



Solihull & District Orchid Society

EAST MIDLANDS ORCHID SHOW

Janet reports that it was a very busy show, with Monica Johnson winning a First Rosette for Laelinae and the Rosette for the Best Society hybrid with her BLC Pamela Finney Big Foolish Cattle.

Malcolm Moodie won the Rosette for the Best Society Species and an award of merit with his bowl of Pleione formosana, he also won awards of merit for his bowl of Pleione Shantung Ducat and his Paphiopedium Fumis Delight. Congratulations to all the winners.



Spring Show

Our show is on Saturday 20th April at Arden School. As Easter is quite late this year we hope that with a little bit of luck the sun will be shining and lots of people will join us for a wonderful event.

The hall will be open from 8.00 for exhibitors and trade with the show officially opening at 11.00. Attached to the Newsletter are the Show Schedule, Show Regulations and Entry Forms.

If you have any plants that you would like to enter we would be very pleased to receive them – if everybody entered one plant we would have a fabulous show.

Many of you have volunteered to man the various rotas and to make the refreshments so look forward to seeing you all on the day.

Malvern Show

The Malvern Show is once again rushing towards us and is the show to go to during the year. It is on Friday 14th to Sunday 16th June and Solihull will be putting up a display. Tjin Ong and Bill Carmen are working feverishly behind the scenes to create something that I am sure all members will be proud of so hope you can come along and see their efforts as well as all the other orchid related stands and, of course, enjoy the whole show.

Once again we have the opportunity to purchase tickets at the remarkably low price of £8, especially when the cost is in excess of £20 if purchased on the day.

As we will not be holding a meeting in April a list will be on display at our show on Easter Saturday but if you can't make it and wish to order tickets you will need to either email (LaeliaM@aol.com) or phone (01295 788159) me to reserve your special concession tickets. You will have one last chance to order tickets at our May Meeting but straight after this I will be placing our consolidated order.

Please pay for them at the time of order as the society has to send the payment when ordering.

The tickets can be used on any one of the 3 days (they will all be printed with Friday on them) and, of course, these tickets are not for resale. The whole point is to encourage as many orchid growers/lovers as possible to attend the show.

Ken takes the BOC Photo Competition again



Ken Johnson has done it again by having his photo of *Dendrochilum magnum* voted as the best photo for 2019. Well done to Ken and another feather in the cap of the Solihull & District Orchid Society.

Next Meeting

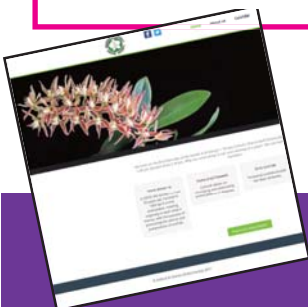
There will be no meeting in April so our next meeting will be on Saturday 4th May when Bala S Kompalli will be giving a talk on the "Orchids of the Western Himalayas".

Bala works in the orchid collection at Kew so has a vast knowledge to share with us. I am sure it will be an interesting and entertaining afternoon.

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: LaeliaM@aol.com or copy and pictures for newsletter: ballm1@mac.com
Society email address: www.solihullorchidsociety.co.uk

Orchids in Lesotho – “The Land of Blue Mountains”

Celia Wright



Celia and her husband Iain traveled to Lesotho which is situated in South Africa in January 2017. After flying into Johannesburg, they drove through the Golden Gate national park on some roads which were only suitable for off road vehicles and stayed in very basic camping type accommodation on the way.

The area is situated in the eastern floral mountain range with open grassy lands, nutrient poor with free draining soils at altitudes of 9000ft and some peaks even seeing snow. However, it is rich with 29 species and subspecies of terrestrial orchids from 10 different genera.

The first 3 days were spent in South Africa starting from Sentinel peak at 9000ft where they found *Satyrium*



longicauda "Blushing Bride Orchid" which is variable in colour and very common in this area. (*Satyrium* is a genus of 91 species of which 41 are found in Lesotho). *Holothrix scopularia* was the second orchid they spotted in both white and yellow forms (*Holothrix* is a genus of 46 species of which 4 are found in the visited area). *Schizotylus angustifolius* was the third orchid seen which is typically a high altitude plant

(*Schizotylus* is a genus of 11 species with 8 found in Lesotho of which 4 were seen on this trip).

Celia also mentioned some of the non-orchid flora they saw such as *Eucomis humilis*, *bicolor* and *schijffii*, *Gladiolus papilio* and *Protea* species.

The next part of the journey took them up to 10,000 ft where in thin soil and rocks they spotted *Disa versicolor* and extremely variable *Disa* forms such as *Disa cooperi* which is uncommon and pollinated by hawk moths. (There are 182 species in the *Disa* genus with 143 of them found in Lesotho – 12 of them were seen on this trip). *Habenaria laevigata* was also seen although very difficult to identify (*Habenaria* is a genus of 839 species with 30 found in this area).

On a day 4, the group had reached the Lesotho border and from now on it was off-road driving. Their first stop was at Oxbow lodge in the Maluti mountains at 9000ft

altitude where they saw *Aloe polyphylla* - the national flower of Lesotho- a very rare and protected plant. This area has numerous diamond mines where access is severely restricted, and they were under strict instructions not to pick up anything from the fields as diamond poaching is seen as a very serious issue.



As a result, these areas are not grazed and so a huge selection of flowers along with many orchids is seen including both *Corycium flanaganii* and *nigrescens* which are some of the strangest looking orchids – the flower looks like a helmet (All 14 species in the genus grow in Lesotho).

Next day, *Eulophia aculeata* was found north of Oxbow which is a low altitude plant with 21 species of the genus

found in Lesotho. By the roadside they found *Satyrium neglectum* - "Pink Candle Orchid", alongside other non-orchid plants such as *Dierama robusta* and *Kniphofia caulescens* which were seen in vast swathes.

They then traveled to Motabeng village going through the "Pass of Guns", where locals keep sheep, live in traditional circular houses and wear traditional blankets round their shoulders. The journey is just over 40 miles, but the roads are full of obstacles with broken down tankers and treacherous river crossings which took up a lot more time than could ever be planned for, so while waiting, the group was able to spend much time orchid spotting in the nearby fields.

Day 7 found them in another small village traveling up to 10,500ft over natural rock gardens to Katase Alpine Botanical Garden which is set up as a natural terrain planted with local plants although strangely, not many orchids, although *Disa cephalotes* and *Androcymbium striatum* were seen.

The next stop took them over unmade roads to Celabathabe National Park where they had 3 days to explore which Celia calls "orchid paradise". Numerous orchids were seen including *Satyrium microrrorincum*, *Disa brevicornis* and *oreophila*, *Schizotylus flexuosus* and *bulbinella* all growing in between boggy and rocky areas.



Disperis cardiophora (Wealei group), is interesting because it is pollinated by oil collecting bees and the flowers grow in pairs (*Disperis* is a genus of 78 species with 26 of them growing in this area). *Habenaria anguices* and *Pterygodium cooperi* (*Pterygodium* is a small genus of 20 species) were also seen here.

This is an area Celia would wish to return as there is so much more to explore.

A long drive took them to St James mission house near Mokhotlong where they found *Disa fragrans* and *stricta* growing in wet meadows.

On the last day they stopped at the Sani Pass at 9000ft height where they found *Satyrium laungicauda* and *parviflorum*, *Holothrix incurva*, *Nobolusia tysonii* - named after a school teacher who found the plant. There are only 3 species of *Nobolusia* known in Lesotho.

On the way back to the airport they stopped off at Mpumalangan to meet an orchid grower where they were shown around the local area where they found lots of rare *Disa patula*, *alticola*, *amoena*, *rungweenensis*, *saxicola* and *stachyoides* all growing in bogs. Plus, *Satyrium cristatum*, *Schizochilus cecillii* ssp *transvaalensis*, two colour forms of *Disperis renibractea* and an unexpected sighting of *Pterygodium magnum* and *Stenoglottis fimbriata*.

A fascinating country with a huge range of terrestrial orchids presented in an extremely knowledgeable and interesting presentation.

Lina Smalinske



March Table Show

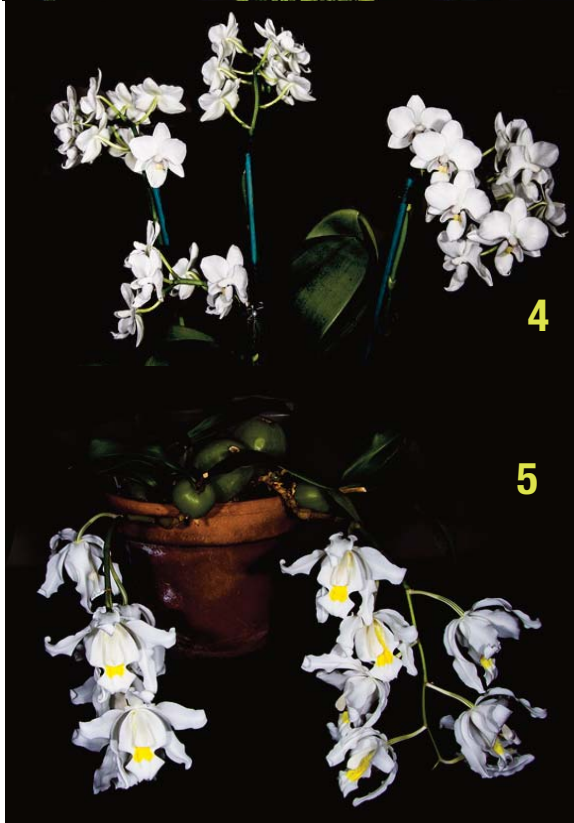


1. *Spiranthes sinensis*
28pts - Janet James



2. *Dendrobium* Sp
26pts - Janet James

3. *Cymbidium Latigo* 27pts - Malcolm Moodie



4. *Phal Timothy Christopher* 25pts - Brian Slater

5. *Coelogyne cristata* 27pts - Lina Smalinske

6. *Paph appleoneanum* 26pts - Malcolm Moodie

7. *Coelogne Bird in Flight* - 26pts Lina Smalinske

8. *Phal Hybrid* 25pts - Lina Smalinske

9. *Paph Fumi's Delight* 26pts - Malcolm Moodie

