

**Sheffield & District  
Orchid Society  
Newsletter  
March 2014**



**March Plant of the Month  
*Dendrobium kingianum***

# Officers of the Society

## President & BOC representative

Richard Baxter  
Hall Farm House  
Shelton, Newark,  
NG23 5JG  
**01949 850713**  
[sheffieldorchids@ineedbroadband.co.uk](mailto:sheffieldorchids@ineedbroadband.co.uk)

## Vice President

Julie Binks  
254 Abbey Lane  
Sheffield S8 0BW  
**0114 236 1900**

## Chairman

Brian Woodward  
23, School Lane,  
Stainton, Maltby,  
Rotherham S66 7QX  
**01709 790427**  
[Woodward.d@sky.com](mailto:Woodward.d@sky.com)

## Administration Secretary & Show Co-ordinator

Carolyn McQueen  
3, Milton Court,  
Swinton,  
South Yorkshire,  
S64 8RE  
**01709 587208**  
[carolyn.m.mcqueen@gmail.com](mailto:carolyn.m.mcqueen@gmail.com)

## Programme Secretary, & Vice President

Ted Croot  
11 Marsh House Road,  
Sheffield S11 9SP  
**0114 236 2283**  
[annette.ted@talktalk.net](mailto:annette.ted@talktalk.net)

## Editor and Publicity

John Garner  
159 Lightridge Road  
Fixby  
Huddersfield HD2 2HS  
**01484 548764**  
[denise.hosker@virgin.net](mailto:denise.hosker@virgin.net)

## Treasurer & Membership Secretary

Norman Jenkins  
Acorns, 24, St Erics Road,  
Doncaster  
DN4 6NG  
**01302 534900**  
[norm@normanjenkins.plus.com](mailto:norm@normanjenkins.plus.com)

## Librarian

Jeff Bagnall  
128, Huddersfield Road,  
Meltham,  
Holmfirth,  
HD9 4AG  
**01484 318113**  
[jw.bagnall@ntlworld.com](mailto:jw.bagnall@ntlworld.com)

## BOC Representative

Silvia Maunder  
14 Whitechapel Close  
Leeds LS8 2PT  
**0113 273 1347**

## Any other member

Peter Battle  
Jim Charlesworth

# Business

Chatsworth is now just around the corner, and we are looking for volunteers to work in all areas. Most of the arrangements are now in place, and we just wish for decent weather. Final arrangements will be made at the April meeting which is the last one prior to the show.

Our next show is at Bowburn on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> April. John Garner and Charles Ford will mount the exhibit, and a request for plants was made.

We are now at the final reminder for reduced price tickets for Malvern. Anyone interested must contact Carolyn by the April meeting at the very latest.

The Society has had an invite to mount a display at the Botanic gardens on the weekend of June 8-9th. This clashes with our monthly meeting on the Sunday, and we are currently investigating the postponement of the

meeting to man the display. Hopefully we should be able to recruit some extra members.

Members were reminded that although the BOC Yearbook was available as a booklet, there is always a more up to date version available online - <http://www.british-orchid-council.info/Docs/BOCYbk2014web.pdf>

## The Table Show

John Garner gave this month's commentary, and started on the left hand side with Rth. Young-Min Orange that had opened more since last month. two bright orange clusters of flowers really stood out. C. Karae Lyn Sugiyama was a large flowered white hybrid with 2 flowers. It was thought that this was a hybrid from Bow Bells, but actually isn't, although it shares many of the same breeding lines. Ctt. Hsiang-Yu Red Pearl 'Red Dragonfly' was just opening, and will look stunning in due course when the 8 medium sized scarlet flowers are fully open. C. Gila Wilderness 'Grandeur' was large flowered with red and white flowers that were quite eye catching (see back cover). C. Phil Sayer was a small plant with orange flowers. Bc. Binosa 'Wabash Valley' is a spectacular and eye catching flower. Although not large, it has green petals and sepals with a white lip mottled with purple

Masd. *civilis* 'Don' was a large plant with tall leaves and short flower spikes which made the pale yellowy brown flowers hard to appreciate. Coel. *glandulosa* was a smallish plant with a single arching spike of white flowers. Pterostylis *curta* is regularly seen at this time of year, and 3 pots full showed the green hooded flowers off to their best. Cym. King Arthur 'Imperial' is another regular March flowering plant, and had 2 spikes of mainly yellow flowers.

Quite a number of slippers are out at this time, with Paph. Prim n' Proper still looking well - as was Pittsburg, now with the second flower fully open. Paph. Black Diamond is an old hybrid with a bad name as it is nowhere near black (see back cover). It is mainly pink and white (from *delenatii*) with a pretty shape (from *fairrieanum*). Paph. *villosum* var. *boxallii* f. *atratum* is a lovely flower and quite different from the standard *villosum*, and is more star shaped. Hopefully in a few years time it will have multiple flowers, and will be spectacular. Paph. Flame of Sunset 'Chilton' was just the opposite with a huge almost round flower of red spots. It just shows how breeding can take natures wonderful creations

and turn them into monsters (some would say ugly). Paph. Woodland Glade 'Fixby' was a smallish mainly yellow flower with a brown stripe and a few spots. The medium size made it very pretty, although it should have been quite a bit bigger. Paph. Dusty Miller 'Shelley' is another old hybrid, and part of the old white breeding programs. The final 2 plants were both *primulinum* hybrids. Firstly x Ferox (a huge flower) created an intermediate sized yellow flower - both parents are yellow. The second was Lyro Petite Fleur (x *barbigerum*) which produced 2 smallish yellow flowers of good shape, and doesn't take up too much room either! Den. *kingianum* was exceptionally well grown with good leaves and 3-4 short spikes from each mature growth. It had small pink and white flowers, and was also the Plant of the Month (see front cover). Den. Polar Fire was quite a small plant that had grown from a keiki, and was now getting going and should be better next year. *Dendrochilum glumaceum* is one of the chain orchids and a specimen sized plant. It was still opening, and should be much better next month. Thank You John.

## **Dendrobium *kingianum***

This one is a division of a plant that I have been growing on now for 11 years. I keep it high up in good light all year, with little shading in the summer and with none at all during the winter.

Temperatures in that part of my Conservatory regularly reach 28-30C and go down to 14C on winter nights but this a very temperature tolerant species, growing naturally in hot temperatures at sea level (19 to 40 C ) and much cooler on the maritime slopes of the Blue Mountains in NSW and South Queensland so it will acclimatise to your growing conditions, the only necessity being a high light level. Feed and water it well (I might say copiously) during growth, allowing drying off in the autumn until you can see that the new buds forming at the tops of the pseudobulbs are really flowers or all you will get are kiekis!

The growing medium is a mix of medium bark and coco husk with a little charcoal thrown in for seasoning. The bark seems to stand up well with little sign of deterioration. **Charles Ford**

# Orchids of & in New Zealand

## David Menzies

David has been to talk to us on many occasions and is well known to us, and throughout the orchid world. His career in the UK has taken in Kew and the Glasgow Botanic Gardens, but he is still a native New Zealander – a country he returns to every 2-3 years to visit family. In particular this is New Plymouth in the North Island, and his last visit there was towards the end of 2013 to coincide with an orchid show.

There are over 100 native orchid species in New Zealand, most are terrestrial and spring flowering. There is quite a climatic variation with the tip of the North Island being over 1000 kilometres from the bottom of the South Island. It has a similar land area to the UK, but with a population of just 4.5 million there are more open spaces and parks to ensure that the species rich flora isn't under undue pressure.

Auckland in one of the main cities towards the top of the North Island, and is very pretty with a lot of colourful street planting and parks. The climate is quite benign being frost free, with plenty of rain and sunshine to provide humidity and ideal growing conditions. Many of the parks have large conservatories/orangeries dating back to the 1930s where many of the more tender plants will thrive in 'unheated conditions' – where the extra few degrees make a big difference overnight. One heated greenhouse provides for the warmer growing plants. A lot of orchids have been here probably since that time, and are sadly no longer labelled with a lack of knowledge passed down over the years. The display plants are used for formal civic displays. It is easy to put names to the plants – for those who know what they are. There is a huge group of *Den. densiflorum* with 9 specimen plants. Vandas are grown over 2m tall. Externally in the parks there are wooden shade houses which grow Phrags and cymbidiums that are use as foliage when out of flower.

Moving about 100 miles south east we arrive at Rotarua which is at the southern end of the large Lake Rotarua. This is in one of the island's volcanic locations, and there is an odour of sulphur that hangs around the pits of boiling mud. It isn't an area noted for plants, especially orchids, but is well worth visiting for its native Maori heritage.

A further 100 miles south west brings us to the west coast of the north island, and to New Plymouth. It is an area that gets more weather with the

westerly wind. The city has grown somewhat over the last few decades with an artificial port that supports the offshore oil industry. The city is dominated by Mt. Taranaki just to the south (It is described by Wikipedia as ‘an active but quiescent stratovolcano’) which has defined the coastline as well as providing rich fertile volcanic soils. The fertility has allowed this smaller city to be well planted and colourful. David has seen *Pleione formosana* growing epiphytically. Many orchids are grown in unheated conservatories – both in the parks, and by amateurs. This area is a real hotbed for native orchids. Many are related to others in Australia by genera, although they have mostly evolved into endemics. There are around 18 species of *Thelymitra*, most are blue, with others paler, and some white ones. These ‘Sun orchids’ grow up to 1’ tall. As in Australia the plants have interesting names – or group names. There are the ‘Potato orchids’ of genus *Gastrodia*, the ‘Leek orchids’ of *Corunastylis* & *Prasophyllum*, the ‘Onion orchids’ of *Microtis* which grow with a hollow leaf through which the flowers come (like the onion). These can apparently grow like a weed! The ‘Bird orchids’ are the genus *Simpliglottis*. Many species of *Pterostylis* are to be found, and are known as the Greenhoods. *Pter. curta* however isn’t one of them! The Greenhoods also include the genus *Diplodium*, which are slightly different. The *Drymoanthas* have flowers that resemble small fleshy Phals, and are actually epiphytes. Up in the mountain the helmet orchids grow in loose leaf litter on clay banks. These are quite short plants, sometimes just 1” tall, and include several species of *Corybas*, generally of a reddish colour. Closely related to these are the *Anzybas* with flowers more tubular shaped. Also related are *Nematosera* species which have spikier petals, and are known as the spider orchids. Many of these species have evolved/adapted to the different sides of the mountain and what else grows there.

David’s sister, and brother George still live in the area, and he grows a lot of cool orchids in shade including lots of *Masdevallias* – *ignea*, *falcata*, and the hanging *caesia* grow well alongside homemade hybrids. *Sarcochilus hartmannii* has grown into a huge specimen plant, and *Cym. tigrinum* stays a relatively compact plant. Plants were being readied for the upcoming show in the local sports hall, with particular emphasis on grouping individual *Pleiones* into large display pots, all facing the same way (no, it’s not cheating...). There were a lot of Society displays in the centre, mainly at floor level, and most contained cool growing plants such as *Masd*, *Pleuros*, *Coelogyne*, *Pleiones*, and seed grown *Epidendrum*s of

all colours. A deep red Cym. *devonianum* hybrid was excellent. Masd. Gold Purse (*veitchiana* x *Notosibirica*) was one of the best, with the huge Cym. Cricket (*devonianum* x *madidum*) being the Grand Champion. NB. The website <http://www.nativeorchids.co.nz/> has a lot of information on native species and a few natural hybrids. A few questions were asked, and a hearty round of applause followed. Thank you David.

## **Dates for your diary...**

### **Monthly meetings at Ranmoor – 10am**

April 13 <sup>th</sup>	Forum
May 11th	No meeting due to Chatsworth show.

### **shows/exhibits/conferences etc**

<b>April 6th</b>	NEEOS Annual Show, Bowburn. ** SDOS exhibiting**
<b>April 11-12th</b>	RHS London Orchid Show
<b>May 3rd</b>	Raby Castle Orchid show, Staindrop.
<b>May 11th</b>	SDOS Annual show at Chatsworth. It will soon be here! Plants required please.

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



Above: - C. Gila Wilderness 'Grandeur'

Below: - Ignore the inferred colour, this is Paph. Black Diamond

