



Solihull & District Orchid Society

BOC Photographic Competition

At the December meeting we will all have the opportunity to vote for our favourite photographs entered by our members.



Christmas Hamper

Although we will be making the draw for this wonderful prize there is still time to bring additional items for which you will receive tickets and of course your items will add to this already great prize.

Additionally, you will be able to purchase even more tickets in order to increase your chances of going home with this lovely hamper. Please give any additional items to Heike.

We have a tremendous record to maintain with both Ken Johnson and Stan Taylor achieving high honours in the past.

I am pleased to say that 4 members have already entered but there is still time for a few more of you to get your pictures to me.

Please send a maximum of 5 to me at LaeliaM@aol.com no later than the 24th November.

Don't worry about their size; just send them to me as jpeg's and I will resize them for presentation at the meeting.

With lots of entries we will have a most interesting meeting choosing our favourites and hopefully, once again, our choices will result in further honours for a Solihull member.

Christmas Show

Our December meeting will be centred around our Christmas Show (the schedule and entry form is attached to the Newsletter) as well as the BOC Photo Competition, the Hamper Draw and our Xmas Buffet.

Please bring along your cakes, savouries and nibbles so that we can all share the food and enjoy each others company.

The room will be open to accept your plant entries from 1.00 until 1.45 when judging will commence.

If you can please email your entries to Margaret Cressy cressym7@gmail.com. or phone 01926 511025 during the week before but if not please bring along your entries on the day.

The Novices Trophy was won by Pam Eden last year so if you have not entered before this is your opportunity to get your name on that Trophy.

If everybody brought along one plant we would have a marvellous display.

Subs due

Please pay at the next meeting, or send direct to our treasurer, Heike Lilley.

Membership has increased to £12 for a single and to £16 for a couple.

Please note that if you wish to receive your newsletter by post please add another £5 to your subscription to cover the additional costs of postage and printing.

On payment you will receive your new membership card with the programme for the year ahead and also a copy of the 2018 BOC Year Book.

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

Dendrobium and allied genera Mel Stephen

Mel has been growing orchids for 36 years but only over the last 10 has he focused on Dendrobium in particular, with the Dendrobium nobile being the first he acquired.

Dendrobiums are native to Australia, much of Asia, including China, Japan, and India as well as many islands in the Pacific. There are approximately 1250 species which are divided into 40 sections although 6 of these contain the majority of the species - **Phalaenanthae, Spatulata, Dendrobium, Callista, Latouria, and Formosae and hybrids**. With the remaining sections containing only a few species each.

There are numerous environments in which Dendrobiums grow including tall rainforests, mangrove swamps, fringing coral beaches, rock faces, misty mountain ranges at circa, 5,000m above sea level, freshwater swamps, beside waterfalls and on street trees in towns and cities. Most are epiphytes although others grow as lithophytes with a few growing as terrestrials, which can reach to fifteen feet tall

Culture

In order to accommodate his Dendrobiums Mel has built a greenhouse specifically with the large climatic range in mind. He grows about 500 orchids of which 70% are Dendrobiums. His aim is to create numerous microclimates within his greenhouse which is sunk 1m below ground. This not only provides a wide temperature range but also prevents slugs from getting in. He has covered the top part of the greenhouse with 25mm polycarbonate with integral aluminum braid to reflect direct sun which reduces sun burnt leaves and maximises the solar exposure throughout the year. In his view it is lack of sunlight that is the main reason why growers fail to flower Dendrobiums and so his plants are mostly hanging up and receive constant 1000-5000 foot candles of light.

Rain water is always used but at a temperature equal to the plants as cold water can cause cell damage and destroy roots, especially following the rest periods. He stresses, that tap water is for emergencies only as salt build up suffocates the roots and eventually causes plants to slowly decline. He uses Rain Mix fertiliser March to October at a high level of feed and reduces to quarter strength in winter. Mel points out, that nutrients become toxic to plants if the pH level isn't correct as pH controls nutrient absorption - a pH range between 5.5 - 6.5 is optimal.

Feeding with high nitrogen produces good growth, but depletes potash and the plants will not flower. Giving the correct amount of nutrients at the same level throughout the year should achieve both good growth and nice flower displays.

Before deciding to buy a Dendrobium one should research the rainfall the plant receives in its natural environment. Prolonged rest periods indicate high temperature needs and monsoons, but high elevation plants will require low temps and constant humidity levels. Mel also encourages to always repot immediately after purchase as the compost the plant is in, will give a lot information needed to successfully introduce new plant into your growing environment.

Mel stated that once he understood the many sections and the differences the plants require, he started looking at Dendrobiums in a completely different way.

Here is a short overview of the 6 main sections:

Phalaenanthae - consists of plants that remain evergreen for years, with thin, tall pseudobulbs, terminal inflorescences, usually appearing in the autumn or twice a year. Growing warm year round (60 F nights) fertilise and water heavily when roots first appear. eg. Dendrobium biggibum

Spatulata (antelope type) - consists of plants that are also evergreen for years. Most grow to be quite large, vigorous plants with long lasting flowers in summer & sometimes several times a year. Culture requirement is warm all year (60-65 F nights, 75-90 F days); no rest period, can be kept cool in the winter if kept dry. eg. Dendrobium rennellii 1.2m height (only 2 in the UK) from

Solomon Islands & Dendrobium antennatum.

Dendrobium - these plants are either erect (nobile type) or pendulous (seminobile type) with leaves all along the canes that often drop with cool, drier weather. One to five flowers form at the nodes on the leafless canes in mid-winter through early spring. Give warmth, water and fertilise heavily from when roots appear to when top leaf appears on canes. Then give high light, little or no water, no fertilizer, and cool nights (40-50 F). Just forget about them until the flower buds appear. eg.

Dendrobium anosmum, aphyllum, bensoniae, cretaceum, cysanthum, crystallinum, devonianum, falconeri, findlayanum, gratiosissimum, heterocarpum, loddigesii, primulinum, rhombeum & unicum.

Callista are pseudobulbous plants with pendant inflorescences. In the summer, give warmth (60-90 F), medium light, medium

quantities of water and fertiliser. In winter, keep cool (50 F nights) medium light and just enough water to keep the pseudobulbs from shriveling up. eg. Dendrobium amabile, brymerianum, chrysotoxum, farmeri, griffithianum, jenkinsii, sulcatum & thyrsoflorum.

Latouria - The leaves at the top of the pseudobulbs are large and leathery, with erect inflorescences and flowers that are commonly yellowgreen. Grow these the same as the antelope (spatulata) types, but with cooler and drier conditions in the winter. eg. Dendrobium polysema, rhodostictum & spectabile.

Formosae - (commonly referred to as the Nigrohirsutae) cane like pseudobulbs with black hairs on the sheaths and the pseudobulbs often apparent. Flowers are usually white, long lasting, two to three together from near the end of the pseudobulb. They should be kept

intermediate to cool year round (50-60 F nights) drying them out in the winter or as growth stops. eg. Dendrobium bellatulum, cariniferum, catenatum, fuerstenbergianum, wardianum (grows up to 4ft tall) & wattii.

Hybrids - There are some lovely hybrids and 2 that were mentioned were Dendrobium "Kuniko" (goldschmidtianum x victoriae-reginae) & "Christy Dawn" (Dawn Maree x christyanum) - flowers last a very long time.

Other Sections

Pedilium - eg. Dendrobium bullenianum (Height 1.2m), goldschmidtianum & limpidum (a very small plant)

Katherinea - eg. Dendrobium amplum (Epigeneium amplum) - flowers similar to Bulbophyllum.

Dendrocoryne - eg. Dendrobium fleckeri, gracilicaule, jonesii, kingianum & speciosum.

Holochrysa - eg. Dendrobium clavatum, chrysocrepis (looks like slipper orchid), dixanthum (very hard to grow), fimbriatum v. oculatum, gibsonii, hancockii (reaching 5ft tall) & moschatum (2m tall).

Breviflores - eg. Dendrobium aduncum, hercoglossum, scoriarum & trantuanii.

Calyptrochilus eg. Dendrobium auriculatum, bracteosum (stays in flower for 9 months), glomeratum & mohlianum.

Stachyobium - eg. Dendrobium denudans & hemimelanoglossum.

Inobulbum - eg. Dendrobium munificum (looks like bulbophyllum or Coelogyne - received RHS botanical certificate) - this section has only two species.

Calcarifera (re-introduced section in 1983) eg. Dendrobium amethytoglossum, ceraula, chameleon, crocatum, guerreroi, nudum, profusum, sanguinolentum, spathilingue & victoria-reginae.

Stuposa - eg. Dendrobium chittimae.

Dockrillia - eg. Dendrobium cucumerina.

Platycaulon - eg. Dendrobium lamellatum.

Lina Smalinske



November

TABLE



Pictures:
Ken Johnson

Restripia falkenbergii - 28pts - Stan Taylor

Stenoglottis longiflora - 27pts - Tjin Ong



Masdevallia Sunset Jaguar - 27pts - Stan Taylor



Dressisigaella lasiocampa - 25pts - Stan Taylor



Encyclia radiata - 30pts - Stan Taylor



Lepanthes caladiction x tentaculata - 28pts - Stan Taylor