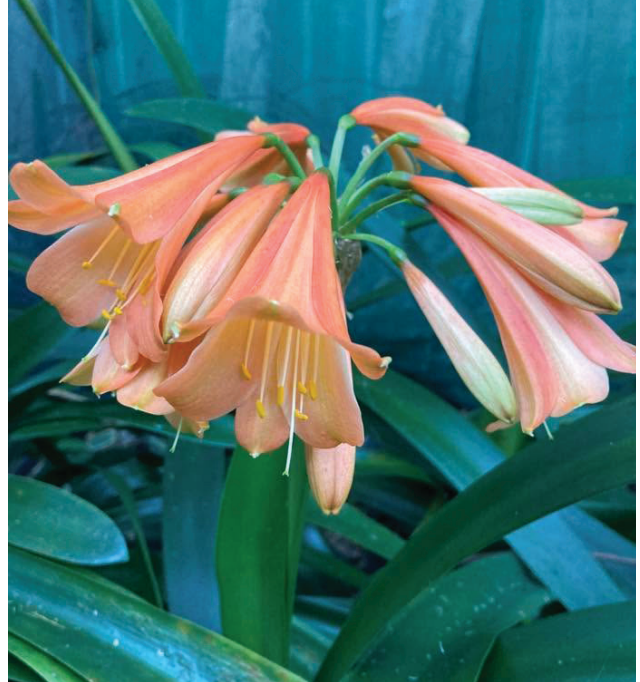
From the Secretary's desk

Welcome to the first edition of our newly redesigned Clivia Society newsletter, Clivia Connection. As the seasons shift, so too does the work in our shade houses, bringing new growth, fresh challenges, and the anticipation of great displays.

This quarter, we tap into the deep wealth of collective knowledge within our society, sharing the rigorous techniques and hard-earned insights that keep our collections thriving. Whether you are refining your potting mixes, tracking down rare offsets, or simply debating the finer points of form and colour over a brew, this journal is a testament to our shared obsession. Dive in, debrief, and let's keep the conversation growing.

Spring is just around the corner and that means our 2026 Spring Show will again show the visiting public the diversity to be found in Clivia. Show set up is Friday Sept 18th, and Saturday 19th and Sunday 20th the Show days.

Recently members were joined by African Violet Association of Australia members for a tour of the PlantBank and gardens at Mt Annan. See the article in this newsletter. Thanks to Rowena for coordinating this event.



At our August meeting we had an informative presentation by Professor Brett Summerell on plant pest and diseases.

The Garden Clubs of Australia have again requested a list of Society members who wish to receive a copy of "Our Gardens" magazine delivered to them in 2027. Cost for the yearly subscription will be \$25. We will complete this list at our November general Meeting.

Financial Position

The Society remains without a Treasurer at this time!

Peter Hey has kindly produced a document that outlines our current financial position. This is included in the August meeting minutes. Peter is working on having the accounts audited for our legal obligations with Fair Trading. He has a USB with 2025 Show document details that will give a clearer picture of our finances.

I am currently attending to a "Know Your Customer" requirement of ANZ Bank, that asks for updated details of our Executive who are dealing with the banking on behalf of the Society.

Guardians of the Vault: Behind the Scenes at the Australian PlantBank



On a gorgeous July winters day, members of the Clivia Society were invited to The Botanic Gardens at Mt Annan for a day of discovery and learning. The morning began with an exclusive look at the region's premier plant conservation and research hub. The award-winning PlantBank facility houses the largest native seed bank in Australia, acting as a crucial insurance policy against flora extinction. Members learned about the meticulous, multi-step scientific workflow that safeguards Australia's unique plant biodiversity.

Seed Processing & Quality Control

Freshly collected wild seeds are brought into the processing rooms, where they are cleaned and separated using specialised tools like zig-zag aspirators. Scientists then X-ray the seeds to confirm they contain healthy embryos capable of future germination.

Dehydration & Thermal Vaults

Viable seeds are placed in a dedicated drying room to reduce their moisture content down to roughly 5%. This step drastically extends their lifespan. Once dried, they are archived in underground, thermally efficient vaults kept at freezing temperatures between -4°C and -20°C.

Cryostorage Laboratory

For species with seeds that cannot survive traditional freezing – such as complex rainforest varieties – the facility features an advanced Cryo Storage Room. Here, tiny fragments of living plant tissue and specialised seeds are frozen long-term in liquid nitrogen at an ultra-low temperature of -196°C.



Tissue Culture & Propagation

In the Tissue Culture and Plant Growth rooms, members observed how fragile or endangered species are grown inside sterile incubators. These controlled environments allow researchers to experiment with seed germination variables and safely multiply rare plants.



The Banks & Solander Legacy

A highlight for the history buffs in the group was learning about the facility's connection to early Pacific exploration. The National Herbarium of New South Wales houses more than 800 priceless botanical specimens collected by Sir Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander.

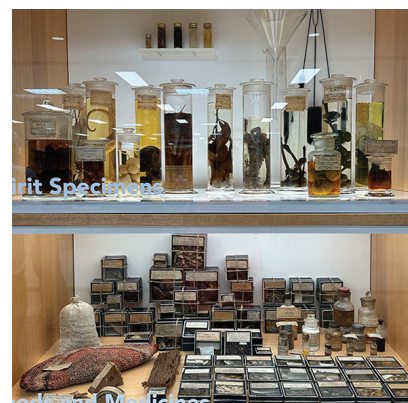
These pressed plants include original dried seeds gathered in New Zealand in 1769, alongside Australian flora collected when the HMS Endeavour arrived in 1770. Society members discovered that these 250-year-old specimens are now preserved together inside the secure, state-of-the-art climate-controlled vault rooms at Mount Annan, ensuring that the region's very first botanical records are safeguarded for future generations.

Preserving a Living Fossil

No visit to the Australian PlantBank would be complete without highlighting its groundbreaking work with the iconic Wollemi pine (*Wollemia nobilis*). Since the “dinosaur tree” was miraculously discovered in a remote Blue Mountains canyon in 1994, Mount Annan’s horticultural scientists have led the global charge to rescue it from the brink of extinction.

Society members learned how researchers painstakingly cracked the code on propagating this notoriously difficult species from tiny wild cuttings and seed fertilisation studies. As part of a massive global “metacollection” initiative, the Botanic Gardens of Sydney recently distributed specially cultivated “six-packs” of young Wollemi pines to partner botanical gardens all around the world.

Each of these packages contains six distinct saplings representing the full genetic diversity of the wild population. By shipping these diverse packages internationally, scientists are testing how different genetic strains react to varied global climates and soils to see exactly where they grow best. This vital project turns a once-fragile wild population into a secure, thriving international conservation success story.



Growing Through Time: Walking the Evolution Trail

After enjoying lunch at the onsite cafe, the group spent the afternoon on a guided walking tour of the 4.5-hectare Connections Garden.

The Fruit Loop Garden

The first stop was a visit to the fascinating Fruit Loop Garden, a dedicated section showcasing the rich variety of Australian native plants used for thousands of years as food, tools, and traditional medicines.

Society members were shown the abundance of “bush tucker” on display, including the robust *Podocarpus elatus* (commonly known as the Illawarra plum) and several varieties of lilly pilly bearing clusters of vibrant berries. As a special highlight, the group was treated to a tasting of delicious, sweet lilly pilly jam and shown unique varieties of the fruit that had grown to the size of a small pear.

Walking through this unique loop provided a profound insight into the resourcefulness of First Nations people, while introducing the horticulturalists to modern culinary applications of native ingredients like finger limes and macadamias.

Connection Garden

The guided walk through the Connections Garden offered a breathtaking journey through evolutionary time, showcasing how plants have adapted over millions of years.



Opposite, left to right
Drumsticks (*Kingia australis*)
Pineapple Cycad (*Lepidozamia peroffskyana*)



Clockwise from top left

'Desert Pride' Emu Bush (*Eremophila mackinlayi*)

Narrow-leaf Drumsticks (*Isopogon anethifolius*)

Pink Cluster Everlasting (*Schoenia cassiniana*)

Twin-leaf Emu Bush (*Eremophila oppositifolia*)

Prehistoric World

Members were treated to an impressive living display of ancient and primitive flora lineages of ancient ferns, prehistoric cycads and primitive conifers.

Walking into the cooler, sheltered pockets of the garden felt like stepping into a prehistoric world, with lush tree ferns throwing wide, detailed canopies over delicate ground ferns.

Next, stop were the cycads, often described as "living fossils" because they have survived largely unchanged since the era of the dinosaurs.

The garden also featured remarkable native conifers, highlighting Australia's deep botanical connection to the ancient supercontinent of Gondwana through unique structural forms and cone arrangements.

Native Flora Displays

The group then strolled on winding paved paths, tranquil water features, and distinct microclimates ranging from tropical rainforest pockets to dryland native beds.

Members admired the diverse array of flowering Australian native plants, seasonal flora, and integrated landscape designs.

The visit left members with a deep appreciation for Australia's unique heritage. Inspired and connected to this ancient landscape, the group concluded a memorable day.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for Clivias

Working with Nature to Grow Healthier Plants

Every Clivia grower will eventually encounter pests. Aphids may gather around flower stems, mealybugs can hide deep within the leaf bases, snails may chew prized blooms overnight, and during the warmer months, the dreaded lily caterpillar can devastate an entire collection in just a few days.

"Early detection almost always means easier control."

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) provides growers with a practical, environmentally responsible approach to pest control. Rather than relying solely on pesticides, IPM combines regular monitoring, good cultural practices, biological controls and carefully selected treatments to keep pest populations below damaging levels while preserving beneficial insects.

As highlighted in the Australian Horticulture article, successful IPM begins with understanding which insects are pests, which are beneficial, and whether pest numbers are high enough to justify intervention. Spraying should never be the first response – it should be the last step after careful observation and assessment.



Regular Monitoring

The cornerstone of every successful IPM program is routine monitoring. Inspect your Clivias at least once a week during the growing season and more frequently during spring and summer when pests are most active.

Look carefully:

- beneath leaves
- inside leaf fans
- around flower stems
- around seed pods
- in the crown
- around pots and leaf litter

A small LED torch and hand lens are invaluable tools for finding pests before they become a major problem.

The Lily Caterpillar – Clivia's Most Destructive Pest

Without doubt, the Lily Caterpillar is one of the most destructive pests affecting Clivias in Australia.

Native to Australia's east coast, this caterpillar attacks Clivias, Crinums, Hippeastrums, Spider Lilies (*Hymenocallis*) and several other members of the Amaryllidaceae family.

Young caterpillars skeletonise leaves by feeding on the softer tissues, while larger caterpillars consume entire leaves and often attack the growing crown.

Within only a few days, beautiful specimen plants can become covered with caterpillars, droppings and collapsing foliage.



Heavy infestations can completely defoliate plants, severely weaken them and, in extreme cases, kill them altogether.

Plants that survive often require months to regain their appearance.

The adult moth has a wingspan of approximately 5 cm and lays eggs in clusters on susceptible plants.

The caterpillars grow to approximately 5 cm long and are black to mottled grey with distinctive yellow or white longitudinal stripes.

Once mature they pupate in leaf litter or soil before emerging as adult moths to begin the cycle again. Several generations occur each year, with the worst damage generally occurring during the warmer months.

Organic Control

Because eggs are laid in clusters, infestations can develop rapidly.

Effective organic control includes:

- inspecting plants regularly during spring and summer
- removing egg clusters whenever found
- hand-picking caterpillars where practical
- thoroughly spraying affected plants with eco-caterpillar killer (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) while caterpillars are young
- applying eco-neem where appropriate
- removing badly damaged foliage once caterpillars have been controlled
- cleaning away leaf litter where caterpillars pupate

After severe attacks, weekly applications of seaweed and amino acid fertilisers can assist plants to recover and produce fresh growth.

Mealybugs

Mealybugs are probably the second most troublesome pest of Clivias.

Hidden deep within the leaf axils, around the crown and even amongst the roots, they are often well established before growers notice them.

Their protective wax coating makes them difficult to control, and repeated treatments are usually necessary.

Organic Control

- Remove isolated insects using a cotton bud dipped in methylated spirits or isopropyl alcohol.
- Spray thoroughly with eco-oil or another horticultural oil, ensuring good penetration into the leaf fans.
- Apply eco-neem to suppress juvenile stages and reduce future infestations.
- Repeat treatments every 7–10 days to target newly hatched crawlers.
- Inspect root systems whenever plants are repotted, as root mealybugs often go unnoticed.

IPM Tip: Avoid excessive nitrogen fertiliser. Soft, lush growth is particularly attractive to sap-sucking insects.



Snails and Slugs

Snails and slugs feed mainly at night and can destroy flowers destined for exhibition overnight.

Their feeding leaves holes in leaves, damaged blooms and characteristic slime trails.

Organic Control

- Hand-pick snails after rain or during the evening.
- Remove weeds, timber, empty pots and debris where snails shelter during the day.
- Use iron-based snail and slug pellets, which are approved for organic gardening and are considerably safer than traditional metaldehyde products.
- Install copper tape around benches or prized pots.
- Beer traps may assist where snail populations are high.

IPM Tip: Good housekeeping around the shade house is one of the most effective methods of reducing snail populations.

"Observe first, identify correctly, and only then decide whether intervention is truly necessary."



Protecting Beneficial Insects

One of the fundamental principles of IPM is recognising that not every insect is a pest.

Many beneficial insects work tirelessly for the grower by feeding on aphids, mites and other damaging pests.

Common beneficial insects include:

- Ladybirds
- Lacewings
- Hoverflies
- Predatory mites
- Parasitic wasps



Broad-spectrum insecticides often kill these valuable allies as effectively as they kill the target pest.

This frequently results in pest populations rebounding much faster than the beneficial insects can recover.

Good Garden Hygiene

Many pest problems can be reduced through simple cultural practices.

Maintain a clean growing area by:

- removing dead leaves
- clearing leaf litter
- improving airflow
- quarantining new plants
- inspecting recently purchased plants
- avoiding overcrowding
- keeping benches and pots clean

Healthy plants are naturally more resilient to pests and recover much faster following attack.

A Simple IPM Strategy for Clivia Growers

Successful Clivia growers generally follow the same approach:

1. Inspect plants regularly.
2. Correctly identify the pest.
3. Decide whether treatment is necessary.
4. Use cultural and physical controls first.
5. Encourage beneficial insects.
6. Select targeted organic products where appropriate.
7. Reserve stronger pesticides only for severe infestations.
8. Continue monitoring after treatment.

Final Thoughts

Integrated Pest Management is not about eliminating every insect from the garden. Instead, it is about maintaining a healthy balance where beneficial insects thrive, and pest populations remain below damaging levels.

For Clivia growers, vigilance is the key. A few minutes spent inspecting plants each week can prevent the loss of valuable specimens and significantly reduce the need for pesticides.

By combining regular monitoring, good hygiene, biological controls and carefully targeted organic treatments, growers can maintain healthier collections, reduce chemical use and enjoy stronger, more resilient Clivias for years to come.



PEST	SIGNS	BEST ORGANIC CONTROL	IPM PRIORITY
Lily Caterpillar	Chewed leaves, droppings, stripped foliage	Hand removal, eco-caterpillar killer, eco-neem	★★★★★★
Mealybug	White cottony masses in leaf axils and roots	Alcohol swab, eco-oil, eco-neem	★★★★★★
Aphids	Clusters on flower stems and buds	Water spray, insecticidal soap, eco-oil	★★★★★
Snails & Slugs	Holes in leaves and flowers, slime trails	Hand-pick, iron-based pellets, copper barriers	★★★★★

Tissue Culture of Clivias – The Future of Clonal Propagation?

By Adrian Bligh

For over a century, Clivia enthusiasts have propagated their favourite plants by seed or by division. While these methods have produced many outstanding cultivars, they also have limitations. Seedlings can take three to seven years to flower and rarely produce plants identical to their parents, while offsets are slow to develop and often produce only one or two new plants every few years.

Modern plant biotechnology offers another option, tissue culture, also known as micropropagation.

Although tissue culture has revolutionised the production of orchids, bananas, lilies and many ornamental plants, it has only recently become a practical option for Clivias. Recent research has significantly improved propagation techniques, raising the question:

"Could tissue culture become the future of Clivia propagation?"

What is Tissue Culture?

Plant tissue culture is the process of growing small pieces of plant tissue (called explants) under sterile laboratory conditions on nutrient media containing sugars, vitamins and carefully balanced plant hormones.



Because every living plant cell contains the complete genetic blueprint of the plant, it is possible to regenerate an entire Clivia from only a tiny piece of tissue.

Depending on the technique used, thousands of genetically identical plants can eventually be produced from a single elite specimen.

A Brief History of Clivia Tissue Culture

Research into Clivia tissue culture began several decades ago, primarily to improve propagation of the highly sought-after yellow-flowering forms (*Clivia miniata* var. *citrina*).

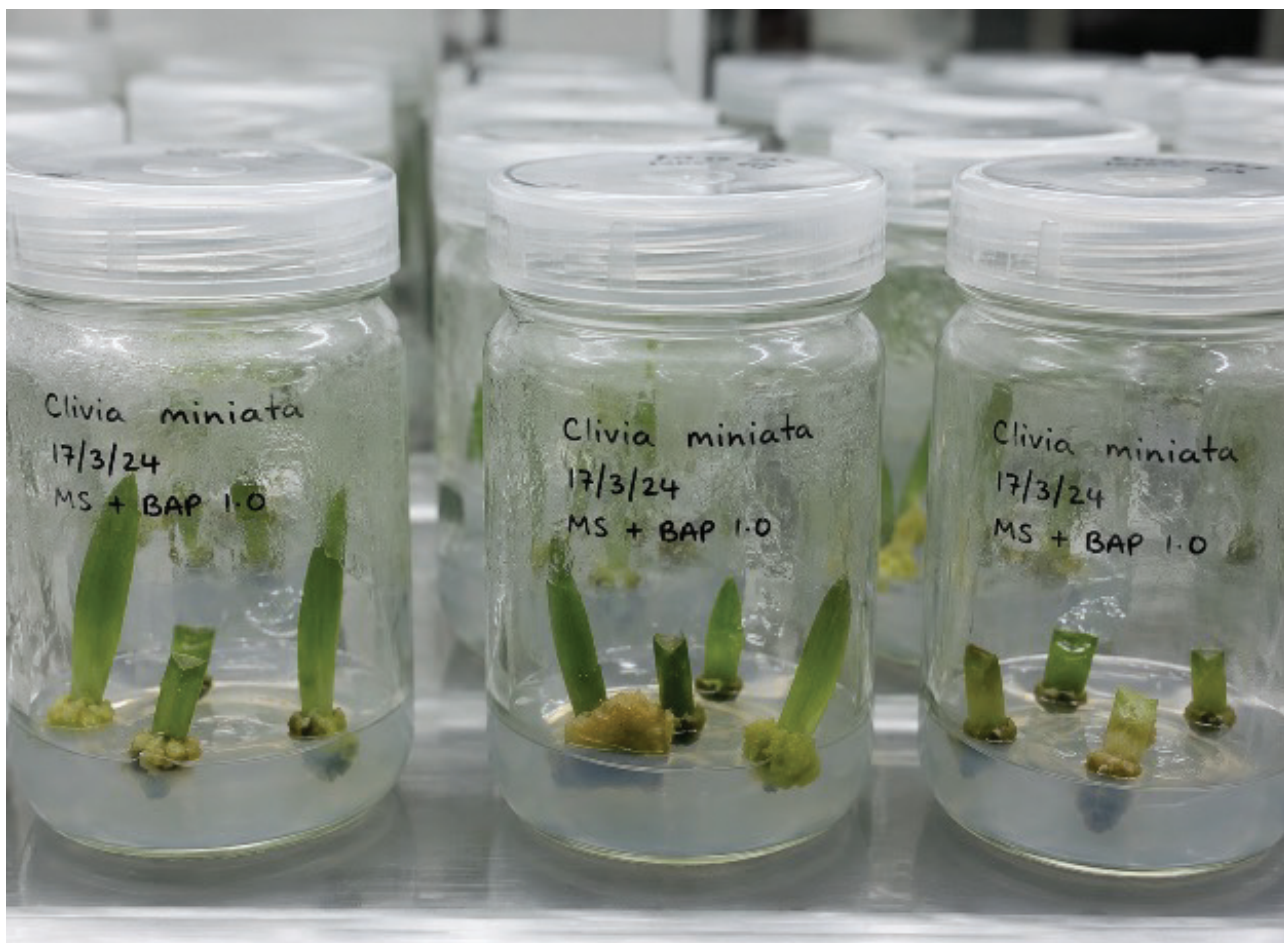
Early work demonstrated that tissues from flowers, fruit, embryos and other plant parts could successfully regenerate into new plants. However, multiplication rates were relatively low and commercial production remained difficult.

A breakthrough occurred in 2022, when researchers developed a highly efficient regeneration system using both organogenesis and somatic embryogenesis. Their protocol dramatically increased multiplication rates and produced reliable rooting, making commercial-scale propagation far more realistic than previously possible.

How Does It Work?

Although the laboratory techniques are highly specialised, the process follows several basic stages:

1. Selection of an elite parent plant.
2. Collection of sterile explants from suitable plant tissues.
3. Initiation of cultures on sterile nutrient media.
4. Multiplication through repeated production of shoots or embryos.
5. Root development under controlled conditions.
6. Hardening-off in a greenhouse before planting into potting media.



Depending on the protocol used, hundreds or even thousands of plants may ultimately be produced from a single parent.

Advantages of Tissue Culture

Rapid multiplication

A mature Clivia may produce only one or two offsets every few years. Tissue culture has the potential to produce hundreds or thousands of identical plants from the same specimen.

True-to-type plants

Unlike seedlings, tissue-cultured plants are clones. This means exceptional cultivars, including exhibition winners, yellow forms, greens, and variegates, can be reproduced while maintaining the characteristics of the original parent.

Disease-free propagation

Plants established under sterile laboratory conditions can be produced free from many pathogens and pests. This is particularly valuable when preserving historically significant cultivars.

Conservation

Some outstanding Australian cultivars exist as only

a single plant or a handful of offsets. Tissue culture offers a valuable tool for safeguarding rare genetics before they are lost through disease, accident or natural ageing.

Uniformity

Commercial growers value tissue culture because every plant develops at a similar rate and displays consistent growth and flowering characteristics.

Challenges and Disadvantages

Despite its enormous potential, tissue culture is not without challenges.

Cost

Establishing and maintaining sterile laboratories requires specialised equipment and highly trained staff. For many common orange Clivias, seed propagation remains far cheaper.

Slow growth

Although multiplication occurs rapidly inside the laboratory, Clivias remain naturally slow-growing plants. Plantlets still require months of acclimatisation before reaching saleable size.



Somaclonal Variation

One of the best-known risks of tissue culture is somaclonal variation. Occasionally, plants regenerated from callus tissue develop unexpected mutations. While some mutations may prove attractive, others may alter flower colour, leaf shape or plant vigour. For collectors wishing to preserve elite cultivars, maintaining genetic stability is essential.

Loss of Exclusivity

This is perhaps the greatest concern among collectors. If an exceptionally rare yellow or green Clivia can suddenly be reproduced thousands of times, its rarity and potentially its market value may decline significantly. Many breeders invest decades developing outstanding cultivars, making the decision to release material for tissue culture difficult.

Is Tissue Culture Right for Clivia?

For most hobby growers, probably not. Growing from seed remains one of the great pleasures of the Clivia hobby. Every seedling is unique, and the anticipation of seeing a flower open for the first time is part of what makes hybridising so rewarding. However, tissue culture has enormous value where the objective is to preserve and multiply exceptional individual plants.

Australia has produced many world-class Clivia cultivars over the past fifty years. Some exist in only one or two collections. Tissue culture provides an opportunity to preserve these plants for future generations while reducing the risk of losing irreplaceable genetics.

A Possible Role for the Clivia Society

The Clivia Society of NSW could one day consider establishing a *Clivia* Germplasm Preservation Program in partnership with a university or commercial tissue culture laboratory.

Such a program could:

- Preserve historically important Australian cultivars.
- Maintain disease-free backup collections.
- Safeguard rare genetics for future breeding.
- Provide propagation material for research.
- Reduce the risk of unique cultivars disappearing forever.

Rather than replacing traditional growing methods, tissue culture could complement them by ensuring Australia's finest Clivias are preserved for future generations.

Conclusion

Tissue culture is unlikely to replace seed raising or division for most Clivia enthusiasts. Hybridising will always depend on seedlings, and offsets remain a simple and reliable method of propagation. Nevertheless, advances in plant biotechnology have made tissue culture a realistic option for conserving and multiplying elite *Clivia* cultivars. As techniques continue to improve and costs fall, tissue culture may become an increasingly important tool for both commercial production and the preservation of Australia's remarkable Clivia heritage.

The future of Clivia growing may still begin with a seed, but preserving its very best cultivars could increasingly depend on a test tube.

Seed vs Tissue Culture

FEATURE	SEED PROPAGATION	TISSUE CULTURE
Genetic diversity	High – seedlings are genetically variable	None/very low – plants are clones
Time to flowering	Usually 3-7 years	Often shorter once established
Number produced	Limited by seed production	Hundreds to thousands
Identical to parent	No	Yes
Cost	Low	High
Suitable for breeding	Yes – excellent	No
Suitable for conserving elite clones	Poor – does not preserve the exact genotype	Excellent

New Asset Management System Introduced

Over the past few months, one of the projects undertaken by the Executive has been developing a comprehensive Asset Management System for the Clivia Society of NSW.

Like many volunteer organisations that have been operating successfully for decades, our Society has accumulated equipment, books, display materials, technology and other resources that are stored by various committee members and volunteers.

As committees change over time, it can become difficult to keep track of exactly what the Society owns, where assets are located and who is currently caring for them.

To ensure these valuable resources are properly managed for future generations, the Society has introduced a modern Asset Management System.

Every Society asset is now being recorded in a central register and assigned a unique Asset Identification Number. Each item will also receive its own QR code, allowing information about the asset to be accessed quickly using a smartphone. The register records details such as purchase information, photographs, location, custodian, condition and maintenance history, providing a complete record throughout the asset's life.

An important part of this project has been locating Society property currently held by members. We sincerely thank those members who have already responded with details of equipment and other items in their care. If you believe you have any Society property that has not yet been recorded, we would greatly appreciate hearing from you so it can be included in the register.

Introducing an asset register is not about creating additional bureaucracy. Rather, it is about protecting the Society's investment and ensuring future committees inherit accurate records. Members can be confident that equipment purchased with Society funds will be properly documented, maintained and available when required.

This initiative also supports several other governance improvements currently being implemented, including updated financial procedures, expenditure approvals and constitutional amendments. Together, these projects are designed to strengthen the Society while reducing the workload on future committees.

As your Executive continues to modernise the Society's administration, our goal remains simple: to preserve everything that has made the Clivia Society of NSW successful while introducing practical improvements that benefit our members for many years to come.



Embracing the Future – Our New Digital Spring Show System

By Adrian Bligh

One of the most exciting initiatives being introduced by the Clivia Society of NSW is a new digital management system for our annual Spring Show.

For many years, our shows have been organised using traditional paper-based processes. While these have served the Society well, advances in technology now allow us to improve efficiency, reduce administration and provide a better experience for exhibitors and visitors alike.

This year, we are beginning the transition to a modern digital system designed specifically for our Society.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	
1	Enter each exhibit once in this master register. Species / Group is selected from a controlled list; Flower Colour, Plant Name and Cultivar remain editable text. Display cards, QR controls and judging sheets are populated from this register.										
2											
3											
4											
5	Show Plant ID	Display No.	Exhibitor ID	QR Status	Exhibitor	Species / Group	Flower Colour	Plant Name	Cultivar	Parentage	Bree
6	CSNSW-2026-001	1		Pending							
7	CSNSW-2026-002	2		Pending							
8	CSNSW-2026-003	3		Pending							
9	CSNSW-2026-004	4		Pending							
10	CSNSW-2026-005	5		Pending							
11	CSNSW-2026-006	6		Pending							
12	CSNSW-2026-007	7		Pending							
13	CSNSW-2026-008	8		Pending							
14	CSNSW-2026-009	9		Pending							
15	CSNSW-2026-010	10		Pending							
16	CSNSW-2026-011	11		Pending							
17	CSNSW-2026-012	12		Pending							
18	CSNSW-2026-013	13		Pending							
19	CSNSW-2026-014	14		Pending							
20	CSNSW-2026-015	15		Pending							
21	CSNSW-2026-016	16		Pending							
22	CSNSW-2026-017	17		Pending							
23	CSNSW-2026-018	18		Pending							
24	CSNSW-2026-019	19		Pending							
25	CSNSW-2026-020	20		Pending							
26	CSNSW-2026-021	21		Pending							
27	CSNSW-2026-022	22		Pending							
28	CSNSW-2026-023	23		Pending							
29	CSNSW-2026-024	24		Pending							
30	CSNSW-2026-025	25		Pending							
31	CSNSW-2026-026	26		Pending							
32	CSNSW-2026-027	27		Pending							
33	CSNSW-2026-028	28		Pending							
34	CSNSW-2026-029	29		Pending							
35	CSNSW-2026-030	30		Pending							
36	CSNSW-2026-031	31		Pending							



QR Codes Bring Plants to Life

Every exhibit will now be allocated its own unique QR code. Visitors can simply scan the code with their smartphone to access additional information about the plant. Depending on the exhibit, this may include the cultivar or species name, parentage, flowering history, cultural notes, breeder or hybridiser information, awards, photographs and other interesting details.

Rather than trying to fit everything onto a small display card, the QR code allows us to provide much richer information while keeping the bench display neat and uncluttered.

It also creates a far more engaging experience for visitors who would like to learn more about Clivias and the remarkable work of our growers and hybridisers.



Supporting Our Exhibitors

The digital system has also been designed to make life easier for exhibitors.

Exhibitor information can be managed electronically, reducing repetitive paperwork and improving the accuracy of exhibit records. The system provides a foundation for future online entry options, simplified plant identification and more efficient show administration.

While traditional paper methods will continue to be available where needed, digital technology offers new opportunities to streamline many of the behind-the-scenes tasks performed by our dedicated volunteers.

Building a Digital Library

One of the long-term goals of this project is to create a growing digital library of Clivias exhibited at our Spring Shows.

Over time, this resource will become an invaluable reference, documenting many of the outstanding cultivars that have been displayed by Society members. It will help preserve the history of Australian Clivia breeding and provide inspiration for future growers and hybridisers.

A Foundation for the Future

The digital show system is only the beginning. As the project develops, there is potential to expand the system to include online exhibitor registration, digital judging records, historical archives, educational resources and other features that will continue to improve the Society's operations.

Importantly, this technology is not intended to replace the personal interaction that makes our Spring Show so enjoyable. Instead, it is designed to support our volunteers, improve efficiency and enhance the experience for everyone who attends.

Continuing to Evolve

Our Spring Show has always showcased the very best of Clivias. By embracing appropriate technology, we can ensure the way we present our plants continues to evolve while preserving the friendly atmosphere and traditions that make the Clivia Society of NSW so special.

We look forward to sharing this exciting new initiative with members and visitors at this year's Spring Show and welcome your feedback as we continue to develop the system for future years.

Ray Sidoti – A Lifetime Passion for Clivias

By Adrian Bligh and Ray Sidoti



Ray in his Clivia shade shed.



Flowerdale



(Benji x Kobi)

Every successful horticultural society is built on the dedication of people who quietly contribute their time, knowledge and enthusiasm behind the scenes. Within the Clivia Society of New South Wales, Ray Sidoti is one of those people whose passion for Clivias and generous support of fellow growers has helped shape both the Society and the wider Australian Clivia community.

Ray's fascination with Clivias stretches back almost forty years. Before discovering the genus, he was an enthusiastic grower of Gerberas, but everything changed when he noticed a remarkable hybrid Clivia growing at his friend Jack Backhouse's rare plant nursery in Beecroft. That single plant, originally from the garden of Allan Searle – well known to many Australians through *ABC's In Your Garden* – sparked a lifelong passion and began a journey that continues today.

Like many collectors in the early days of Australian Clivia growing, Ray searched tirelessly for unusual and superior plants. In the 1980s, he spotted an advertisement for cream Clivias priced at the then-considerable sum of \$35 each. He purchased two tiny offsets from Flowerdale Nursery in Victoria, affectionately referring to the plant as "Flowerdale", long before cream Clivias became widely known as *Aurea*. One of those plants was given to his friend Reg Gorton, while the clone itself later became an important parent in the breeding program of renowned Queensland hybridiser Kevin Walters.

Ray also became fascinated with the historic Cowlshaw hybrids, acquiring several original breeding lines from growers including Reg Gorton and Sinclair of Kenthurst. These plants represented an important part of Australia's early Clivia breeding history and provided valuable genetics that continue to influence modern hybrids.

His own hybridising has produced many outstanding plants. One particularly successful cross combined a very dark orange Belgian hybrid growing in Sydney's Bridge Street with Reg Gorton's famous "Large Head". The result was a line of plants producing large, perfectly rounded umbels on thick stems-qualities highly prized by exhibitors. Two of these exceptional hybrids were named **Benji** and **Kobi**, in honour of his grandsons.

Like every dedicated hybridiser, Ray understands that patience is one of the greatest virtues in plant breeding. Each flowering season brings the anticipation of discovering whether years of careful crossing have produced something truly special. Among his favourite surprises have been a beautiful cream-flowered Clivia with a green throat from an *Aurea* × *Triplet (Red)* cross and discovering that separate *Aurea* plants could successfully pollinate one another where self-pollination had failed. These observations reflect decades of careful experimentation and close observation.

Today Ray continues to breed with a clear vision. He seeks plants with large, tightly rounded “soccer ball on a stick” umbels carried proudly on thick stems, while his current interests focus on developing richer pink shades and deeper reds.

Ray’s commitment extends well beyond his own collection. As a foundation member of the Clivia Society of New South Wales, he was among the enthusiastic group of growers who came together in August 2013 to establish what has become one of Australia’s most active Clivia societies. Together with fellow founding members, he helped lay the foundations through countless hours of volunteer work and unwavering support.

*“His dedication is recognised
through success on the show bench.”*

As both a grower and exhibitor, Ray has developed a reputation for producing beautifully grown Clivias that consistently demonstrate excellent cultivation, strong foliage and outstanding flower presentation. His dedication has been recognised through success on the show bench, including winning his class in the international virtual Clivia shows of 2020 with one of his striking dark red hybrids.

Beyond growing and exhibiting, Ray has helped preserve Australia’s Clivia heritage through his photography and contributions to historical articles published by the Melbourne Clivia Group. His photographs documenting early Australian hybridising, including the work of G. Keith Cowlshaw, have helped record an important chapter in our horticultural history.

Those who know Ray appreciate that his greatest contribution is not simply the quality of his plants, but his willingness to share his knowledge. Whether exchanging pollen, seed, plants or practical advice, he has always embodied the collaborative spirit that makes the Australian Clivia community so welcoming. He has quietly supported Society meetings, exhibitions and countless activities, encouraged new growers and helped ensure that knowledge is passed from one generation to the next.

As the Clivia Society of New South Wales continues to grow, members like Ray Sidoti remain central to its success. His lifelong passion, generosity and quiet dedication remind us that while beautiful flowers may attract our attention, it is people like Ray who provide the roots that allow our Society to flourish.

References for page 14 – Tissue Culture of Clivias

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5. **Images are AI-generated.**



Sunray



'Hirao' Green x Hottie's 'Hirao'



Kobi



Vicki



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