

SHEFFIELD & DISTRICT ORCHID SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2011



**APRIL PLANT OF THE MONTH
*PAPHIOPEDILUM JAVANICUM***

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BUSINESS

The Society mounted a small display at the annual NEEOS show with plants supplied mainly by Richard and Charles. Our only class winner was Richard's *Cochlioda vulcanica*, with AMs for Richard's Paph. *gratrixianum*, and Charles's Phaius *tankervilleae* & Den. New Star. Although the display wasn't poor, additional plants would have been appreciated.

Our own annual show is at Chatsworth on May 8th – just a matter of days away. It is just a single day show, although setting up is from 2pm Saturday 7th and up to 9am on the Sunday (judging commences at 09.15 sharp). The SDOS display this time will be table mounted rather than on the floor. The 'old' floor display is quite large and last year there weren't enough plants to do it justice. Using tables will allow us to reduce or enlarge the display this year if necessary. As many plants as possible would be appreciated from members, and by 2pm on Saturday if possible. If you are bringing plants for the display then please let John Williams have the names for the labels by Wednesday 4th please. Doors open at 10.30, and refreshments will be available. Julie and Janet are co-ordinating the catering, and would appreciate cakes, buns, and assistance of any kind on the day. Please contact Julie if bringing food so that we can make sure that we have the variety of food that works. Volunteers are sought to man the entrance desk, the info/help desk and also for the car park.

THE TABLE SHOW

This month's talk was given by Ted Croot, who had quite a large number of plants to cover. Paphs covered the left end, so Ted started with Paph. *druryi*, a pretty yellow flower with a brown stripe on the dorsal and petals. It is an isolated species from south India. *urbanianum* is a fairly small species with mottled leaves and was pretty, although not yet fully open. *hirsutissimum* is a colourful flower of mainly purple with hairy margins. *tonsun* was fairly short, with a pale green/brown flower. *hainanense* is very similar to *appletonianum* which some (Cribb) think is just a variety. *acmodontum* is another colourful species of red green and white. *callosum* var. *sublaeve* is a smaller variety with drooping petals, whereas var. *mwang sonakla* is shorter and smaller – more of a miniature. *Javanicum* was tall and elegant, and judged to be the plant of the month (*front cover*). It was well grown, and an additional growth had a bud to come in future weeks. Cribb believes this to be a variety of *bullenianum*. In the hybrids, Icy Icy Wind was back after a couple of months, now with 4 flowers open and showing the opening green tinge fading to white (with spots). St. Ouen was a good strong yellow now just passed its best having been trailed around a bit. Miss World x Crossbow was a first flowered seedling with a spotty flower that shows promise. Phrag. *Schroderae* is a large plant with a tall spike of slightly drooping deep pink flowers. Den. *aphyllum* was a good form of the plant with a strong wide lip. The flowers are pale pink, and the plant still had some leaves left – these are usually shed during the winter rest. Another leafless plant was *Catasetum Rebecca Northern*, and this has clusters of small white/pale pink flowers. *Cattleya skinneri* is a tall species with several flowers of strong pink, and it is the national flower of Costa Rica. Rsl. Firedance 'Patricia' is a good strong orange (*back cover*), and the more compact Ctt. Hazel Boyd had a couple of deep red flowers. *Serapias lingua* is a European native terrestrial that needs to be frost free. It grows in winter, and then flowers as the leaves start to fade. It has pretty purple flowers. Masd. *ignea* var. *rosea* isn't as tall as some clones of the species can get, and is free flowering of pink flowers. Odm. *luteopurpureum* is a cool growing species that had 3 spikes from the same bulb – obviously growing well. The medium sized flowers are mainly yellow with brown bars, and can bloom for a long time – sometimes flowering itself to death. An unknown plant had spiky orange flowers, and is probably a Brassada hybrid (Ada x Brassia). Odm *ramulosum* (syn. *Cyrtochilum densiflorum*) is a cold species with a 5' spike. The flowers are small and are brown/yellow. It comes from the Eastern Cordilleras. *Zelenkocidium Cheiro Kukoomay* has an interesting name, but has small plain yellow flowers on a pendant spike. This smallish plant has 2 spikes in flower, with a further 2 to come, so is growing well. Cym. Fremont Point is a foundation raised plant, with a tall spike of pale

yellow/green flowers and a white lip creating an overall pleasant impression. Cym. King Arthur 'Imperial' is just a shade greener, with some red on the lip. It is a more compact plant and a good doer. Den Isca Perle x Mild Yumi is a *nobile* type hybrid grown from a small Keiki, and will get much bigger. It has white flowers with a red/purple splash at the base of the lip.

A group of Pleiones completed the table. The majority were shades of pink with just size and shape to distinguish them. These were Alishan, Irazu, Versailles 'Heron', Hekla 'Partridge', and Tongariro. The single yellow hybrid was Shantung 'Ducat'. Thank you Ted.

MARCH PLANT OF THE MONTH

PAPHIOPEDILUM PLATYCOLOR

I bought this plant from Paphanatics (who, sadly, don't seem to exist any longer – they were very knowledgeable and dedicated Paph. growers) on 29th August 1992 at the BOGA Fair at Elcott Park, as a seedling. It grew only slowly at first but at least it kept going and eventually it became part of the general furniture of the greenhouse. It was re-potted every now and again in a variety of different mixes, including rockwool for a while, depending on the prevailing "fashion" in Paph growing.

I see from my records that it appeared to be budding-up in 1999 but it was only a new leaf emerging. I had the same disappointment in 2003 so when it appeared to be doing the same again this year, I ignored it. It was obviously a flower spike in November last year and soon after, there were two more. The first flower opened on February 23rd and ultimately there were two flowers on each of the three spikes when it was fully open. The first flowers have just gone over so they've lasted a full month (which included a trip down to the RHS in London, unfortunately to no avail).

Paph Platycolor is the hybrid between *P stonei* and *P concolor*, registered by Sir Trevor Lawrence in 1896 but it has never been a popular hybrid – not perhaps surprising if you have to wait 19 years for a seedling to flower. But in those 19 years, I don't recall ever having seen another one anywhere, either in the flesh or even on any sales list. **Ted Croot**

APRIL PLANT OF THE MONTH

PAPHIOPEDILUM JAVANICUM

Genus *Paphiopedilum javanicum* – Sub Genus *Sigmatopetalum* – Section *Barbata* – Sub Section *Chloroneura*; according to Guido Braem, wow!

Although discovered before 1821, *Paph. javanicum* remained virtually unknown until it was collected by Dutch botanist Caspar Reinwardt from the mountainous region of eastern Java in 1826. It was 14 years later that it was collected by Thomas Lobb, one of Messrs Veitch's collectors and sent to England.

In 1858 the first Bornean specimen was sent to Messrs Low and Co as part of a consignment of other slipper orchids. The plant was bought by Mr John Day of Tottenham. When the plant flowered it was found to have much brighter, deeper green flowers and more richly coloured pouch than the ones from Java.

The Bornean specimen was treated as a distinct species by Dr H. G. Reichenbach in 1863 and named *Paph. virens*, although it is sometimes referred to as *javanicum* var. *virens*.

My plant originally came from David Binks, it is grown along with all my other orchids in intermediate conditions, Temp Summer months 70-75 F Day / 60-65 F night, Winter months 63-68 F Day / 54-58 F Night. Light is moderate, Humidity 60-85 %. **Derek Jackson**

ORCHIDS IN SINGAPORE

DAVID MENZIES

David is a member of the RHS Orchid Committee, a retired curator of the Glasgow Botanic Gardens, and has spoken to us on numerous occasions in the past.

The upcoming WOC will be held in Singapore this November, and a dress rehearsal for the judges was held there last summer – of which David was involved. This gave him the opportunity to have a good look around the island to see just what is grown. There is of course a long tradition of orchid growing in Singapore. It is a multicultural hotpot of mainly Chinese, Indonesians and Malays – as well as the British and other Europeans. The country is classed as a benign dictatorship, and things 'get done'.

The city and surrounding areas are planted with trees, which are essential for shade as Singapore is close to the equator. Humidity is naturally high as there are frequent heavy downpours – perfect for many hot growing orchids. In the city orchids such as *Cym. findlaysonianum* are planted on trees. They look great for a few years before they become very large and messy.

The Botanic Gardens were built by the British in 1859, and at the entrance is a huge *Grammatophyllum speciosum* that is about 4 metres across. Within the gardens is a specific orchid area, although they are found around the garden. A chilled house allows some cooler plants to be grown. These include *Masdevallias*, as well as some *Paphs* that require cooler nights. Arches are constructed of yellow *Oncidiums*.

V. Miss Joaquim is common as it is the national flower. This, and other Vandas are grown on 6' posts where the roots attach to the post. The plants grow rapidly, and flower frequently all year round. Often these are grown as hedges, or within hedges.

The National Orchid Garden is on a nearby hillside, and plants are raised here for display as well as export. They have a bright lab with thousands of flasks. A huge range of species and hybrids are grown in all colours and sizes. Mokaras (Arachnis x Acsocentrum x Vanda) are becoming more prominent having vigour, shape and colour. Many are in a basic clay pot for their first roots. Renantheras are common, although they tend to grow very tall very quickly. It isn't all vandaceous though, and a range of Cattleyas are produced. Dendrobium *phalaenopsis* hybrids are planted out as temporary bedding (in pots), and are up to 3-4' tall. Antelope type Dendrobiums are also produced (by the herd) in great colour and range. Spathoglottis of all colours are also used for bedding. Phals are a rarity as generally it is too hot and bright for them. Any that are around are imported from Taiwan.

The conference centre is very modern, and is built on land reclaimed from the sea. This is adjacent to the huge conference hotel – the Marina Bay Sands Hotel of 3 towers connected at the top with a huge open 'boat' complete with trees and swimming pools, as well as a view over the entire island. The show itself was over 2 floors, and was full of displays of enormous sizes and colour. 20' high was common. Cut flower walls are frequently built, as are curtains of Vanda roots. Many displays are off the cuff, and beyond description in words, and sometimes photography can be difficult due to the artificial lighting.

This was an excellent introduction to the orchids in Singapore as well as an insight into what is likely to be seen at the WOC. If your appetite has been whetted there is still time to arrange your trip.....

A hearty round of applause followed.

TABLE SHOW JUDGING

In the hope of encouraging more members to enter their plants for judging at our regular meetings, here is a re-print of the article from the Newsletter of October 2006 about the scheme for the benefit of those members who didn't have the thrill of reading it then.

We currently have 21 classes available, including one class specifically for novices (i.e. anyone who has not won one of our classes before). The points in these classes are cumulative but there is also a 22nd 'class' for the single best plant shown in the course of the whole year's judging.

To be eligible for judging, a novice must have grown the plant for at least 6 months prior to entry and anyone else must have grown theirs for at least a year.

A novice has the privilege of deciding whether to enter a plant in the novices' class or in the appropriate class for that plant.

Each plant entered gets one point for being entered. If it is judged to be the best in its class that day, it then receives up to 15 more points for the flower quality plus up to 15 more points for the quality of its culture, giving a maximum of 31 points. The second in that class can get up to 10 + 10 points and the third up to 6 + 6 points.

At the end of the year (after the September meeting) all the points for individual owners in each class are totalled and the trophies awarded to the owners with the most points. Only in the 22nd class is the trophy deliberately awarded for one individual plant.

It's quite painless really (except for filling in the cards – and for the judges who award the points during their coffee break). The judges incidentally, are all qualified judges under the British Orchid Council's internationally recognised scheme.

Have a go if you haven't entered anything before but even if you're not interested in the competitive side of orchid growing, please bring your plants to the table show for others to enjoy. You don't necessarily have to enter them for judging and we would all like to see them.

The complete list of classes is given in the December Newsletter when the results of that year's judging and the awards of trophies at the AGM are printed in full.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY...

MONTHLY MEETINGS AT RANMOOR – 10AM

May NO Meeting due to show at Chatsworth

June 12th Hilary Hobbs – Pests and diseases

July 10th Robin McDonald - Coelogynes

OTHER SHOWS

May 8th SDOS Annual Show at the Edensor Institute, Chatsworth
***** Plants and assistance required *****

June 5th NEOS Annual Show, Tatton Park.

Society website - www.sheffieldorchids.org



Above: - Rlc. Firedance 'Patricia'

Below: - *Cypripedium x ventricosum* just open in the editor's garden.

