



Solihull & District Orchid Society

Name that Hybrid

If you always wanted to have an orchid named after you now is the opportunity

Our President Peter White has a Phalaenopsis Hybrid that requires a name and all you need to do is to purchase raffle tickets (the more you buy the better your chance of having the winning ticket) at £1/ticket which will be drawn at the AGM in September.

You can name this plant after yourself, a loved one, your pet or anything you wish and so what a lovely opportunity. Tickets will be on sale at the meetings in June, July and at the AGM in September.

Chester Zoo

Sunday August 6th
Our trip to see the National Collection of Pleurothallids, the Orchid Collection and the Zoo itself is still a couple of months away but the coach has now been booked and so if you have ordered some places please see Heike at the next opportunity to pay for the trip.

The current price is £40/person but once all the monies have been collected there may well be a rebate for distribution on the coach.

Next Meeting

On Saturday June 3rd Trey Sanders will be giving us a talk on "Australian Orchids". Australia is often somewhat overlooked for orchids but this large country has some wonderful species that are found nowhere else.

A talk that will surely surprise many.

Society Cups

Over many years Jan Davison has managed the Society Cups making certain that they are all engraved each year and made ready for our shows.

This is an oft forgotten activity but one that is critical to the smooth running of the shows especially our Annual Spring Show. Jan has carried out this task very diligently and professionally but has now decided that it is time to hand this over to somebody else.

So if you feel that you could take this on please contact Malcolm.



*Pleione Tongario
Jackdaw that didn't bloom for Janet in time for the recent show*

Malvern 2017

I am sure you are all looking forward to the International Orchid Show at Malvern this year and if you have purchased tickets they will be available for collection from Heike at the next meeting.

So please ensure that you are at the meeting on Saturday 3rd June to pick up your tickets.



You can follow Solihull & District Orchid Society on Facebook and Twitter



Chairman: Malcolm Moodie
01295 788159

If you have any pictures or information you would like to put on our website please email: caroline.reid1@blueyonder.co.uk or copy and pictures for newsletter: ballm1@mac.com

European Terrestrial Orchids - Home and away

Steve Clements

Steve has been growing orchids for 25 years, before he even knew these were orchids.

His first encounter was as a kid was when he was told off by his dad for snapping the top off a Lizard orchid (*Himantoglossum hircinum*) with a stick.

Steve started by comparing the 30,000, to date, orchid species on Earth to less than a 1,000 in Europe and to just around 56 found in UK. He also mentioned the current situation on terrestrial orchid naming. There is a divide between Taxonomists – there are "Lumpers" who group species together thus keeping orchid species numbers low versus "Splitters" who are naming plants as different species just because of the slightest variation in shape, hair length, flowering timing and etc. Steve refers to himself as a "Lumper" as he doesn't see the need to invent lots of names for the same plant species for minor variations.

He acquires plants that he knows he should be able to grow providing he creates the correct growing conditions. For example, Helleborine (where beech trees are always close) and those that freely grow with almost no effort like the Early Purple. However, those that require a very specific environment, for example *Noettia nidus-avis* (Bird's Nest Orchid) which requires a specific fungus to grow he will not attempt. He always makes sure he knows exactly where the suppliers' orchids come from as collecting from the wild is a big issue.

Dactylorhiza foliosa was his first orchid and from where his hobby and obsession in orchids began with *Dactylorhiza fuschii* (Common Spotted) soon following.

Steve also mentioned the loose laws towards orchid protection. He remembered how in the past you would be picking orchid flowers in buckets but

today there is a general understanding that it is inappropriate to do so. However, the law in fact only forbids the digging up of plants and then only a few endangered species but not the act of picking flowers.

Growing conditions are very minimal compared with the tropical orchids - they don't require much heating or watering as most are from the Mediterranean and are prone to extended drought periods. Steve says he only learned how dry these plants grow, when he saw them in their

native growing conditions. His advice is to always buy them dormant, this way the legal ways of acquiring plants can be assured.

His orchids are grown in 50% grit, 50% perlite and a little bit of John Innes no 2. All plants are potted in clay pots and are plunged in grit beds. Feeding is done with Akernes Rain Mix and

at very low levels as these orchids do not like much fertilizer.

Neck crown rot is the biggest unknown mystery and the only disease to attack terrestrial orchids in cultivation and it does it suddenly and without a known solution, as yet. Otherwise most regular tropical orchid pests do not attack terrestrials.

As a regular visitor to the Mediterranean, Steve and his wife have noticed that plant protection has been suffering in the recent years due to the influx of tourists, who are not interested in orchids but sandy beaches. In addition, the locals are using more of their land for food cultivation, sacrificing rare local orchid populations. Even so, orchids are in the soil waiting for the right conditions, once the fungi and seeds are established orchids can "wait" for long periods of time until the right conditions arrive which is why new locations for orchids are spotted every year. However, they must be seen that same year as they may not show up the following year.

Regardless Steve is still, after many years, extremely passionate about terrestrial orchids in Europe. [Lina Smalinske](#)



Photographs by Janet James of some of the terrestrial orchids that can now be seen locally

MAY COMPETITION table

Photos: Ken Johnson



**Potinara Taichung Beauty Rouge
Cattle - 30pts - Graham Jones**



**Paph St Swithin - 32pts -
Malcolm Moodie**



**Epidendrum vesicatum 30pts
Monica Johnson**



**Dendrobim wardianum - 30pts -
Chris Gibbs**



**Masdevallia Pinwheel - 29pts -
Malcolm Moodie**



**Phrag. wallisii x longifolium -
31pts - Malcolm Moodie**



Odontoglossum naevium - 31pts - Stan Taylor



Brassavola perrenii - 30pts - Stan Taylor