



Solihull & District Orchid Society

Marvellous Malvern show



It's that time of year again when we are at the Malvern International Orchid Show. Despite it being the middle of June we are up to our ankles in water setting up the display and it's still raining.

However, the Solihull display was awarded a Silver Gilt Medal along with a number of awards for individual plants.

Dactylorhiza fuchsii grown by Malcolm Moodie won a Show First Rosette, the Laneside Trophy and Rosette for the best Amateur Hardy Orchid in the show.

This plant was also put up to the RHS Orchid Committee and was awarded a Cultural Commendation Certificate (CCC) and given the name Dactylorhiza fuchsii 'Andrea' making her a very happy lady.

This plant has also been put forward for an Award of Garden Merit (AGM) which will be judged by a special sub committee in September.

Three more of Malcolm's plants also won awards - Paphiopedilum Lowii "Doll" was given a Second place Rosette with Awards of Merit for Paph. lawrencianum and Paph. David Ott.

In addition, three other Awards of Merit were made - one to Monica Johnson for her Dendrobium Ong-Ang Al-boon, one to Stan Taylor

for his Paphiopedilum tigrinum, and the third for a white Phalaenopsis Tiasuco Snow.

Congratulations to them all.

The weather improved for the next few days and it was lovely to see so many of you there alongside friends from other societies too.

By Sunday the marquee smelt like a barn with all the damp straw that had been put down, and you might guess – 4.30 time to be thinking about packing up, of course, the heavens open and everyone is soaked.

Let's hope that in June 2017 the sun shines!!



Janet & Martin Mitchell



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



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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

June table points

1. *Bulbo lobbii* - 31pts - Malcolm Moodie
2. *Brassavola perrenii* - 31pts - Stan Taylor
3. *Masdevallia ignea* - 30pts - Stan Taylor
4. *Masdevallia Ishbel* Kirkwood - Malcolm Moodie
5. *Cattleya skinerii* alba Lynn - 27pts - Stan Taylor
6. *Cattleya iwanagara* - 27pts - Stan Taylor
7. *Polystachia pubescens* - 26pts - Malcolm Moodie
8. *Sarcochilus hartmanii* - 36pts - Brian Cope
9. *Masdevallia Marcello* Bajarano - 26pts - Malcolm Moodie
10. *Paphiopedilum lawrencium* - 30pts - Malcolm Moodie



Next meeting

Our next meeting is on Saturday 2nd July when Dr. Wilson Wall from Bewdley Orchids will be speaking on "British Native Orchids - conservation in your garden". Plus he will be bringing plants for sale so it should be an enjoyable afternoon.

Pictures: Ken Johnson

Wild Orchid News



This year has been an odd one for our wild Orchids - it was the 15th May before the Early Purple were in flower at Snitterfield and there were very few of them.



The Birds Nest Orchid did not appear at all and there were less Butterfly Orchids with no flower spikes evident. A week later we went to see the Green Winged Orchid at Draycote Meadows which were a sight to be seen with hundreds in the field in full flower.



The following day we went to Oversley Wood to see White Helleborine's and managed to count 29 flower spikes. No doubt there were some we missed as there are many pathways through the wood and we didn't walk them all.

At the beginning of June we went to Ufton Fields to look for Man Orchids and were pleased to find nine flower spikes.



The Butterfly Orchids were also nearly out but not as many as some years.

Following a message from Colin Clay we went to Stockton Cutting as he said the Butterfly Orchids there were amazing this year.



Sure enough they were fantastic - the best we have ever seen.

We also saw a few Bee Orchids coming into flower at both Ufton and Stockton but we will need to go back again to see them in their glory.



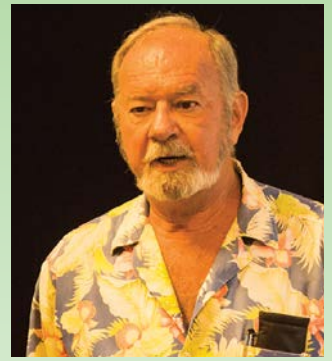
If you have been out and seen any of our wild Orchids we would love to know.

Janet & Martin Mitchell



Orchids of Mexico

T.J Hartung is a president of Vallarta Orchid Society and a board member of Vallarta Botanical Gardens. Puerto Vallarta is located on the South West of Mexico and since 2010 (botanical gardens opening) this has become the most visited public collection of orchids in Mexico. Over 1,200 orchid species can be found in Mexico. Of these, about 250 are found ONLY in Mexico. Currently, the botanical gardens has a goal to create the National Collection of Mexican Orchids thus protecting local orchid populations from depletion by poachers who are taking them from the nearby jungles to sell commercially.



T.J Hartung

T.J started his talk with a story about an orchid that had been travelling from one owner to another for many years, failing to flower no matter the owners' skills or the conditions applied. After more than 25 years it was left to die during a cold winter and after it was found in the corner of the garden it was flowering in the snow. This story illustrates the width of climatic conditions of orchids in Mexico and that all of them are adapted perfectly to their distinct environment.

Mexipedium xerophyticum one of the most interesting and rare orchids of Mexico. Although similar to Phragmipedium, it was renamed after DNA tests considered it a separate but related genus. Mexipedium xerophyticum is known from a single location in Oaxaca with only seven plants observed at the time of its discovery in 1990. The specific name xerophyticum means "preferring dry conditions" which means this is a desert orchid but that also likes a temperature drop to -3 to -7C which induces flowering. It grows at an elevation of 320 m (1,050 ft) on rocks in crevasses. Its growth form is unusual in that it tends to spread by runners, offset from the parent plant by several centimetres.

Laelia gouldiana is extinct in the wild but preserved by local people as this is the most common plant in their gardens and perhaps the best of the Mexican Laelias. It also comes from the poorest areas of Mexico.

Oncidium cebolleta has leaves that resemble onion leaves and can induce psychedelic effects fairly similar to peyote, hence it was traditionally used by shamans in the old days.

Vanilla being one of T.J's favourite Mexican orchids - 3 out of 6 species being used for the food industry.

Vanilla cribbiana, inodora, insignis, odorata, planifolia & pompona.

Vanilla tahitensis is a hybrid of planifolia and odorata both of which grow in the same area and bloom at the same time.

It is one the most labour intensive spices in the world and therefore one of the most expensive. To produce beans it has to be hand pollinated with the flowers lasting only one day. Around 70% of all vanilla nowadays is produced artificially through a process discovered in 1800 and is a result of the waste water of wood pulp in paper production.

Around 2% of Mexico's landscape consists of cloud forests with 95% of the orchids found there. T.J Hartung says there is only around 10 days in a year when the sun isn't shining. There are two distinct seasons dry and rainy starting right on the clock every year: June 15th till October 15th and rainy and dry from October onwards. Typical night and day temperature differences are around 10-14 degrees with 39C (102F) being hottest but 32C (90) is a regular day temperature.

The biggest threats for orchids in Mexico is still illegal poachers that sell orchids in the markets but Vallarta Botanical gardens conservation project is contributing immensely to preserve the unique orchids species of Mexico.

Report: Lina Smalinske



Show Secretary vacancy

When I took on the role of Show Secretary I did not envisage taking the chairman's role as well.

As a result I have made it clear that to do both roles is too much, but to date I seem to be unable to relinquish the show secretaries role.

As a result, next April's Spring Show will be my last – that will be four years.

Would anybody be interested in volunteering to take on this activity?

Of course, all the help needed will be provided.

Please speak to Malcolm if you are even vaguely interested.

Speaker reports

I am sure you all enjoy reading the Speaker Reports in the Newsletter.

Each month when we have a speaker Margaret Dale has provided a summary of each talk and this is what you have all enjoyed in the Newsletter. Margaret has now decided to stand down and we would be very keen to continue putting a summary of each talk into the Newsletter but we need somebody to volunteer.

Lina has completed the write up for May and she will do so again for June and July but this is only a stopgap until somebody else volunteers. So if you think you would be happy to carry out this valuable task please let your chairman know. In the meantime, many thanks to Margaret for such a sterling job over the years.