



Newsletter



FEBRUARY 2020

Spring Show

Saturday

11th April 2020

Once again the spring Show is just round the corner on Easter Saturday.

We are still quite short of helpers, we have spaces on several of the rotas.

Even if you can only spare an hour, there are lots of various chores, whether it be sitting taking the money for food, helping Jackie's team, on the tombola, or the entrance door.

Your help would be greatly appreciated.



Coach Trip - Harlow Carr, Harrogate Sunday 2nd August 2020

This trip is proving to be very popular, thanks to David & Malcolm's efforts.

If you haven't booked your seat yet, look out for the sheet circulating at our March meeting, or contact David or Malcolm.

Windowsill grown orchids

This new section at our monthly meeting is a great success, at our February meeting we had seven participants in the hybrid section, with Graham Jones receiving 35 point for his *Dendrobium nobile*, well done Graham.

Pleione growers

Hopefully those of us who grow Pleiones have them all repotted, I find that it is adequate to lightly spray them every week or so, until the flowers have come and gone. They enjoy a well drained compost, suitable ones can be made from various mixtures, small orchid bark/ leaf mould/ spagnum moss/ coarse perlite and a little charcoal.



Next meeting, Saturday 7th March 2020

Malcolm Perry will be showing us a BBC Video, "The fatal flower" and also will bring plants for sale.

BOC Photo Competition

Lina has confirmed that she has now sent of our entries to the BOC.



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



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Judging at Taiwan international orchid show 2019



Taiwan International orchid show was established in 2005, it is organised alongside the Asia-Pacific Orchid Conference and the World Orchid Conference and it is classed the largest of its kind in the world.

Peter attends this show as a judge on the regular basis.

The show happens over a 2 week period taking up 4 halls divided into Orchid Land Pavilion, Contest Pavilion, Orchid Creation Pavilion, Business Pavilion, and Orchid Bazaar similar hall sizes to NEC with 210 000 people on average attending it.

The 2019 show was held in Tainan and the theme was "Orchid Land" to represent 400 years of Tainan history. The entire city government was involved in organising this show. The mayor said that TIOS is not simply an exhibition for looking at orchids, it also promotes local tourism and development of industries. To make traveling to 2019 TIOS easy for everyone, and provide interesting travel schedules to Tainan, the city government offered many ticket and tourism discounts.

The Orchid Land Pavilion used Tainan's historical changes during the last 400 years as background. Five attractions were created with a large number of orchids: Taijiang Inner Sea from Age of Discovery, Fort Zeelandia under Dutch and Ming rule, Traditional Celebrations under Qing rule, Sugar Economy under Japanese rule, and Cultural Creation in the modern era. Visitors meandered through different times and spaces to see stories from the ancient city of Tainan.

Other pavilions also showcased diverse and rich orchid conceptions.

The Contest Hall presented 1,200 orchid entries; 200 domestic and overseas judges selected the best orchid display with a prize of up to one million dollars.

However, Peter was in a group of 6 judges and 9

runners/helpers to judge 1700 entries for Phalaenopsis only. There were 6 groups from A-F with each group being further divided further into up to 15-16 categories. These were narrowed down to very small types of orchids for example group E consisted of two categories 1. diameter less than 100cm; height less than 150cm 2. diameter less than 75cm; height less than 100cm. Group C that was dedicated to Phalaenopsis genus had categories like "Hybrids Harlequin type: Large dark purple spots, white background" and the category next was dedicated to different harlequin type hybrids with spots on different colour backgrounds.

Some orchid displays consisted off 50% props like a real train being decorated with orchids within one of the show pavilions. This show is a real trend setter in the orchid world as most trade deals are set in the business pavilion alongside when the grand champion category is being judged. Peter has mentioned that some specimens are enormous size and quality, get never picked or judged, just because the Paphiopedilum pouches have got wrong angles or some Dendrobium's many flower stems are leaning to too much out leaving a gap slightly bigger in the center. Peter has also mentioned that a true Phalaenopsis Indigo blue Viola type sold there for £4-5 thousand each.

A particularly strange to a hobbyist, white sprayed Phalaenopsis orchids were gaining a lot of interest and was driving huge business in the show.

Peter is getting ready to go to the 2020 show this March to judge once again.

Lina Smalinske



Here are some of the grand champions in the 2019 show:
Encyclia Shinfong Smile 'Shang' - Paphiopedilum Gloria Naugle 'Tristar'
got best in show - Phalaenopsis Lioulin Hot Lip 'Lee1184' - Dendrobium polianthum 'Linol' - Rhynchostylis Chorchalood 'Lai' the grand champion



In my Greenhouse



Paph venustum alba - 30pts - M. Moodie



Paph In Charm Mystique - 30pts - M. Moodie



Fredclarkeria After Dark - 30pts - Lina Smalinski



Cymbidium Aviemore Delight - 34pts - M. Moodie



Dendrochilum glumaceum - 30pts - Pam Eden



Eria thao - 31pts - Lina Smalinski

On my Windowsill



At our monthly plant table display, we now have a new category for windowsill grown orchids, this was a great success, with six entries, both species and hybrids.

We hope this will encourage all members who have plants sitting on windowsills to bring them along for judging.

Plants have to have been in your possession for four months in order to show them.



Dendrobium No Name - 35pts - Graham Jones



Dendrobium nobile - 3rd place - John Hoong



Dendrobium Spring Dream - 33pts - M. Mitchell

Orchid potting and growing advice



Majority of people these days grow orchids on a windowsill, however Malcolm encouraged not to limit collections just to a Phalaenopsis genus. Even though, he says, you may end up killing the orchid, you will learn a lot in the mean time.

When growing orchids, the first thing to consider is temperature requirements. What ever plant you decide to grow, it is important to find out the temperature it requires and adapt your growing environment to its needs. When growing on a windowsill it is important not to place plants on a south facing windowsill as the plant will end up with leaf scorch. Also, in the winter time plants on the windowsills must not be left behind a curtain, due to the temperature drop and draft at night time.

Light is another important factor to consider, Malcolm has advised not to put orchids directly on a windowsill, but on a shelf next to. However, in a greenhouse light and heat are much harder to control: he advises to put aluminum shading outside the greenhouse, as this way, heat isn't entering the greenhouse, therefore light and temperature are much easier to control.

Humidity is the 3rd most important factor to grow orchids successfully. Greenhouse and windowsill growers have considerably different challenges to overcome to accommodate the right humidity levels. In a greenhouse you can dampen the floor, install sprinklers however, at home this isn't an option, therefore a humidifier or a mister are suitable options to consider.

Water quality: Malcolm demonstrated two jars of water with different qualities. Having a water tester is a very clever thing to do, for a more varied orchid collection owner. Tap water is very different in quality from area to area in the UK. Usually a 200µS and up is a common water indication you will get using tap water. So rain water is better to use at all times, beware if rain water is collected from a concrete surface the salts will leech into the water. Some plants tolerate tap water better than the others, for example Cymbidiums, Phalaenopsis will not suffer much, but Masdevalias and Disas as very susceptible to hard and salty water, therefore these plants will die within the matter of weeks. White scale marks are left on the leaves as a result of spraying tap water on the plants that are hard to get rid off and unsightly. Soft water should be also used for humidifiers as

scale build up ruins the mechanism.

Fertilising is another area where knowing your µS (microsiemens) in your water is important. That's how you should decide the amount of fertilizer to use on your plants and what brand to use. For example, fertilizers should all have NPK (nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) amounts indicated clearly on the packaging, or those that have urea based Nitrogen in the mix should not be used at all. Akerne's rain mix is only to be used with rain water. Malcolm advised to use liquid fertilizer as it's more evenly distributed when watering. He also advised that adding extra Magnesium and a cell wall strengthening Silicon to every watering, will massively benefit all orchids, no matter if grown on a windowsill or a greenhouse.

Pests are very common encounter for every grower, as Malcolm mentions it's every growers' headache and you only can manage, but never eradicate completely. He uses Provado, Bug Clear Ultra, but he advises to change the chemicals regularly and never use the same ones for prolonged period of time as pests become immune.

When buying potting compost it is important to be able to see into the bag, so that you know exactly the type of compost you are buying. Also, knowing if "open" or "closed" compost the plant requires you're repotting. There are lots of different composts you can use, however Malcolm advises to use bark as this is most commonly you would find orchids planted in by commercial growers and it won't clog the pot leaving plenty of air pockets even when bark starts to disintegrate. When repotting orchids, it's important not to repot into a much bigger pot, as most orchids are epiphytes they don't require much compost around the roots. If a pot is too big, the root system will stay too wet for too long and it will end up rotting and eventually the plant will die. Repotting is a very easy task, there is nothing to worry as the plant will pick up and start growing again as long as the right amount of temperature, light and water is provided to it.

Lina Smalinske