



Newsletter



FEBRUARY 2021

Secretary resigns

It is with regret that our secretary/chairman Tjin Ong has resigned from the society.

Tjin was an active member of the society, and before becoming secretary Tjin was involved in building orchid displays at various society shows, including Malvern International Orchid Show.

We would all like to thank Tjin for his involvement with the society and wish him all the best for the future.

Next meeting

At our next Zoom meeting on Saturday, 6th March Andrew Bannister of Alchemy Orchids will be giving us a talk entitled "New Horizons in Hardy Orchids".

Andrew and his partner run the business, and specialise in raising orchids from seed, and mostly grow species, but also produce a few hybrids.

The meeting will begin on Zoom at 1.45pm for 2pm start, and all members will receive an invite to join, via email, a few days beforehand.

Just click on the link provided and drop into the meeting.



Frederick John Clarke (John)

18th May 1926 - 6th February 2021

John sadly died after a long battle with cancer on the 6th February 2021. John had been a member of the Society for a number of years and will best be remembered for his lovely phalaenopsis's and cymbidiums which he showed at our Spring Shows.

John leaves a Wife and family and Grandchildren.

Our deepest sympathy goes to the family at this sad time..



Can anyone help John?



I have an interesting question for members, which concerns the name **Stanhopea wardii**.

Normally, the specific epithet **wardii** commemorates Frank Kingdon Ward, as in **Rhododendron wardii**.

The **Stanhopea** goes back a century before Kingdon Ward's day, to a time when Nathaniel Bagshaw Ward was popularising his Wardian Case, the introduction which transformed travel conditions for plants.

Does anyone know whether he is the one whom the orchid honours?

There could be other contenders of course.

John Page



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



If you have any pictures or information you would like to put on our website please email: lina_sala@yahoo.co.uk or copy and pictures for newsletter: ballm1@mac.com
Society email address: www.solihullorchidsociety.co.uk

Lockdown Pictures



Busy kitchen windowsill November



Coelogyne cristata Chatsworth



Encyclia Octopussy 1

Colin
Clay



Soprolaelia



Miltonia



Singapore hybrid



Phal Pink Infusion

Lockdown Pictures



Neighbours garden visitors



RLC Cutie Girl Yoshiko SBM JOGA

Monica
& Ken
Johnson



SLC Hsin Buu Lady Red Beauty



Rhynchostylis gigantea Pink form



Catt Bow Bells X Catt New York



Neostylis gigantea



Catt Duns Pink



Phal Harlequin type



Coelogyne granulosa Stanwell

Lockdown Pictures



**Keith
Bates**

**Liz
Kirk**



Can anyone help Liz with a name for this plant, label lost?

The British Orchid Council Photographic Competition



**Masdevallia equestris x M. Gilberts
Triangle, highly commended for Stan
Taylor**



**Dendrochilum magnum - Congratulations
Ken Johnson, another stunning photograph
of this beautiful plant, and a 3rd place.**

Hardy Orchids in Winter

If you are able to get out and check the hardy orchid sites near to you, don't forget that it is a good time to see and count plants.

Please tread carefully. Probably 15 species of our hardy orchids are 'winter green' and can be found.

One such species is our native Bee orchid (*Ophrys apifera*), with its' easily recognised glaucous foliage (see Fig. 1) The 'weeding tool' was placed for scale – 25mm wide. Foliage can appear after early Autumn rainfall. This one was found whilst 'metal detecting' in a meadow, near to my home on 17th February 2019. The landowner had no idea that he had orchids, so we promptly put a marker nearby so that he could monitor the progress. I revisited on June 27th, when the flowers were just past their best (Fig. 2). One of the pollinia had already self-pollinated, as in the UK our Bee orchids don't have a pollinating insect. The other dangling pollinium will eventually also twist upwards to reach the stigmatic surface.

After a conversation about hardy orchids with another landowner last May, I was given directions into a wood to see his Early Purple Orchids (*Orchis mascula*) in flower. On 12th January this year I revisited to see that rosettes of EPO leaves are rising (Fig. 3) and more will show during the coming months. Last years' flower stalk (pale brown) is still present.



Bee leaf Feb - Fig 1



Bee flower June - Fig 2



EPO leaves Jan 21 - Fig 3

COLIN CLAY

Feeding orchids – feast or famine?

Malcolm Moodie

Malcolm started his presentation specifying that this is how he grows his plants and that it works for him, therefore one has to adjust to their own set up.

Water

There are three types of water: rain water, tap water, RO (reverse osmosis) water. Tap water is very different in its constitution and nutrients and PH depending on the area you live in. Rain water quality depends on where it was collected from, for example rain water collected from a concrete surface will have higher PH. Therefore, Malcolm has actively suggested to measure and know tap and rain water readings all the time. Water is a crucial element in helping adding nutrients to the plants. Water also adds air to plant roots, therefore Malcolm always suggests to add plenty of water every time watering, so it pours freely through the bottom. Sufficient water storage is mostly important in the summer, however most importantly, when storing water, it is crucial to have it oxygenated and not stale, also same it must be same temperature as the plants.

Macro – Nutrients

All fertilisers should contain NPK (Nitrogen, Phosphorus & Potassium) and other micronutrients like calcium and magnesium. Plants will need different ratios of nutrients depending on the growing season.

Lower light levels and shorter days will require lower Nitrogen levels as the plant isn't growing much at this time of the year. In the summer plants will require high levels of Nitrogen, usually there are two types of fertilisers available to accommodate those needs: it's the "grow" for the summer and the "bloom" for the winter. Alternatively, if grown under lights then only a general one type of fertiliser is needed through the year. The NPK nutrients are mobile, therefore a plant can move them around to suit the situation. Nitrogen is usually that supplements leaf growth, but given in the winter it can result in the weak growth and delayed flowering. Phosphorus another mobile element that is responsible for roots and cell growth, not enough of it does result in weak and restricted growth. Potassium is critical for stem rigidity, sugar production, cell division and it's responsible for disease resistance. Deficiency in potassium results in spotting and deformed leaves. However, too much of it locks the mobility of other nutrients and becomes toxic to the plant.

There are two forms of Nitrogen within the fertilisers: Nitrite and Ammoniac. Young plants tend to use Nitrites more to grow. The ammoniac form usually, due to costs, is supplemented by adding urea however, it is important that it isn't used on orchids. In order to break down urea it is necessary for soil microbes to be present in the growing media which is not the case with orchids. Magnesium is important for chlorophyll production it is also responsible for flower size and count.

Sulphur is present mostly in all water however, a deficiency does result in pale leaves.

Calcium is not a mobile nutrient, therefore if the fertiliser doesn't have any the plant won't be receiving calcium from any other sources. It is important for cell wall formation, cell growth

Nutrient	Urea Fertiliser	Relative Plant Health	Commonly Used Fertiliser	Westland Plant Food	Crystal Fertiliser	Liquor
Nitrogen	•	•	•	•	•	•
Phosphorus	•	•	•	•	•	•
Potassium	•	•	•	•	•	•
Calcium	•	•	•	•	•	•
Magnesium	•	•	•	•	•	•
Sulphur	•	•	•	•	•	•
Boron	•	•	•	•	•	•
Chlorine	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cobalt	•	•	•	•	•	•
Copper	•	•	•	•	•	•
Iron	•	•	•	•	•	•
Manganese	•	•	•	•	•	•
Molybdenum	•	•	•	•	•	•
Nickel	•	•	•	•	•	•
Sodium	•	•	•	•	•	•
Zinc	•	•	•	•	•	•



Epi. stamfordianum

Babybio & Westland give no statement regarding urea or any other form

Chempack Nitrogen is 80% Urea

NB. Red = Crystal
Yellow = Liquid

and division, water and nitrogen uptake, it also prevents root rot. If growing in rockwool, Calcium is especially important to prevent rotting. It is an expensive nutrient to add to fertilisers, therefore many cheaper brands may have very low amounts or none at all. IMG1

Micro – nutrients

Manganese – (Immobile) important for enzyme production for photosynthesis and metabolism. Deficiency results in weak and pale leaves.

Zink – (Intermediately mobile) is responsible for protein and stem growth. Deficiency results in mottled and irregular yellow leaf patches. It becomes toxic at a low PH.

Molybdenum – it breaks down nitrates and is important for nitrogen fixing bacteria.

Cobalt – formation of vitamin B12 and DNA formation.

Sodium – involved in osmosis deficiency results in leaf tip burn and inefficient flowering.

Chlorine – is important in osmosis and ionic balance and it's also responsible for scent.

Nickel – is necessary for iron absorption.

In the long-term using same fertiliser that isn't providing sufficient amount of these nutrients and micronutrients will result in a range of problems on the plants. IMG 2

Also, fertilisers do come in liquid and crystal forms therefore it's important to keep in mind that crystal fertilisers have twice more NPK than written on the bottle and it'll be harder to dissolve. It is very important to adjust the amounts of fertilisers depending on the type of orchids grown as there's a big difference for the need for nutrients between Cymbidiums and Masdevalias.

Growing media

When it comes to growing media there are two ways of growing orchids: organically – with bark, coconut sphagnum moss and inorganically – rockwool or ceramics. If you are growing organically, there is no need to flush your pots with clean water very often however, if grown inorganically - flushing needs to be done on a regular basis to prevent build-up of toxic salts and potassium. But it's important to remember that organic growing media is going to break down, therefore plants will need yearly repotting.

Supplements

When we use fertilisers our water PH goes down. PH in water is very important for a maximum nutrient uptake: Malcolm has advised to monitor and have it between 6.2-6.8. Adjustments can be done by adding Silicone to water. It is a very important supplement for orchids as well as correcting PH, it increases heat and drought resistance, it helps create cell rigidity, pest and disease resistance. To increase flower potential in Cymbidiums Malcolm adds extra Magnesium. Liquid calcium nitrate or oyster shells can be added for extra calcium however it changes the PH.

Malcolm has strongly advised to use rain water no matter how many orchids grown, also use quality fertiliser with all nutrients, measure PH and use silicone. Malcolm is happy to measure any bodies water with his meters when the physical meetings have resumed.

Nutrient	Urea Fertiliser	Relative Plant Health	Commonly Used Fertiliser	Westland Plant Food	Crystal Fertiliser	Liquor
Nitrogen	•	•	•	•	•	•
Phosphorus	•	•	•	•	•	•
Potassium	•	•	•	•	•	•
Calcium	•	•	•	•	•	•
Magnesium	•	•	•	•	•	•
Sulphur	•	•	•	•	•	•
Boron	•	•	•	•	•	•
Chlorine	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cobalt	•	•	•	•	•	•
Copper	•	•	•	•	•	•
Iron	•	•	•	•	•	•
Manganese	•	•	•	•	•	•
Molybdenum	•	•	•	•	•	•
Nickel	•	•	•	•	•	•
Sodium	•	•	•	•	•	•
Zinc	•	•	•	•	•	•



Epi. stamfordianum

Babybio & Westland give no statement regarding urea or any other form

Chempack Nitrogen is 80% Urea

NB. Red = Crystal
Yellow = Liquid