

# **SHEFFIELD & DISTRICT ORCHID SOCIETY**

## **NEWSLETTER**

**JUNE 2011**



**JUNE PLANT OF THE MONTH  
*DENDROBIUM DELACOURII***

# OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

## President

John Williams  
Whitecroft, 170 Watt Lane  
Sheffield S10 5QW  
**0114 230 4568**

## Vice Presidents

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

## Chairman, Treasurer, Membership Secretary & BOC Representative

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

## Vice President

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

## Librarian

Janet Kirk  
**Any other member**  
Jeff Williams  
55 Greenwood Avenue  
Sheffield S9 4HB  
**0114 234 0168**  
[Janet.kirk@virgin.net](mailto:Janet.kirk@virgin.net)

## Editor

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

## 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)

## Administration Secretary

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

## Additional Members

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

## BUSINESS

The recent annual show at Chatsworth was a great success, and thanks to all who supported us. Despite this, our next annual show is in the balance as it requires organising. Richard (despite being Chairman, Treasurer, and Membership Secretary) took on the role of organising and publicising the 2011 show. We shouldn't be a 1 man show, and Richard has other roles in life (including BOC), and has indicated that he is unable to do the same next year – which is the 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Show. There is a simple clear message for us all – if we want a show in 2012, then someone has to take on the mantle, otherwise it just won't happen. All the details from this year's show are documented, so it should be straightforward to follow. All 'you' need is a PC and some spare time.

Our next show is the EMOS show at Lowdham on 11<sup>th</sup> September. Although it is too soon for arrangements yet, Ted would like to know who may be going, as well as providing plants. Please note that this clashes with our own monthly meeting so we have cancelled ours. Prior to this we have an invitation to mount a display at the Sheffield Fayre at the Norfolk Park on 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> August (bank holiday weekend). We need volunteers to man the display – a half day rota is all that is required. If you can provide this, please let Richard know ASAP. If we don't get sufficient support by the next meeting then we will have to decline the invitation.

As mentioned we have cancelled the September meeting. In November several of the committee will be in Singapore for the World Orchid Congress – which also clashes. We are due for a forum/auction. Volunteer(s) are required to man/chair the discussions/auction. Again, please contact Richard if willing. If no-one wants to do this, then we may yet cancel the meeting.

The Orchid Study Group in Wales is running an Orchid Festival at the National Botanic Gardens near Carmarthen on 3<sup>rd</sup>–4<sup>th</sup> September, Individual plants can be entered for judging, and please let Chris Squire know in advance if entering - see [www.orchidstudygroup.org](http://www.orchidstudygroup.org) for details.

## THE TABLE SHOW

Charles Ford volunteered for this month's commentary, and had a reasonable number of plants for the time of the year. He started at the left with a decent sized *Epipactis gigantea*. This is grown outdoors, and stays in a cold frame over winter to avoid becoming waterlogged. It had an unusual double flower. *Dendrobium delacourii* was mounted on a stand, and was a specimen sized plant with many short spikes of pale yellow flowers with a frilly edge. There was a slight fragrance to it, and it had been adjudged to be the plant of the month (see front cover). *Den lindleyi* (syn. *aggregatum*) is from SW China, and was wood mounted and growing very well. This intermediate plant had several short spikes of almost round pale yellow flowers. Sadly the wood is now starting to rot, so an interesting 'repot' will have to take place.

*Himantoglossum hircinum* is an interesting UK native orchid that appears to be dying when in flower. It grows to a reasonable height with a greenish brown cupped flower with a long tongued lobe. It is known as the lizard orchid due to the lobe, but *hircinum* means 'smells like a goat', which is also highly appropriate. *Thunia Gattensis* is a tall reed like plant with tubular flowers at the apex which are white with pink inside, and sadly only last a short while. *Asco. Daryl Venables* is a frequently seen plant (although still fairly short) with an upright spike of smallish orangey yellow speckled flowers. *Renanthera Kilauea* is a tall well growing plant with a branched spike of deep red flowers. This is its third flowering this year, and already has a new spike starting. It is definitely a good doer.

*Zelenkocidium Cheiro Kukoo* is a warm growing, smallish plant of the *Oncidium* family. It had 4 spikes of small yellow flowers that look impressive. *Onc. Splinter 'Norman'* had a huge spike around 2m tall with many branches of yellow and brown flowers that were all fully open (see back page). *Psychopsis Memoria Bill Carter (Mendenhall x papilio)* was a strong plant with a long spike of a single yellow/red flower – that should reflower in due course. The pseudobulbs are a bit shrivelled as is always the case in this genus. *Brassia verucosa* was well grown with 2 decent spikes of pale starry flowers just about to go over.

*Cattleychea [Ctyh.] Newberry Butterscotch (C. purpurata f.alba 'Elias' x Ctyh. Westconnett Gold 'Mendenhall')* had golden flowers with a reddish lip, and would probably do well on a windowsill. *C. Love Knot 'Blue Step'* was a very tidy small plant

with lovely pale purple flowers. Jackfowlieara (syn. Iwanagara) Appleblossom was well named as this compact Cattleya had flowers of mainly white with pink edges.

Paph. *barbatum* is a warm growing species from Thailand with a fairly deep red dorsal and reflexed petals. Paph. Clair de Lune 'EVB' is quite a common plant, but still impressive due to its size. Despite being a large plant it had just a single flower as it tends to flower anytime when ready. Paph. Quies is an old hybrid of *curtisii* and *hookerae* and was quite tall with a dark flower.

Disa Unifoam had 2 spikes of smallish pink flowers. It is cool growing and needs plenty of shade, but is still a troublesome grower. A couple of Phals were at the end, with Brother Golden Embers being a mid-sized pale yellow, and Zuma Aussie Delight was a short spiked plant of pleasant golden flowers with red centres. It is growing well, and had a new growth as well. It was thought that *violacea* was a major influence, but is just 25%, - with *venosa* contributing 50%. The final 25% is evenly made up of the barred *amboinensis* and white *amabilis*. A strange mix indeed – Ed. Thank you Charles.

## PLANT OF THE MONTH

### DENDROBIUM DELACOURII

I inherited this plant from the collection of the late Alan Booth after he died, very prematurely, in 1993. Alan was an enthusiastic and knowledgeable grower and exhibitor, and a keen supporter of the Society for many years. *Den delacourii* is an unusual Dendrobium, not often offered for sale in this country and this particular plant doesn't quite fit the description of the species given in Baker and Baker's monograph on the genus. It is an intermediate-growing species, widespread in south-east Asia, and very closely related to *Den venustum*. It is quite distinct from it though – *D delacourii* flowers in May on short (c.5cm) compact pseudobulbs, with fewer, larger flowers (mine was usually on our stand at Chatsworth when our show was at the end of May) whereas *Den venustum* flowers in September on longer (c.15cm) thinner, pseudobulbs. *Den ciliatum* is probably a synonym of *D venustum* differing only it seems, in the length of the cilia on the lip of the flower.

This plant is deciduous: the leaves fall in late autumn and then it is kept almost dry until the new growths appear in spring. Careful watering is started now but when growth is well-established it is watered every day. I feed only once or twice with Orchid Grow before the flower spikes show in mid-April, when I change to Orchid Bloom, then back to Orchid Grow, tailing-off in autumn when the leaves start to go yellow.

It is kept hanging up on a piece of cork bark, in good light near the greenhouse door (not on the back of the door – to save anyone asking). The drop in temperature from a minimum of 70F in the daytime to a minimum of 60F at night that my thermostat provides, is apparently important in inducing flowering. **Ted Croot**

# PESTS AND DISEASES

## HILARY HOBBS

Pests and diseases affect all plant species, not just orchids, but the effect on these valuable ornamentals can be deadly. Pests damage cells, suck sap, and generally reduce vigour leaving unsightly plants that can take years to recover – if at all. Prevention is by far the best control, and just a few simple steps can go a long way. These include good (optimum) culture, greenhouse and tool hygiene, avoid overcrowding, remove non essential plants such as ferns, regular inspections, water in the mornings to keep plant crowns dry overnight. Despite best efforts it is almost impossible to avoid pests for an active grower. Pests and diseases can come into the greenhouse from purchased plants; contact with plants at shows etc. Quarantine, isolate, and if necessary be prepared to destroy plants badly infected.

There are 3 methods of dealing with pests – ignore, control, and prevent. The first isn't a viable solution. You really need to know your enemy to understand how best to treat/prevent them. Diseases are harder to identify at first alongside normal wear and tear, but once seen won't be quickly forgotten.

### The pests

**Mealybug** is probably the most common pest, and attacks most genera, but especially phals. They suck sap from the leaves, and leave white cotton like marks everywhere. An adult can lay 100-200 eggs which hatch at 14 days into crawlers who are highly mobile and will rapidly spread to adjacent plants. They have a tendency to hide in sheaths, under leaves, in compost and elsewhere. Males eventually pupate and turn into flies to go off elsewhere to mate and die.

Treatment is to kill the adults by either a systemic spray such as Provado or Bifenthrin, or treat with cotton buds and meths. Neither treatment will kill the eggs, so must be repeated 2-3 times at weekly intervals. Neem oil (no longer available) will help to suffocate the bugs, and a bio control – **Cryptolaemus montrouzieri** (common name Mealybug Ladybird is a ladybird species endemic to Queensland and New South Wales, Australia) – should work, but Hilary hasn't tried them.

**Scale** incorporates both hard and soft versions. The scale is a membrane that acts as armour from other pests, and unfortunately acts as a shield from spray. The females live under the shell where the eggs are laid, and look very unsightly. Once hatched, the nymphs are mobile, and the males pupate and become flies. Systemic sprays will have an effect, but manual treatment is more effective.

**Boisduval Scale** looks very similar to mealybugs, but is more aggressive. They originated in South America, and have a liking for native genres such as Cattleyas, Odonts, Pleuros etc. Their lifecycle is similar to the other bugs, taking 33 days to become adults. Treat as for bugs at fortnightly intervals for 6 weeks. A weak solution of Physan will work on the crawlers.

**Aphids** are quite easy to see as they tend not to hide and give birth to live offspring. Consequently they are easy to treat with insecticides. As aphids are winged insects, they are very mobile, and can spread viruses.

**Thrips** are tiny insects that are hard to spot. Like the others they are sap suckers, and can quickly turn leaves brown. They are often widespread in greenhouses, and rarer in the living room. They spread diseases, viruses and fungus, so are quite dangerous. They pupate in the compost before flying off elsewhere. Treat by spraying insecticides, or use Neem oil. A better prevention is to use sticky fly tape around the greenhouse.

**False Spider Mites** are too small to see without a magnifying glass. They are reddish brown mites that damage cells leaving unsightly marks. A large infestation will leave a silvery mesh on the leaves. They like it hot and dry, so a humid greenhouse helps. Insecticides work, and regular leaf cleaning is useful. They prefer softer leaved plants. Biological controls are available – **Phytoseiulus persimilis**, a predatory mite.

**Slugs and snails** are large pests that cause rapid damage. Use slug pellets for protection, and use a torch at night to spot them, then dispose/despatch as required.

**Vine Weevils** are often unseen as they tend to eat the roots. A serious problem will see plants simply keel over. They tend to be nocturnal. A root drench of insecticide is the best treatment.

NB. When using insecticides, check that they are for ornamental plants, carefully read the instructions and use the correct strength. Use outside if possible, and protect yourself.

## Fungus

**Black & Brown rot, phytophthora & phythium** affect many genuses, especially Cattleyas, Paphs and Phrags. Results are leaf spots that spread out. Trimming leaves back to green matter with a sterile knife and dusting the wound with cinnamon or sulphur should suffice. In serious cases remove the whole leaf or cane in the case of Cattleyas.

## Bacteria

These are difficult problems to prevent. **Pseudomonas** is soil borne and affects Cattleyas and the Cyp group. Using a weak solution of Physan can be effective. **Erwinia** affects the Cyp group, and spreads rapidly. Affected leaves must be removed immediately and cinnamon/sulphur applied.

Be vigilant with rots and bacterial infections. Fungicides can be effective, but not on bacteria. Isolate plants when being treated. Good air movement and dry crowns at night should help avoid problems. Identification can only really be made through lab analysis – which usually takes too long to be of great help, and is expensive.

## Viruses

These are simple organisms and are classed as Intracellular parasites. They contain RNA and a protein coat/cover. Good husbandry can keep them at bay, but once infected, they are likely to remain in the host for life weakening plants.

**Cymbidium Mosaic Virus** (CymV) is common in several genuses, and can often be seen as a brownish diamond pattern within the leaf rather than external. It can also be seen as chlorotic spots on leaves and flowers.

**Odontoglossum Ring Spot Virus** (ORSV) is uncommon, and can be identified by necrotic rings on the leaves. This virus is stable, and can survive outside of the plant, so is more mobile.

**Bean Yellow Mosaic Virus** is spread by aphids when sucking infected cells then moving on. It affects Masdevallias where new growth is deformed and mottled.

No treatments for viruses are available. Affected leaves can be cut off and burned. If possible divide and isolate the plants to see if the division is clear – then burn the infected one.

## Summary

Prevention is far better than treatment or death. Carefully inspect new plants and quarantine them. Greenhouse hygiene is essential. Avoid overcrowding. Water in the mornings, and avoid drips onto other plants. Good air movement is essential. Try not to reuse pots, canes or ties. Sterilize tools between plants and wash hands. Deal with pests when seen.

An excellent and well received lecture. Thank you Hilary.

NB. Further information is available in general orchid growing books, or use the names in a search engine on the internet. Biological controls are available to purchase online - [www.ladybirdplantcare.co.uk](http://www.ladybirdplantcare.co.uk) is just one site.

# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY...

## MONTHLY MEETINGS AT RANMOOR – 10AM

July 10 <sup>th</sup>	Robin McDonald – Coelogyne
Aug 14 <sup>th</sup>	Jeff Hutchings - growing Hardy Orchids
September	No meeting

## OTHER SHOWS

Aug 27 – 28 <sup>th</sup>	BOGA Summer Fayre, Dinton Pastures, <a href="http://www.boga.org.uk">www.boga.org.uk</a>
Sept 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 4 <sup>th</sup>	Orchid Festival, National Botanic Gardens, Carmarthen <a href="http://www.orchidstudygroup.org">www.orchidstudygroup.org</a>
Sept 11 <sup>th</sup>	EMOS annual show, Lowdham *** SDOS Exhibiting ***

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



Above: - *Onc. Splinter 'Norman'*  
Below: - *Psychopsis Memoria Bill Carter*

