

**Sheffield & District
Orchid Society
Newsletter
February 2013**



**February Plant of the Month
*Lycaste campbellii***

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Business

Members were thanked for their understanding of the change of date for today's meeting. Whilst it may not have been to the benefit of all attendees, it was unavoidable due to other meetings/events beyond SDOS's control.

Harrogate OS will be holding their annual show on Sunday 24th Feb. Details were covered.

The now defunct PIOS is to be replaced by the Malvern Orchid Show to be held 14th - 16th June. Tickets for orchid society members are available for £6 up to 18th May. Will anyone wishing to purchase a ticket(s) please deal with our

Secretary Carolyn McQueen who will co-ordinate and place the order on members behalf.

Following the enjoyable judging exercise, it was announced that, in addition to various experienced and knowledgeable members being invited to join in the Table Show judging, if anyone is interested in acting as an observer of the judging process, they should speak to Ted or Brian and they too will be invited to participate. This is all part of the objective of encouraging more involvement by more members = more pleasure from their membership.

Former member (several years as Treasurer) Theo Dengel has finally decided to discontinue orchid growing. He has produced three lists - orchid books, sundries and plants with all proceeds going to charity. Copies of all or any of the lists can be had by Email from Brian - woodward.d@sky.com. Please note all plants are cool growing.

The Table Show

Charles gave this month's commentary, and started with Rlc. Cornerstone with 2 lovely large purple flowers (back cover) and a sheath still to develop into flowers. *C. percivalliana* is a well grown species with 6 medium sized pink flowers of strong colouration in the lip, and the flowers were well presented rather than the usual 'around the pot style'. *C. Newberry Luisa's Love* is a compact type with a single red flower of a medium size. It was clean and tidy, and a joy to see.

lyc. campbellii is usually in flower at this time of the year, and was a mass of small yellow flowers around the edge of the pot rim. It is a plant that is deciduous at this time of the

year, and a little shrivelled until watering recommences with the growths. It was adjudged the Plant of the month (see front cover).

Phrag. Will Chantry has quite a tall spike with a single pinky orange flower. Olaf Gruss was fairly similar, but a bit more orange. It shares the *besseae* parent, this time with *pearcii* (rather than *klotschianum*). *sargentianum* was very tall with 2 flowers and a load of buds. This vigorous species can grow to over 2m tall. In the Paphs, *urbanianum* was a good colour and a strong grower. Maudiae is a noted old timer and has been remade many times, but still looks consistently good. Wössner Vietnam Moon was an attractive colour and shape (from the *hangianum* parent). *malipoense* is a tall species, and this clone had 2 flowers of decent shape. Carmen Coll 'Satin' is a complex type with good shape and colour being mainly white with pink brushing and spotting. Sweet Sunrise 'Splendide' was a more modest flower, but of a good colour being mainly a yellow/amber colour.

Cym. Strathblane 'Cooksbridge' was a lovely light mauve with an arching spike that created a pleasant effect. *Habenaris lindleyana* is a pure white terrestrial that is still coming to terms with the UK. It had just 2 flowers, and the foliage was just about all gone - possibly it had been over watered. When grown to their best this species looks very showy. Ross. *ampliatum* had a medium sized branched spike with lots of very small yellowish flowers. It is best grown intermediate. Thank you Charles.

February Plant of the Month

Lycaste campbellii

This plant, which came to me from the late Nev Brown's collection, is a species of *Lycaste* not often seen offered for sale here: it probably came from Germany. It is a warm-growing (not to say hot) species from Panama which bears some of the smallest flowers in the genus. The flowers are somewhat nodding, yellow with a tinge of green and they are not long-lasting. Ten days is about all you get but there are lots of them and they don't all come at once, so the plant may be in flower for almost a month.

It is deciduous: the leaves fall in late autumn and then the plant is kept almost dry. The flowers appear in February and the new growths about a month later. Careful watering can be started now (water left in the new growths will rot them overnight). When growth is well-established it should be watered liberally provided that drainage is good, and fed liberally too. Ideally a higher nitrogen feed is given up to mid-July and then a higher potash feed till the leaves turn in October – a gentle increase in spring and a tailing-off in autumn.

The compost used is chopped sphagnum moss lightened with medium bark, charcoal and coarse Perlite, roughly twice as much sphagnum as the rest put together. Keep it warm, keep the red spider off the leaves and you can't go wrong. **Ted Croot**

Judging Session

The main event of the day was an interesting look at judging for members. It is true that not all members wish

to progress towards judging, however an understanding of how the system works is of benefit. It should be noted however that thinking in advance that your own plant may not be a class winner shouldn't prevent members from taking plants to shows etc.

Judging isn't rocket science, but there are a few different methods of undertaking it. Different Societies use various methods such as points, or appreciation (e.g. which one you would like to take home etc.). The BOC judging scheme is a standard method (covered in last month's newsletter), and would be used today.

The theme for today's session was *Paphiopedilum*, and 8 plants were numbered ready for evaluation. These were a mixture of species, primary hybrids, multiflorals and complex types of different colours etc.

Ted and Silvia gave guidelines on how to tackle the group. First up would be a process of elimination to try and get a shortlist of 4 plants to then try and get the top 3. This would involve consideration of poor plant growth, poor flower size, shape and colour (breaks). An unusually short spike would also count against it. Removal of old foliage that is dying back is a moot point with judges - generally to be removed. Evidence of bugs would be an automatic exclusion, and poor presentation (sloppy tying, canes too long etc.) is also a negative.

Once down to 4 plants, look at the growth for health - old growths as well as new starts is positive. Is the flower shape good, is the colour strong (texture). How floriferous is the plant? Generally the points should be split 50/50 between the flower and the growth.

After everyone had a good look at the plants and scored their own top 3 the officials (Ted, Silvia & Brian) gave

their verdicts. 3 plants had evidence of bugs, so were immediately discarded (this was known by the owner). The final shortlist was a species, a primary, and 2 complex plants, with the eventual winner being Paph. Skip the Buss 'Almond' as it had very good foliage with an old growth as well as a new start. The flower was a decent size and of an open shape with strong colouration - of mainly white with a pink pouch and pink speckles elsewhere. This is shown on the back cover. Many present got 3 or 4 and/or picked the winner. Well done everyone.

Dates for your diary...

Monthly meetings at Ranmoor – 10am

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|----------------------------|---|
| Mar 10th | David Menzies – Orchids in SW Australia |
| Apr 14th | Chris Squire – In the Footsteps of the Old Orchid Hunters |
| May 12th | Andrew Bannister - From flask to flower |

Other shows

- | | |
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| Apr 7th | NEEOS, Bowburn Community Centre, Durham
** SDOS exhibiting ** |
| Apr 12-13th | RHS London Orchid Show |
| May 4-6th | Raby Castle Orchid Show, Staindrop |

Society website - www.sheffieldorchids.org



Above:- Blc. Cornerstone.

Below: - Paph. Skip the Buss 'Almond' , winner of the judging session.

