

# SHEFFIELD & DISTRICT ORCHID SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER

JULY 2010



*Masd. coccinea* var. *xanthina*

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## EDITORIAL

They say you are never too old to learn, and some info that I was unaware of was divulged by our speaker this month. It is down to latin, and associated grammar. To most of us, latin is alien as it is a historic language, and no one uses it on a daily basis. Plant genus(es) can be either male or female, ending in 'ium' or 'a' respectively, and as a result the individual species within the genus should follow the same principal and end the same. If a genus has been renamed to the alternative, then the species should be renamed as well eg. *Epidendrum vitellinum* is now *Prostechea vitellina*. Allied to this is the colourform lacking pigment that should be called f. album or f. alba as appropriate. Well, well!

# BUSINESS

A small display (a single table) will be made at Ranmoor on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> July. This is when the parish centre showcases all of the activities that take place on the premises, and we are just one of them. Ted is co-ordinating ‘things’.

Congratulations to Dave and Mary Parkinson who have won Gold at both Hampton Court and the RHS show at Tatton Park.

A copy of the updated Society Rules (from the AGM) is enclosed with the newsletter.

A stock of orchid myst, and orchid fertiliser in small bottles is available for members to purchase at £1 each – a huge reduction on retail cost. These have been donated to the Society for fund raising following the recent PIOS, where the Society did fairly well, winning a Bronze (sadly not Silver as reported), and rosettes for Ian Dorman, Hilary Hobbs, and Brian Woodward. Thanks are accorded to all who contributed.

Ivens Orchids are closing down after many years due to retirement. This has been coming for a while, but attempts to find a buyer for the orchid business have been unsuccessful, and the plants are now being sold off cheaply – with any remnants being skipped! For a list of stock, and a price list, call 01727 863178 or email them at [info@ivensorchids.co.uk](mailto:info@ivensorchids.co.uk)

## TABLE SHOW

With our speaker overrunning somewhat, the table commentary was shortened a bit so that all could get home prior to darkness. The editor was nominated for the job – which on the whole went well with just a few words of advice from the speaker as well.

First up were a couple of Masdavellias. Normally considered as ‘small’ plants (not necessarily miniatures), these were large specimens. *coccinea* f. *xanthina* was a delightful yellowy orange,

though not quite as tall as some standard colour forms can get to. Shuttryana 'Lucy' is a coccinea hybrid that doesn't have the spike height, as the pink flowers are barely above the leaves. This is a huge plant in a very wide pot that will need splitting at some point otherwise it will become too large to transport. It isn't quite as good as it was last year when it won a CCC for Ted.

Ascda. Daryl Venables is a frequent table visitor with an elegant spike of medium sized mottled yellow/orange flowers. It is in need of some TLC as the basket has all but disintegrated, and a couple of yellowing leaves suggested stress from underwatering at this hot time of year (2 or 3 times a day would be better than the usual 1). Tol. Popoki 'Red' is a member of the *Oncidium* subtribe that grows in dryer conditions using fleshy leaves rather than pseudobulbs to retain moisture. The plant was mounted on a small bit of wood and hangs near the greenhouse roof for extra light. 3 smallish *Disas* demonstrated a range of colours being yellow, pink and red (*uniflora*).

Guaricyclia Kyoguchi has a most unusual name, being the result of the renaming exercise in the *Cattleya* alliance. An interesting short debate on the nomenclature of the parent was most enlightening, but still leaves an odd question. The plant had a nice tall spike with orange flowers that look to be what you would expect from the parents (and the result is considered better than either parent – see back cover). The parents are *C. aurantiaca* and *Pros. vitellina* – although the hybrid name appears to follow the former name of *Encyclia* – whilst other sources still have the plant as *Epi. vitellinum*. *aurantiaca* is now renamed (though not accepted by Guido) as **Gaurianthe** – itself contributing to the hybrid genus.

Paph. Clair de Lune 'Edgard van Belle' is frequently seen on the show bench, and is a large example of an easy to grow and long lasting (3 months) desirable slipper. It has been used as a cut flower for hotel displays. This is a cultivar that has been propagated enormously by Ivens Orchids, and should be available at quite reasonable prices. At the opposite end of the scale, *volonteanum* is a tiny species, with a very colourful flower of purples, greens and

brown. It is closely related to *hookerae*. *dayanum* is a medium sized species, in this case with 2 flower spikes of red/white/green flowers. This was about normal size, though larger examples do exist. *Phrag. wallissii* had a couple of pale yellow flowers that had been open for some time – unusual for many *Phrag*s as they tend to flower sequentially, however, those allied to *caudatum* open together and last longer. *Phrag. Mardi Gras* is one of those that open sequentially, and had 3 nice pink flowers on a tall spike with more to come. To date, this is the only registered hybrid from the relatively recently described *Phrag. brasiliense*.

In the Phals, Happy Birthday was a smallish but well named plant of pastel shades. JJ, another frequent visitor had a branched spike of delightful medium sized white flowers. Golden Embers had a couple of strong spikes of pale yellow flowers that was very effective.

The final 2 plants were *Bulbophyllum lobbii*. First was ‘Noddy’ - named after the loose nodding lip, a tallish flower within this variable species. The other was var. *Claptonense*, a much smaller and darker flower form that some consider a species in its own right (it still has a nodding lip though). A brief round of applause followed.

## **CATTLEYS BY GUIDO BRAEM**

Guido is currently on a lecture tour of the UK, taking in 4 different Societies within an 8 day period. Although he is originally from Belgium, and now lives in Germany, his English is excellent having studied Botany in the northeast of England. It is difficult to know just how to describe him, and many adjectives spring to mind. One thing that can be said is that he speaks his mind, and is consistent with what he says and believes. He is a pure botanist, so deals with only species, and has scant regard for DNA analysis, and for other botanists who “can’t read!” The rules of botany are extremely open to interpretation, but there does exist rules of priority on nomenclature which are frequently ignored by

taxonomists, however, as he admits, plant descriptions must be in latin, but the grammar doesn't matter too much, nor does the original location – as long as one is entered, and this has resulted in different continents being used in Victorian times to protect sources from other plant hunters.

With the title of “Cattleyas - a review with comments on the mess made by modern taxonomists” we looked forward to his views on ‘the mess’, and confusion that it has caused, as well as a possible way forward. Guido has probably mellowed in recent years and doesn't look to be as argumentative as he once was – possibly as he retires in a few years. He once spoke at a conference on the genome process (which has consumed many £millions of university funds), saying that at the end there would be more questions than answers, and that the whole process is flawed as there is more inter-relationship between genes, and their purpose in different situations (ie. root cells, leaf cells, and flower cells). He has little regard to the analysis and results of the DNA sequencers, as they are just lab staff, and not botanists. Their results within Cattleya appear to be based on certain common genes within the alliance, and therefore they are all the same. “It's just bull”, he says quite candidly. A lot of the things they now say are Cattleyas, Laelias or Sophronitis simply aren't. No comment was made on the new genera – which I guess he simply doesn't believe in. I feel that his views are that the most recent species descriptions are the most valid – from whichever botanist they come from, so a simple new publication could transform the whole system back. That doesn't mean that he is about to publish such a document!

Cattleyas were first described by John Lindley in 1821/2, with Lealias coming later in 1828. As they are sturdy canes, they were originally used for packaging within crates for other plants sent back from the Americas. Some of these crates were sent to a Mr Cattley, for whom John Lindley worked. He simply potted up this

packaging material in the hot house, whereupon they grew and flowered. Lindley named the genus *Cattleya* after his patron, and the rest is, as they say, history.

*Cattleyas* come from the tropical and sub-tropical Americas (south of Mexico to Brazil). There are 2 different types – the unifoliate (single leaf), and the bifoliate (2 leaves), although this can vary, with well grown bifoliate often having 3 leaves. The unifoliate are found in both Central and northern South America, but there is a gap between the 2 areas. Bifoliate are found continuously within the areas.

Starting with the bifoliate, Guido took us through each section.

***Aurantiaca*** – comes from Mexico, and has masses of small orange flowers. Some colonies are a little different in that they have flowers that don't open fully, and they must rely on a crawling insect pollinator rather than something that flies in.

***Bowringiana*** - has quite big flowers, generally lilac and blue, but also varies towards red.

***Skinneri*** - is the national flower of Costa Rica. It is smallish, and highly variable, from pink to blue, often with *alba* or *albescens* forms. NB. The misuse of *alba* is something that annoys Guido.

These three are those found in Central America, and the remainder are from Brazil, although they may creep over national boundaries from time to time.

***Aclandiae*** - has beautiful colours, on a smallish plant and flowers that mottled red, yellow and purple with a contrasting white or pink lip.

***Amethystoglossa*** – is a tall plant up to 1m high, with variable colours, usually mottled lilac or pink flowers. The lighter colour is the base, with the darker providing the spotting. The lip is usually the darker colour. There is also a boring *alba* form.

***Bicolor*** – variable in colour, usually brownish green with a pronounced sloping red lip with no side lobes. Var. *brasiliense* is more purple and red, with a larger lip.

***Dormaniana*** – is similar to bicolour, but the petals reflex badly, whilst the lip lobes incurve. It also has a difference to most Cattleyas in that it has 8 pollinia, however, 4 of these are rudimentary.

***Elongata*** – grows more as a terrestrial in very arid lime based soils alongside cacti. It has star shaped petals of purple brown and a rolled pink lip.

***Forbesii*** – has a very nice shape with wider petals than those above, and more of a rounded lip – it looks more like a ‘traditional’ Cattleya. Colour is variable, usually pale green to pink, with a whitish lip and a yellow throat.

***Granulosa*** – is both an epiphyte and a terrestrial in arid areas. It has a very long flat lip of mainly purple and petals varying from pale yellow green to pink and brown, sometimes with some spotting.

***Porphyroglossa*** – is very closely related to granulosa, but the flowers tend to be a bit more brown.

***Guttata*** – has mottled flowers of various colours and a lip that tends to be pink, but sometimes the rolled lobes are white. An alba form is green with a white lip that is incorrectly named.

***Tigrina*** (or *guttata* var. *leopoldii*) is almost indistinguishable from *guttata*.

***Harrisoniana*** – is a nice small plant with fuller shaped flowers of mainly pink, with a showy lip of varying colour.

***Loddigesii*** is tall plant with large flowers of pink hues and a nice white lip. An alba form is very pretty.

***Intermedia*** – is hugely variable in colour being whitish and pink to blue lips. Often these are peloric (petals the same colour as the lip), usually classed as var. *aquinii*. The normal form is pretty, and huge variation in *aquinii* is an acquired taste.

***Kerrii*** - is relatively recently discovered (1976), and is an attractive pale pink with a hooded lip (the side lobes meet fully).



***Schilleriana*** – is mainly brown to green mottled with a veined white/purple lip, and is very tall.

***Tenuis*** – is possibly a bicolor natural hybrid, and is very close to bicolor.

***Velutina*** – is a very nice brownish flower with a white purple veined lip that is a little more flamboyant.

***Violacea*** – is a species found beyond Brazil, where it has crept into Peru at the top of the Amazon basin. It is mainly pink to purple, with some white on the lip.

***Walkeriana*** is a shortish plant with roundish flowers. The species is odd in that it has vegetative growths and floral growths (dimorphism – having 2 body types). The flowers appear rounder due to the large petals, and a relatively long lip. Usually pink, alba forms exist, and semi-alba ones inbetween.

***Dolosa*** – is very similar to *walkeriana*, and may be a natural hybrid.

Moving onto the unifoliate;

***Araguaiensis*** – is a plant that looks more like an Epidendrum. It comes from the River Araguaí area, and has rolled brown petals and a whitish lip. It is notably hard to cultivate.

***Dowiana*** – comes from Panama, and is noted for having a colourful lip. The petals tend to be pale yellow, with the lip reddish veined. Some petals can tend towards pink, whilst retaining yellow sepals. Aurea is virtually indistinguishable, having a ‘more colourful’ lip.

***Gaskelliana*** - is a smelly flower of generally pink colouration. An Alba form has yellow inside the trumpet.

***Iricolor*** – comes from Ecuador, and is cream, with a colourful lip of white, yellow and pink.

***Jenmanii*** – is a blousier flower of pale pastel colours lilac to pink with a deeper coloured narrower lip. Alba forms exist.

***Labiata*** - is the 'standard' and original flower within *Cattleya*, dating from 1824. Over the years most of the others have started out as varieties of this species. It has quite a full flower and a very frilly lip. Colours are highly variable from white through to pink, sometimes with some spotting. It can grow as a terrestrial in arid areas.

***Warneri*** - is just about identical to *labiata*, with a similar colour range. However it flowers in spring.

***Mendellii*** - is another similar plant, but has a narrower tubed lip, and occurs in a different location.

***Lawrenciana*** - is a northern growing plant with a long large funnel (or trumpet). Flowers are pink to white.

***Lueddemanniana*** - is similar to *lawrenciana*, and has a slightly fuller flower.

***Luteola*** - is a small plant with yellow green flowers with a lip that doesn't fully roll, with some red inside. Var. *mooreana* is much taller.

***Maxima*** - is from Ecuador, and has a long rhizome. It is tall with reflexed pink petals and a veined lip.

***Mossiae*** - is very close to *maxima*, with more colour variation.

***Percivalliana*** - is a northern plant. It is a fast grower, and forms specimen plants quickly of red or pink smelly flowers with a deeper coloured funnel.

***Rex*** - was described originally (Linden, 1838) as ugly. The flowers are white with a more colourful lip of red & yellow, and can be quite small to the size of plant.

***Schroderae*** - is a great plant! It has large blousy flowers of white to red.

***Trianae*** - has a good lip. The flowers are flat and can become 'square', and tend to be whitish. *F. chocoensis* is more cupped (though is often known as *C. quadricolour* - Ed).

***Tricopiliochila*** - is a name from Guido as he believes the original (*eldorado/wallisii*) is invalid. The name means it has a lip like a

funnel. The flowers are white to pink with yellow inside the funnel.

*Warsewiczii* – is a huge flower of mainly white with varying colours on the lip.

After a few questions a hearty round of applause was given.

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY...**

### **MONTHLY MEETINGS AT RANMOOR – 2PM**

- August 8<sup>th</sup>** John Gay – Phrag. Kovachii – a Peruvian experience. An enticing subject on one of the most fascinating discoveries of recent years.
- Sept 12<sup>th</sup>** Chris Squire – orchids my way.
- Oct 10<sup>th</sup>** Chris & Jean Barker – more on Taiwan

### **OTHER SHOWS**

- August 7-8<sup>th</sup>** Scone Palace Orchid Show, Perth.
- August 28-29<sup>th</sup>** BOGA Orchid Fair at Dinton Pastures, Berkshire.
- Sept 19<sup>th</sup>** CANWOS annual Show. \* SDOS exhibiting. \*
- Sept 26<sup>th</sup>** EMOS show at Bottesford. \* SDOS exhibiting. \*

Society website - [www.sheffieldorchids.org](http://www.sheffieldorchids.org)



Above; *Guaricyclia* Kyoguchi

Below; Part of Ted Greaves' *Phalaenopsis* collection in his conservatory.

