



# Solihull & District Orchid Society

## Christmas hampers and food for the Christmas lunch appeal

Once again we will all have the opportunity to win two wonderful Hampers which we will draw for at the December meeting.

For every item you donate you will receive ticket for a chance to win this wonderful prize which means the more you bring the better chance you have of walking off with the Hamper. In addition, you can also buy more tickets to increase your chances even further.

This is such a lovely prize and would be a great starter to your Christmas celebrations.

Please be generous and bring as many items as you can spare to give to Heike and

let us create to two super duper hampers which will be a welcoming addition to the festive period for any members.

Following the Society's tradition of sharing food at the Christmas lunch, we also ask each member who are attending the December meeting to bring along food items that they like to eat, and a little extra, to put on the communal food table so they can be shared and enjoyed by all. Savouries, sandwiches, cakes, sweets/puddings and festive items are most welcome. As usual, tea and coffee will be available.

Please share generously.

## JUNE COPE



June Cope, honorary life member of the Society passed away in September 2019, her funeral was held on the 14th October at Redditch

Crematorium and her life was celebrated by family and friends. Representing the Society at the funeral service were Peter, Ken and Monica, Malcolm, Janet and Martin.

June was the widow of Brian Cope, grower extraordinaire who passed away just after the Malvern Show in 2017 where his *Sarcophilus hartmanii* "Fiona" was awarded a Certificate of Cultural Commendation by the RHS Orchid Committee.

June was made an honorary life member following Brian's death and she very kindly donated Brian's collection of books on orchids to the Society.

As we no longer maintain a library, the Committee decided to sell Brian's book for the benefits of the members and we raised over £100. With the blessing and agreement of the family, we purchased a state of the art label printer and some cartridges from the proceeds so that our plants can be labelled professionally at future external shows.

We are grateful for the generosity of the Cope family and the memories of Brian and June will remain with us each time we use the labelling machine.

## BOC Competition

Each year the British Orchid Council holds an online Photographic Competition, the pictures can be of any subject, but must contain an orchid. The competition is open to all individual members of organisations that are themselves members of the BOC. There will be prizes for the first three winners of £50, £30, and £20 respectively.



The judging will take place between 1st January and the end of February and a decision made in March 2020.

At our December meeting we will, once again all get the chance to choose those photographs that will represent Solihull in the BOC Photo Competition. As a Society we have enjoyed much success with both Stan Taylor and Ken Johnson featuring in the top 3 on a number of occasions and Ken's *Dendrochilum magnum* (left) won the first prize this year.

It would be great if one of our other members picks up a prize although we will all be very proud if Ken or Stan feature once again. However, unless you enter you have no chance, so look

through your orchid pictures and send them to Lina Smalinske.

Please send your photographs of orchids to Lina (no more than 5 each) by Friday 22nd November so that she can create a file of all of the photos for you to judge.

We will then pick the best 5 to represent us. I look forward to a fascinating afternoon at the December Meeting when we will have our Christmas Show, Buffet and select the photographs you have submitted. Hopefully, we will be inundated with lots of entries over the next 5 weeks.

Please email your entries to [lina\\_sala@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lina_sala@yahoo.co.uk)

## Revised Constitution

For those members who were not at the AGM, you will find attached to the Newsletter, a copy of the revised Constitution for the Society which was approved by members at the last AGM. The two changes made to the document are:

- Inserting the word Secretary next to Chairman, as we no longer have the post of Chairman.
- However, we decided to leave Chairman in the Constitution in case of any future applicants for the role.
- Removing the reference to library as we no longer maintain and keep a library.

## Next meeting

Our next meeting will be on Saturday 2nd of November 2019 when we welcome our speaker, Iain Wright who will be sharing his experiences whilst visiting the Rio Atlantic Forest Trust with his talk titled "In the Mountains of Brazil".

Iain has travelled extensively in his quest for orchids and is also heavily involved with the British Orchid Council and the Cheshire & North Wales Orchid Society

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



Secretary: Tjin Ong  
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If you have any pictures or information you would like to put on our website please email: [tjin1@sky.com](mailto:tjin1@sky.com) or copy and pictures for newsletter: [ballm1@mac.com](mailto:ballm1@mac.com)  
Society email address: [www.solihullorchidsociety.co.uk](http://www.solihullorchidsociety.co.uk)

# How to prepare and present your orchids for the show table

Those of us who still have a good memory may recall that we did not have a show table for the October 2018 meeting but we have a very decent collection of plants for show this month. As Lina Smalinske, our Trainee judge was indisposed (it was her little boy's birthday), Peter White, our President who is himself a very seasoned and experienced BOC judge step into the breach and did the judging for the show table. In his deliberation after the tea break, Peter started by explaining that although the show table was at society level, all plants were judged using the very strict criteria set by the BOC. Each plant on the table is judged on its culture and flowers, each can earn up to 20 points, giving a maximum score of 40 points. In arriving at the points awarded for each of the two attributes, considerations are given to the way plants are

being prepared and presented for the show table.

By this time, most of us would have noticed that the points awarded for this month's display were somewhat lower than previous months. Peter pointed out that some of the plants, even though well grown, were not presented as well as they could be and did not show themselves in the best light. He identified a few less well presented plants and likened to putting them on the table, straight from the greenhouse without any further attention and care. My analogy of Peter's comment is very much like that of a Miss World contestant who went on to the stage, straight from getting out of bed still wearing pyjamas, without doing her hair and putting on any make up and expecting to be taken seriously. Peter also pointed out examples where plants were well prepared and presented to their best advantage. We could all immediately see the differences in the presentation between the two and where the point differences lie. Excellent presentation could make a difference of a couple of points and when two plants are equally well grown, it is easy for the judge to choose a winner.

So, the tips and advice that Peter gave were:

**Leaves** – Ensure that all the leaves are cleaned thoroughly and not covered in dust, dirt and unsightly marks, where possible repair or remove damaged foliage. Wipe and clean leaves with a damp cloth to make the foliage shiny and to get rid of water spots.

**Stakes** – They are often needed to support flower spikes but they should not detract the eyes. Where possible try to match the colour of the stake with that of the spikes and always ensure the stakes are behind the flower spikes so they look natural. The tip of the stake should be trimmed to ensure that it does not protrude beyond the top of the highest point of the flowers.

**Ties** - The spikes should be tied to the stakes by using soft twist ties and where several are used, ensure equal spacing between the ties. It is advisable to use tie flower spikes to the stake before the flowers are fully bloomed as the spikes are less brittle and more flexible and do not break easily. Butterfly clips are alright to use at home but its use should be avoided for show table.

**Pots** – The BOC prefers plants to be displayed using black pots, where plants are grown in clear/see through pots, they should be placed inside a black pot for the table. Always ensure that they are clean and there is no sign of water mark showing on the side of the pots.

Peter gave us some very useful insight to the way the BOC judges looked at orchids on show tables and when pointed out, most of the tips and advice he gave on presentation seemed to be common sense but sometimes it is the simplest thing that eludes all of us. So, take heed and follow Peter's tips if you want to gain that extra point or two the next time you put your plants on the show table, it is the importance of Being Neat and Tidy!

## October TABLE

Pictures: Ken Johnson



Paph Joyce Hasagawa 24pts Malcolm Moodie

Paph Harbur Balthazar x Grizzly Hill 24pts Pam Eden



Paph charlesworthii 26pts Malcolm Moodie

Masd princeps 24pts Malcolm Moodie



Masd princeps 24pts Malcolm Moodie

Dendrobium magnum 27pts Monica Johnson



Cattleya Astraea 27pts Monica Johnson

Camaridium scalariforme 24pts Stan Taylor



# Pleurothallids

Pleurothallids are the largest sub-tribe in the orchid family and currently comprise over 5000 recognised species – a number which is increasing every year. They are considered to be fly pollinated and use a huge variety of ways to lure, guide or trick the fly to bring about pollination. They occur mainly at high elevations where Dipteran species of flies are common.

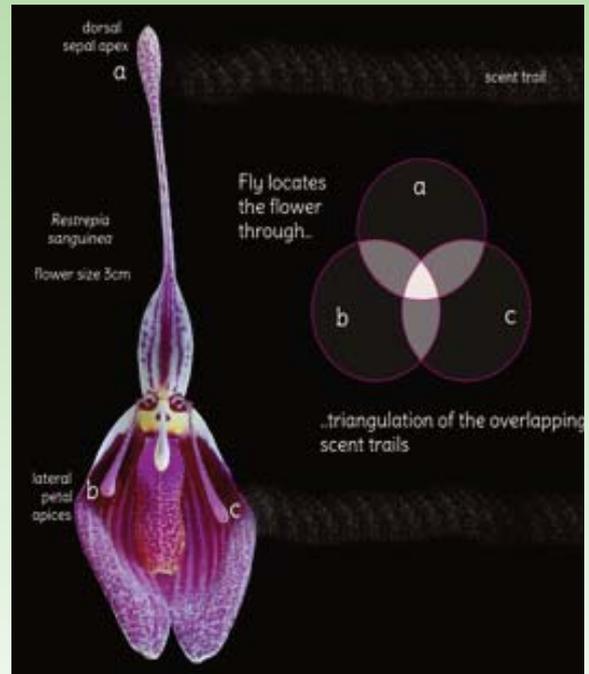


*Pleurothallis troglodites*

Many Pleurothallids in these high elevation montane rain forests are 'narrow endemics' i.e. confined to small areas and often in only a few localities. They are also restricted to narrow altitudinal ranges.

Volcanic activity led to deposits of lava and volcanic ash which provided new habitats for plant species. Orchids were among the first pioneer species to exploit these new habitats.

It is only the male fly which is attracted to the flower in the pollinating systems studied to date in the Pleurothallidinae. Scent trails produced by the sepals and petals act as guidance systems for the male flower towards the lip of the flower.

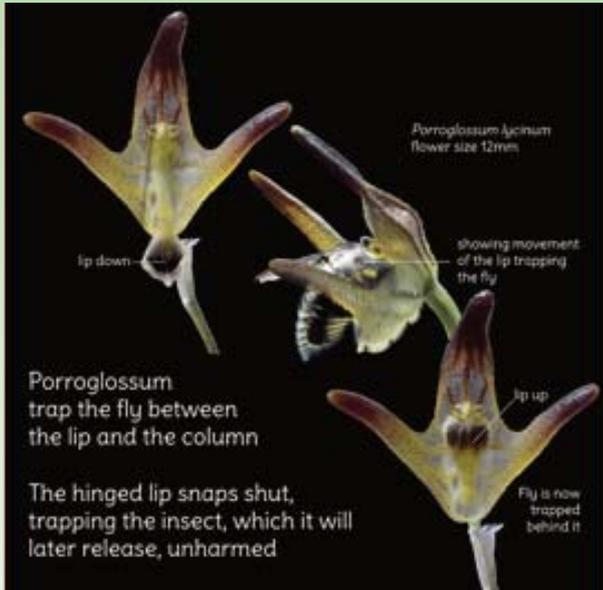


Many Pleurothallid flowers have traps of devices to hold or keep the fly in the flowers so that pollination can take place. While it is not thought that Pleurothallids are 'pollinator specific' the fly must be the correct size and shape to bring about pollination



Masdevallia

Too big and the fly cannot get into the flower or will get stuck, too small and it cannot pollinate the flower. Many flowers have traps of some sort, perhaps the best example is in Porroglossum

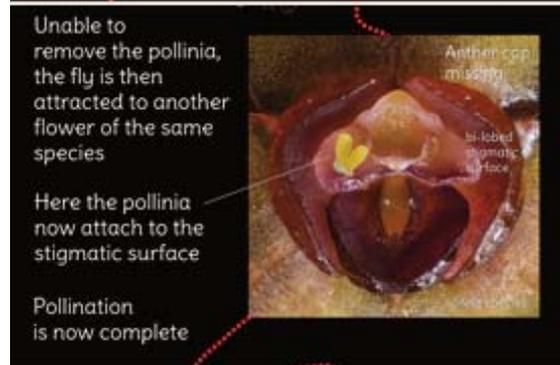
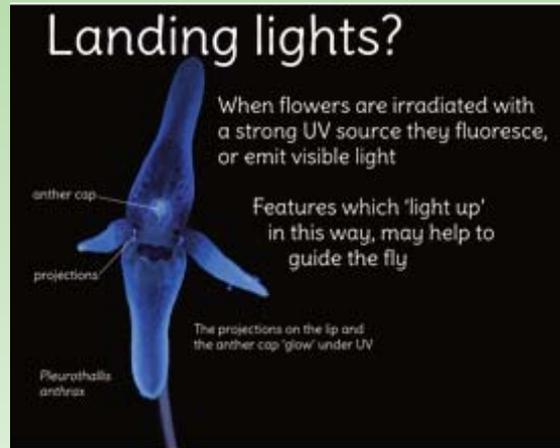


When studied under higher magnification many 'papillae' can be seen on the petals, sepals and/or the lip. These produce various viscous, liquid substances but tests have shown that this is not nectar. The substances produced may be oils, waxes and male scents which will make him more attractive to a female.



Many of the rewards offered by the flowers are in fact false promises and the fly will leave with nothing. This discourages the fly from returning to the same flower and is a mechanism to prevent self-pollination.

What flies actually see when they land on a flower is very different to what we see. Their compound eyes are very sensitive to movement and to a different range of wavelengths. Some flowers possess areas which will fluoresce under UV rays. This may be another way they guide the pollinator



The fly is now free but will be attracted to another flower very soon ...

