

# **SHEFFIELD & DISTRICT ORCHID SOCIETY**

## **NEWSLETTER**

**OCTOBER 2011**



**AUGUST PLANT OF THE MONTH  
CATTLEYA DÉESSE 'CHARLES'**

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## BUSINESS

The recent display at the Fayre in the Norfolk Heritage Park went well – although we didn't quite know what to expect. Most of the public didn't know that there was an Orchid Society in Sheffield, and most questions were asked about Phals. We may well display there again in 2012. Thanks were expressed to those who supplied plants, assisted in the setup and breakdown, and manned the display.

Just after the Fayre was the EMOS show, and a decent display was mounted, winning awards for Charles, Ted, Hilary and Ian. Once again, thanks to all who took part.

Subscriptions for the next 12 months are now due, with the increase to £15

The AGM will be held on December 11<sup>th</sup>, with a buffet to follow. Notice of the meeting is hereby served, with an agenda and accounts etc. to follow in the November newsletter.

Anyone who has trophies should return them either in November or December. The buffet will be a DIY job as is usual with Julie/Janet co-ordinating. There will be list started at the November meeting for members to indicate what they will bring. After this, please contact Julie to see what may be outstanding.

The November meeting will be a general horticultural sale, with the accent on orchids. This is expected to be split into cheaper fixed price items, with more expensive items up for auction. NB there will be no table show judging due to a shortage of accredited judges (at the WOC), but an exhibit can be staged just the same.

Our next show is at Harrogate OS on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2012. Plans for our annual show at Chatsworth are now underway.

Ted is working on the 2012 lecture program, and still has a few gaps that he would like to fill with 'locals'. If you feel that you can do a talk (anything Orchid related), please let him know.

## THE TABLE SHOW

Ted Croot kindly volunteered to do this month's commentary and was faced with quite a full table which is more in line with what should be expected at this time of year. He started off with *Miltonia Angela Barker* which had a couple of spikes of around 4 starry orange flowers with purplish lips on each. The constituent species come from Brazil, and the flowers will last for weeks. *Spiranthes cernua* is a plant that is cold growing during the summer and flowers at this time of year. The flowers are produced in a spiral around the spike. *Den. oligophyllum* is a smallish plant with lots of tiny white flowers. The plant was well in leaf despite the name meaning 'having few leaves'. *Den. lamyatae* was a small plant in a basket with a cluster of smallish orange flowers with long petals. *Den. Polar Ice* was unusual in that all the growing parts seemed to be keikis in flower with smallish pink flowers. It will be interesting to see how this may look in 12 months time.

RLC Déesse 'Charles' was a well grown plant with 2 clusters of huge white flowers, some of which had a pink tint to the edge of the lip. This was adjudged to be the plant of the month (see front cover). *C. loddigesii* is a tall plant with 3 medium sized flowers of pink with a pale lip. *C. maxima* was a good form with 2 large pale pink flowers with a stripy lip. *C. Pirate King 'Port Wine'* was delightful with 2 purple flowers of good substance with a very frilly lip. *Rth. Burana Beauty* wasn't to Ted's taste as it is one that may be described as peloric with smallish red striped deep yellow flowers. *Rlc. Ports of Paradise 'Green Ching Hwa'* had a single large green flower, and another to come on a different growth. *C. Angel Bells* had 2 large white flowers, 1 of which sadly was damaged by a water drip. *C. June Bride* is a smallish plant with a medium sized pink flower with a red and white lip. *C. Seagulls Mini-cat Heaven* was a miniature type sporting a single round orange flower not unlike a daffodil.

*Vasco. Pine Rivers* had a good spike of many small pale scarlet flowers. *Stenoglottis longifolia* was growing well, and had several short spikes of pale pink flowers. This is a cool growing plant that usually flowers as the leaves die back, but this one looked in perfect condition.

The Paph season is just starting in earnest, and several were shown. *fairrieanum* was a very nice specimen with its oriental charm. *barbigerum* is still a recent introduction, and is a small plant with a modest sized flower. *spicerianum* is an established species, again, on the small size with a reasonable size flower characterised by a reflexed dorsal and a purple stripe. *White Lightning* displayed a reflexed dorsal, and apart from lacking any purple pigmentation looked like a larger version of *spicerianum*. *Maudiae f. album* is a medium sized flower of green with white stripes. *Clair de Lune 'EVB'* is about double the size of *Maudiae* in leaf size, spike height and flower size. *Little Alexander* was a bit of a miniature inheriting its dwarf habit from *helenae*, and floral shape from *gratrixianum*. *Hot Spots* was mislabelled, but was pretty good all the same having 2 nice maroon flowers, slightly reflexed. *Phrag. Tara 3N* completed the slippers, and had a good shaped flower of deep red and a shape from its *besseae* heritage.

*Phal Mini Mark* is a small plant for phals, and had a single short spike of several small speckled white and orange flowers. An unnamed plant had 2 good spikes of medium

sized pink flowers that were well spaced. Silvia's Dream was pretty with medium sized pink veined white flowers. Symphonie was interesting with medium sized pink flowers with a hint of orange on the lip. The final plant was Pink Lady which had a tall spike with large plain pink flowers. Thank you Ted.

## **AUGUST PLANT OF THE MONTH CATTLEYA DÉESSE 'CHARLES'**

This one has been growing on now for four years, it came from David Bink's collection and needed some care to set it on its feet.

I have re-potted it into coir chips and keep it high up in good light all year, with a little shading in the summer but with none at all during the winter.

Temperatures in that part of my "Orchid House" (Conservatory) regularly reach 28-30C and go down to 14C on winter nights.

Feeding is the same as all my Cattleyas, a standard (half strength) mix throughout the year, the amount of feed being regulated by the watering regime. Which is simply more water during growth, less during resting and in winter, allowing the plant to become nearly dry between waterings.

This plant was re-potted this year after three years in the same pot. Pest control is achieved by a thorough dunking in and spraying with a systemic insecticide every six months and further spraying three months afterwards. The dunking seems to control moss-flies very well. **Charles Ford**

## **CYMBIDIUMS BY IAN PARSONS**

Ian started growing orchids around 1970 when he was also growing pelargoniums. He knew of them from grandparents who worked at a residence where these exotic beauties were grown. In acquiring more pelargoniums he met a parks superintendent who gave him a cymbidium that he couldn't get to reflower. Ian researched the plant as much as he could with what available literature there was. He fed it more, and it grew better foliage, and eventually after a slight change of feed it flowered. Content with success he returned to the park to show it off, and was promptly given several more. It seems that the plants were purchased in flower for important council events, and were almost surplus after that point. He also discovered that these plants were supplied by McBeans and Ivens, so when time permitted both were visited. Ivens he thought were the best at that time as they grew huge plants for cut flowers and was able to ask about better growing and flowering conditions as well as getting a few more. General consensus was to feed well to make them grow, then make them think they are about to die to make them flower. Eventually he built up a collection of around 1500 plants, with many species amongst them. Plants were imported from around the world with the help of Burnhams, EYOF and Ray Bilton. He has travelled to many parts of the world for his research, usually dragging the family along for a 'holiday'.

Although these are cooler growing plants, and more common in the earlier days, literature on Cymbidiums was extremely scarce up till 1988 when Du Puy and Cribb wrote the first monologue. This was incomplete at the time but pulled together most of the known species. After further research an updated version was published in 2007, and is regarded

as reasonably accurate. This has involved some DNA research, but this type of work is never completed.

Cymbidiums are found from the western Himalayas across to China and Japan, and down to the north of Australia (linked through Java & Sumatra). They are known from Chinese medicinal literature over 200 years ago, and in Japan variegated foliage plants are highly valued. At present approx 52 species are known, and these are divided into 3 subgenera with a number of sections within them

### **Sungenus Cymbidium**

**Section Cymbidium** contains 5 species. All have pendant spikes

*aloifolium* is the species type, and has small flowers of pale yellow with a maroon stripe on them.

*atropurpureum* is thick leaved and medium sized maroon flowers.

*bicolor* – as the name suggests it has 2 colours – purple and white striped petals, although there are other coloured sub-species as well. Flowers are scented of coconut.

*finlaysonianum* is common and in places such as Singapore is grown in trees around the city where it reaches 6' wide, with spikes up to the same length containing mainly pale yellow/green flowers with some red on the lip.

*rectum* – in theory this is named for its erect spike (you have to wonder why it isn't called erectum though – Ed.). It has small yellow and red flowers.

**Section Borneense** contains 2 species – both from Borneo, and consequently are warmer growing.

*aliciae* has small white flowers on an upright spike.

*borneense* was only described in 1983, and little is known about it

**Section Himantophyllum** contains a single species

*dayanum* is a common cool growing species from the Himalayas and is easily distinguishable by its white flowers with a red stripe.

**Section Austrocymbidium** contains 3 species – all from Australia, and are often found on Eucalyptus trees.

*canaliculatum* has racemes on many small mottled flowers of mainly green/brown that are attractive. Variety *sparksii*, has plain coloured flowers mainly of purple to almost black, but can be towards green as well.

*madidum* is a large plant with flowers mainly yellow that appear cupped. Loved by bees.

*suave* is a large clump forming plant with masses of flowers (It will reflower from old growths) of mainly green to deep green. It is sweet scented.

### **Section Floribundum**

*chloranthum* is hot growing from equatorial islands. The spike is upright with delicate yellow flowers.

*floribundum* is very widely spread and as a result is varied from green to brown and red. It is floriferous with pendant spikes.

*suavissimum* is believed to all have come from a single plant, so it pink on an upright spike. Ian claims to have a few different clones of the plant with colours varying from red to brown.

**Section Bigibbarium** is a single species section

*devonianum* is a well known Himalayan plant and is widely available. It is a small plant that produces many pendant spikes of flowers from green to red and brown. It is best grown in a basket.

## Subgenus *Cyperorchis*

### Section *Iridiorchis*

*tracyanum* is a large flowered species with striated brown flowers that has been well used in hybridisation

*iridiodes* (syn. *giganteum*) is a cool growing species, and is quite large. Generally brown, some consider it as a smaller plainer form of *tracyanum*.

*erythraeum* (syn *longifolium*) has bigger brown/maroon flowers than *tracyanum* with a whitish lip.

*hookerianum* (syn. *grandiflorum*) is a cool growing large flowered specie with glossy green flowers.

### Section *Eburneum*

*eburneum* is a single flowered white species from the Himalayas

*parishii* is believed to be extinct in the wild, but is line bred for availability. It has full formed white flowers with a blotchy red lip.

*roseum* is a rare warm species with pink flowers

*mastersii* is a white species with yellow on the lip that could be mistaken for a *Coelogyne*.

**Section *Annamaea*** is a single species from the Annam region of Vietnam.

*erythrostylum* is an upright white species notable for having cupped petals although the sepals are fully open. It is quite distinctive.

### Section *Cyperorchis*

*elegans* is a cool species with a mass of pale yellow tubular flowers that are quite unlike normal flowers. It is fragrant.

*insigne* is large flowered, and white to pale pink. The flowers are similar to the common shape.

*lowianum* is a common and popular species as it has good shape and colour (greeny brown). It is notable for a maroon 'V' on the lip which is passed on to hybrids. Var. *I'ansonii* is paler, but still has the V.

*cochleare* is similar to *elegans*, but with brownish flowers. Some can tend towards black.

*whiteae* is a pendulous species from Sikkim in India. The flowers are pale brown/green.

*sigmoidium* is a rare species with an apparent bent shape.

*banaense* is still relatively unknown and is from Vietnam.

*wenshanense* is recently discovered from the Wenshan area of Yunnan in China. It is white, and not dissimilar to *erythrostylum*.

**Section *Parishiella*** is a single species section.

*tigrinum* is quite distinct and is short growing with short spikes with brown petals with a white barred lip. Out of flower it could look like a *Coelogyne* with tiny bulbs and few leaves.

## Subgenus *Jensoa*.

### Section *Jensoa*

*ensifolium* is wideapread and can be found as a terrestrial. The colour is variable from pale green, striated, to brown. An album form has been discovered. Numerous varieties exist due to the widespread nature.

*munroianum* is often considered as a variety of *ensifolium*. It comes from Sikkim.

*sinensis* is more widespread than just China. It has an upright spike of several flowers varying from green to pink.

*kanran* is around china, and has long petals of mainly green. It means 'cold orchid'. The flowers are star shaped and vary from pale to red.

*defoliatum* is extremely rare and little known.

*nanulum* is quite small, and has green flowers.

*omeiense* is close to *kanran* and *faberi*, and from China.

*tortisepalum* is recently described, and little known. It has twisted petals, and grows in grass in Taiwan. It may be considered as a variety of *goeringii*.

### **Section maxillarianthe.**

*goeringii* is a low flowering count type and has triangular red to green flowers.

*cyperfolium* is a short spike species widespread, and has a few green triangular flowers.

*faberi* is a cold species from the east Himalaya where it grows amongst grass. The flowers are mainly brown with narrow petals

### **Section Geocymbidium**

*lanceifolium* is an easy grower, and is notable for having broad lance shaped leaves. Several flowers per spike which are variable from green to reddish or brown striped.

### **Section pachyrhizanth**

*macrorhizon* is a species with a 'long rhizome', but in essence lives underground off fungus and just pokes its flowers through the ground.

A few hybrids were shown to cover how the hybridisation has progressed over the years, with Stanley Fouracre, St. Helier and Pontac being good examples.

Future plans could include breeding for more miniatures, better perfume, variegated foliage, colour – tending towards blue, intergenerics - with *Zygopetalums?*, and remontancy – where spikes can continue to flower such as on *phalaenopsis*.

A good book on Cymbidiums by Cribb and Du Puy is available. A decent online reference site is online at [www.cymspecies.com](http://www.cymspecies.com)

A good round of applause was given.

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

### **MONTHLY MEETINGS AT RANMOOR – 10AM**

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Nov 13 <sup>th</sup>     | Bring and Buy                             |
| Dec 11 <sup>th</sup>     | AGM and buffet, please attend.            |
| Jan 8 <sup>th</sup> 2012 | John Garner – the recent WOC in Singapore |

### **OTHER SHOWS**

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Nov 13-20 <sup>th</sup> | 20 <sup>th</sup> WOC – Singapore (SDOS not exhibiting!) |
|-------------------------|---|



Above: - Cattleya Pirate King 'Port Wine'

Below: - *paph spicerianum* shows its influence on White Lightning

