

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



**October Plant of the Month  
*Dendrobium oligophyllum***

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# Business

The treasurer wished to remind everyone that annual subs fall due now and he will gratefully accept your contributions.

Ted is to stage a display the following weekend (19<sup>th</sup>) at Dawlish for the Devon OS weekend, which proved to be a success.

The AGM will be held in December and in accordance with the rules nominations for vacant (or retiring positions) close today. Vacancies are for Chairman, Librarian, Any other Member and possibly Secretary depending on nominations and voting. The Agenda for the AGM is enclosed, and please note that there are still several vacancies to be filled!

Trophies will be awarded at the AGM, and should be returned on that day. If you aren't attending the AGM and have a trophy to return then please do so in November or pass it onto another member who will attend. We will be holding a DIY buffet, and a list will put out in November for contributions.

A simple questionnaire was passed around members to complete, and this concerns the ongoing business of the Society. A copy is enclosed with the

newsletter for those members who didn't attend on the day. There is an explanatory note about the reason for the questionnaire which should be read first. A summary of the results will be published once all the replies are collated.

## The Table Show

John Garner gave this month's table commentary, and started at the left with a group of Phals. Charmer was first up with 2 tall branched spikes of nicely veined pinky orange flowers. The plant had been purchased at Chatsworth this year from Burnhams, and had lost just about all of the flowers that it had at that time, but had now started to produce new ones at the end of each branch. These were quite closely spaced as tends to happen with this type of growth, and gave an overall impression of a well clipped poodle. A lost label pink one was next with a very well presented arched spike with evenly spaced flowers – well grown. There were 2 more unlabelled pink phals with arching spikes, but of a lesser quality. Diamond White was a plant in recovery with a shortish spike of 3 almost pure white flowers (as would be expected in the commentator's opinion, but there followed a light hearted short debate on the colour of diamonds – with no real conclusion). This should look much better on its next flowering. *equestris* is a small phal species with small pink flowers, and had been used many times in hybridisation to create smaller more floriferous plants. It has a tendency to produce kiekies, and this plant came into being in this way. An unknown phal had a tall branched spike with harlequin type flowers of red and white. The original spike had flowered a long time ago, as had the next branch, and this was the third coming on the same spike – what value for money!

C. Walkerinter (*walkeriana* f. *alba* x *intermedia* f. *alba*) is a compact Cattleya with small pure white flowers that are very pretty. C Margaret Stewart is a *loddigesii* hybrid (x Dorothy Mackaill), and is also compact. It had 3 flowering spikes with eleven white flowers all in a row (see back cover). It was quite spectacular, and hopefully will go onto becoming a specimen with lots of flowers. C Ports of Paradise 'Green Ching Hwa' is a well known large flowered hybrid. The colour is very much on the boundary of green and yellow, and opinions vary to its colour, but green will suffice.

Den. *oligophyllum* is a small species, now of a specimen size with multiple growths up to 8" long. Most of the growths are arched, and bear a number of tiny white flowers with a light green throat. This was judged to be the plant of the month (see front cover).

Two plants of Paph. *barbigerum* showed the variation within the species. This is a true miniature species that doesn't take up much greenhouse room. *bellatulum* is a species with a slightly larger flower of a spotted white. Its spike of 2" was said to be quite tall as it often flowers within the leaves spoiling the view. *charlesworthii* is another smallish species with an intense pink dorsal flower. The

plant was well grown and really should have a few more flowers on it. Phrag. Urgandiae was very tall (and only just fitted into the owners car) with 2 flowers of good shape. Normally they tend to be sequential, so 2 is good, and with at least 1 more bud to come. This was a first flowering, so will probably be larger in the future.

Aliceara Peggy Ruth Carpenter is well known and has been mass produced over the years. It has strong pink and white flowers, and is a great plant to start a cool collection with. This one was growing strongly with 2 spikes of multiple flowers. *Miltonia clowesii* is a smallish plant from the Chatsworth collection. It is a coolish grower producing intricate small flowers of barred bronze petals and a small whitish labellum, and is very attractive.

The final plant was described as a weed as it was almost out of control. *Stenoglottis longifolia* is a terrestrial from South Africa that produces tall spikes of tiny pink flowers, and this example had 5 spikes with the tallest approaching 4'. The spikes had intermingled and it was starting to look a bit untidy. Like *Spiranthes* it tends to flower towards the end of the UK summer, so tends to be kept indoors, and the extra warmth probably produces this untidy effect.

## October Plant of the Month

### ***Dendrobium oligophyllum***

(Syn. *Den tixieri*) This plant was a piece of a much larger plant growing at Papa Rohl's nursery in Paradies, near Souest, in central Germany. We were on a visit in 2005 with Nev and Ruth Brown who knew the Rohls well and had been there several times before.

In the wild it grows in mainland Thailand (not, apparently, in peninsular Thailand), Cambodia and Vietnam where it flowers through most of the year. It occurs at altitudes of between 2000 and 2500 feet and where there is good light. Summers are wet with temperatures between 20C at night and 30C by day so it's really a warm-growing orchid. "Winters" are drier and while the temperature may drop to about 15C at night it rarely falls below 30C by day.

In my greenhouse it does get good light but the thermostat is set at 16C at night (it drops lower when there's a power cut!) and 24C by day - only on a sunny day might it shoot up to 30C. It's not exactly ideal but it survives and flowers pretty well. It only flowers in the autumn though but the flowers are long-lasting and it's usually in bloom for several weeks.

Clearly it is a very tolerant and adaptable species! **Ted Croot**

# The Photographic competition

The competition was launched earlier this year, and today was the day to review and assess the entries. The entries have been collected by Ian Wilson who covered the entry criteria upon which they would be reviewed. Entries had been received both electronically and digitally, and converted to digital to be presented. The format for today's review was to look at each entry in some detail from subject matter, presentation and use of camera facilities. After this all the pictures would run through on a loop so that each member could then consider which was the best one and cast a single vote for their favourite. These would then be counted in isolation with the winner being announced at the AGM in December.

It had been hoped that the pictures would be shown in numerical order alternating between the entrants, but due to a slight technical hitch they appeared in a random numerical order. It was noted that the pictures were of a high pixel count, however, the projector was of a lesser projection quality so that they may appear less good (high quality digital projectors are very expensive). The displayed entries were still of a good quality, and in fact minor defects were hidden within the transposition process (?). In order of appearance the entries were as follows;

1 was a white flower on an exhibit, and was in quite close focus with a blurred background so that all the focus was on the flower.

10 was an *Ascocenda* (now *Vanda*), also with close focus as above. Aperture control was required to achieve this as there are several flowers for the camera to select rather than the single flower above.

15 was a *Coelogyne* with a similar style to the above.

6 was an interesting novelty picture featuring *Phrag. besseae* with a tiny doll placed inside the pouch (she looked very comfortable there).

8 was a very close up picture of the staminodal area of *Paph. micranthum*. These are often difficult to achieve as good lighting is required to avoid shadows etc. This was very good as it showed all of the surrounding hairs quite clearly.

16 was a *Paph* flower in strong light mainly from above that created an almost evil looking shadow across the dorsal and into the pouch and petals. Not all *Paphs* are evil though...

5 was an old picture from our days at the Hallamshire Hospital, and featured one of David Bink's pink waterfall *Miltoniopsis*. It's a great shame that we haven't seen any of these plants in flower for a long time.

7 was another *Miltoniopsis* of the same vintage, this time a good white with a red mask.

9 was *Cattleya* 'Green Pig' with a good close up of the flower and its very frilly lip.

17 was a UK terrestrial, possibly a *Dactylorhiza* in close up showing the typical pinky purple spotted flowers.

4 was an interesting multifloral Paph with 1 open flower and 1 just opening with the petals crawling out. This had originally been a slide, copied to print and then scanned to become a digital image, and had lost a little clarity when viewed on screen. Through the projector it looked quite clear.

14 was *Den. pierardii* var. *cucullatum* (Sym. *aphyllum*) showing off its good pale flowers against a strong and contrasting blue background.

18 was a Phal with pale yellow flowers and a pink blush also against a deep blue background.

20 was a *Cattleya* with medium sized flowers and a tubular lip of speckled orange. This type of flower is more of a challenge as the flower is more 3D than simply flat as with most phals etc. As a close up it is harder to get into proper focus. The blue background helped to get it into a sharper contrast.

2 was a terrestrial in situ up in Scotland. It is probably a *Dactylorhiza* species, and it was on a windy day which didn't help. This type of picture can easily confuse the camera if in auto mode as it is just as likely to focus on nearby vegetation leaving a blurred orchid. This image was sharp, and well done.

12 was a standard supermarket phal with a large number of mottled white flowers. A large area of flowers can be difficult to focus onto, but on this occasion the camera was left in auto mode, and worked it all out for itself resulting in a decent shot.

11 was *Restrepia contorta* which had come from one of the monthly raffles. As with the majority of these species it has a tiny flower, so a close up is necessary even to get an overall view. The owner had used good magnification which showed up the petals to good effect.

3 was a deep pink/purple *Cattleya* shot against the blackened back of the greenhouse door. Greenhouse shots need just a bit more care as the humid atmosphere can soon mist up a camera lens where there are temperature variations between indoors and outdoors when a camera hasn't had time to acclimatise. This had been avoided and the shot had good clarity.

19 was a yellow *Oncidium* – Sterling Tiger, with several well spaced flowers. A simple point and click shot was used for this picture which lets the camera do what it needs to do, and a good picture resulted.

NB. There wasn't an image number 13, so it hasn't been missed out. Many thanks to Ian for a good critique of members efforts, and we await the announcement of the result with baited breath!

# Notes from the Antipodes

We all know that Cymbidiums are cool growing orchids don't we? Well here's one that most definitely is not - Cymbidium Canaliculatum. Found in Cutta-Cutta (Many Stars) about 30Km south of Katherine in the Northern Territory. Temperature is 43°C (109.5°F). Humidity is 0%, Last rainfall was three months ago, Shade - Full Sun!!

A population growing in open Sclerophyll forest in a Karst (Limestone pavement) landscape on Eucaliptus trees, which is unusual for epiphytic orchids due to the fact that Eucalipts shed their bark every year. Canaliculatum manages to "hold on" by growing in holes in the trunks or on broken stumps of hollow branches. These trees have been hollowed out by Termites and the orchid's root system is always contained within the hollowed out tree.

The rocky terrain limits undergrowth and therefore the frequency and severity of bushfires, non-the-less no plants were seen to be growing within reach less than three metres above the ground.

Despite the lack of rainfall you can see from the picture these plants were actually in bud and on the point of blooming (back Cover). **Charles Ford**

## Dates for your diary...

### Monthly meetings at Ranmoor – 10am

Nov 9<sup>th</sup>                      WOC 21 - John Garner. A complete round up of all the pretty flowers from South Africa.

Dec 14<sup>th</sup>                    **AGM & buffet. Please attend!**

### shows/exhibits/conferences etc

Nov 29<sup>th</sup>                    BOGA pre-Christmas Autumn fair, Solihull

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



Above - *Cattleya Margaret Stewart*

Below - *Cymbidium canaliculatum* from the Australian Northern Territories.

