

Harrogate Orchid Society

NEWS

For everyone with one orchid or a thousand!

SEPTEMBER 2017 EDITION

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EVERYONE**

DURHAM SHOW

EDITORS NOTE

I Hope by now you have all heard ,that our annual show has been moved to Harrogate Pavilions on the show ground which is just before you get to Sainsburys on the main Harrogate to Wetherby road. Details on how to get there will be sent out to you in plenty of time so don't worry. There was broad agreement from your committee that it would give the society a better chance of getting more people to attend the show. A lot of effort is going into advertising in various formats so lets hope this will work. If you can help at the show could you please let me know because there is a bit more to do this next year.

Before I move on though , I want to give a much needed and overdue mention about your retiring show secretary Malcolm White. Malcolm has undertaken this task for a number of years, along with the many other jobs he has performed from the beginning as a founder member. His

current task is to be treasurer and he probably thinks it's a doddle after multi-tasking for so long. When I first joined the society about 8 years ago Malcolm and Trish were among the first to make me welcome, gave me encouragement and advice on getting started and I will always be grateful to them for that. Since taking over the show this year I have realised the amount of effort he has had to put in to keep it going properly. So on behalf of the society I would like to thank Malcolm for all his hard work in this post and wish him well in semi-retirement as treasure. You will know ,he does this job well, when you try to get money out of him !

MALVERN SHOW REPORT

In my opinion this is up there as one of the most enjoyable shows to visit. I know there are more prestigious shows than this one but for an exhibitor who wants a few relaxed days away and takes some plants to show, its great. If you are an exhibitor you can get a wrist band for all three days if you want . Its a big show to get round in a day with all manor of interesting things to look at and that's not including the large orchid show tent . You can spend hours in there looking at the excellent society display tables and of course it's a good opportunity to purchase that illusive plant you have been looking for from the trade stands that come from the U/K ,Europe and the Americas . Having said all that there is still the stunning country side of the Malvern hills,the lower Cotswolds and the Severn valley to go and see. If you have not done it before ,take a few plants to show next year and have a nice break.

There were 6 HOS members who exhibited this year but what they lacked in numbers they more than made up for in quality by putting on an excellent table display and winning a silver gilt award from the RHS and more individual category awards and below is a list of the achievements.

LIST OF MALVERN SHOW AWARDS



CLASS	PLANT NAME	OWNER OF PLANT
DENDROBIINAE	DENDROBIUM LAWESII	HILARY HOBBS



CLASS	PLANT NAME	OWNER OF PLANT
PAPHIOPEDILUM	PAPHIOPEDILUM St.SWITHE	IAN DORMAN
DENDROBIINAE	DENDROBIUM LAWESII	HILARY HOBBS
ANY OTHER SPECIES	THUNIA BENSONIAE	IVOR PAWSON

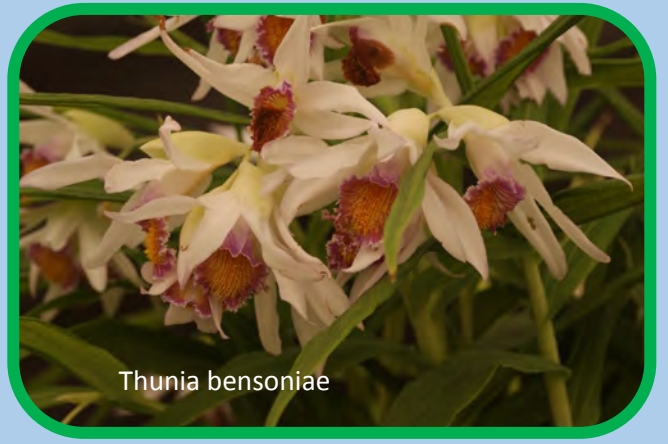


RHS AWARD FOR	AMATURE STAND
SILVER GUILT	HARROGATE ORCHID SOCIETY

SOME OF THE PLANTS ON THE DISPLAY



continued



25th JUNE MEETING

THIS WAS A TALK BY TOM MIRENDA

'A COSTA RICAN ORCHID FANTASY'

Obsessed with the natural world since childhood, Tom has always been an avid collector and grower of exotic plants. Even so, he got his degree in marine biology, and worked at the university of Hawaii doing coral reef ecology during his 20s. It was there that Tom's passion for orchids was born. Returning to the mainland US to pursue some other career goals (as an opera singer) Tom continued to work in horticulture at the New York Botanical Gardens. He was the floor manager of the New York International Orchid Show at the World Financial Centre prior to its destruction on 9/11.

For the past 16 years, he has been the orchid specialist at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC where he cared for and curated an extensive and remarkably diverse collection and produced educational exhibits visited by hundreds of thousands of visitors. Tom has contributed in several initiatives promoting international orchid preservation projects and has been writing detailed articles on numerous orchid genera, for the American Orchid Society for well over a decade.

Recently he co-authored a new encyclopaedic tome called 'The Book of Orchids'. Tom leaves the Smithsonian this summer to

take on a new challenge as Director of Horticulture, Education and Outreach at the Hawaii Tropical Botanical gardens



Tom Mirenda was as colourful as this Ruby Leopard Slipper *Paphiopedilum* from Costa Rica. Costa Rica is claimed to be home to 10,000 varieties of orchid. At the end of Tom's talk it felt as though we had seen photos of most of the many and varied varieties, and yet he only scratched the surface if there are 10,000!

The national flower is *Cattleya skinneri* "La Guaria Morada" (You may remember the magnificent specimen Dr. Knox put in the auction last year!) According to Costa Rican culture, the Guaria Morada brings good fortune and luck.

There were pictures of large orchids and small orchids, tall epidendrums bearing clusters of orange or red blooms on stems which stretched upwards towards the canopy of the tropical forests. Lots more *Cattleyas* and orchids large and small, too numerous to remember.

Tom told us about slipper orchids which lure bees into their bowl, where the only escape is by squeezing through a small gap whilst pollinating the plant.

He also tempted us with the possibility of a trip to the cloud forest where there is a research project located in a building used for educational purposes with accommodation facilities. Humidity levels looked about 98% Relative Humidity.....not for the faint hearted.

An enthusiastic and colourful talk with lots of information.

Tony Garthwaite

Meeting continued

After the usual break for the excellent refreshments on offer and the raffle, we got down to the table talk. For some reason, not all members stay for this ! Why that is I don't know but they are certainly missing out. It is usually entertaining and always informative and this meeting was no exception with a lot of cultural ideas being discussed. I always come away with something different to think about .

PLANTS ON THE TABLE



Unfortunately the table displays have so many great plants it can become impossible to put in a picture of all of them and not all of the pictures I take are good enough. It is quite a challenge . On just one display there can be half a dozen completely different lighting backgrounds so if any of you take pictures of the various events please send them to me it will give me more choices. Once again ,sorry if your plant didn't make it into the newsletter



1st JULY MEETING

FIELD TRIP

The field trip turned out to be one of the best so far. The Yorkshire Wildlife Trust venues were at Maltby near Rotherham in the morning and Sprotborough near Doncaster in the afternoon. The sites were just a short distance from each other so there was not much driving to be done and both close to the M1 or the A1 which made it easy to get there. The day was bright and clear at 10am

when we met up at Maltby. Even though there were some last minute cancelation texts, we still had a group of 10 including a member from the Sheffield society. The walking was easy through the woods and it was not long before the site opened up into a large meadow with literally thousands of Southern marsh orchids. A team of ladies were there conducting a survey for the trust on the state of the site and gave us a bit of info. We then walked on through the next wood and came out onto an area at least 10 acres just the same. When Lorna and myself walked the trip 2 weeks before, it was a sea of purple orchids mixed with the yellows, blues and reds of the wild flowers. It was simply stunning and I wish I had taken some pictures then. Never the less even though the wild flowers had gone over, it was still stunning and a joy to be there. I am reliably informed that we saw 8 different types of butterfly and I was given a list of names but it would have made this article too long. After 2 hours at this site we made our way back to the cars and headed off for lunch at the canal basin Sprotborough. This was a very pleasant place to relax and have lunch and the locals were a laugh.

The sun was shining on us as we sat facing the canal basin watching the boats go up and down. They can do that because the basin is quite wide at this point. Stretching our legs again we set off for the afternoon walk. This was just round the back of the Boat Inn, up a sharp rise and onto the top of the Donn

gorge. As we entered the site just over to our right was a large patch of Twayblades in amongst a host of Pyramid orchids. Further onto the site we could see that it was covered in all colours of northern Marsh, pyramid and Twayblade orchids. The hunt was now on to find that elusive white Northern marsh



FIELD TRIP CONTINUED



Yes, I did take some orchid pictures including the one Charlie said wasn't pure white. You can't win them all. After 2 hours of wandering the fields, one or two got tired and started dreaming about holidays and the pub, so time was called and after a quick pose for



the camera we made our way down to the pub. After a few glasses of the landlords finest wine and ale, it was agreed by all that we had enjoyed a brilliant day and hope to do it again next year.

A LITTLE EXTRA TO THE TOM MIRENDA TALK

Tom Mirenda, a long time NCOS member, has left the Smithsonian and is leaving the area for the exotic Hawaiian Islands. This was mentioned in the talk he gave ,reported earlier . On Labour Day there will be a concert at Clare Parmalee's with supper at 5:30 and concert at 7:00 given by Tom Mirenda who is a wonderful tenor accompanied by the known Jazz pianist, Frank Owens. Tom is performing at his farewell event as he is leaving to go to Hawaii to be the Director of Botanic Gardens.

MEMBERS PLANT FOCUS

Catasetum type orchids – *specifics, diversity, care*

In this topic we'll talk about Catasetum alliance orchids or Catasetum type orchids. Catasetum alliance represents several orchid genera with similar biology and thus similar growth and care requirement.

Prominent features of catasetum type orchids

These orchids are famous, and not only for their exceptional beauty. Some biological features of these orchids are so amazing and unusual (even for such unusual plants as orchids) that Darwin wrote his book “Fertilization of Orchids”, discussing Catasetums. The first thing to consider about Catasetum Alliance orchids (including closely related genera Catasetum, Cynoches, Mormodes and Clowesia) is that these orchids have unisexual flowers – which is not common for orchids. Most prominent genus (Catasetum) has male and female flowers which differ tremendously from each other. In the past, botanists thought that specimens, simply bearing flowers of different sex, belong to different species and even genera. And only Darwin has made clear that they do belong to the same genera and species, just having male and female flowers. A plant may produce both male and female flowers at the same time (and even on the same inflorescence) but cannot produce hermaphroditic ones.

Catasetum pileatum

The most prominent difference between male and female flowers in

Catasetums is that male flowers are bright, fancy coloured and have interesting shapes, while female flowers of Catasetums are greenish, not so interesting and don't much differ among different species. Cynoches

and Mormodes have fewer differences between male and female flowers, while Clowesia is only one genus of Catasetum alliance which has hermaphroditic flowers. The second feature of Catasetum alliance orchids, which is quite bizarre, is that these orchids have unique pollen ejection structure, allowing to simply blast their pollen up to 8 feet (Catasetum saccatum). Catasetum has some sort of a hook inside its lip which causes “shooting” the pollen with some force when being pressed by an insect. Sticky disk flies up striking the insect and sticking to it. It is possible to feel some recoil from this “shot” if touching the hook with a pencil, imitating an insect.



Catasetum saccatum



Catasetum
pileatum

The third unique feature and very interesting feature indeed is that the natural pollinators of Catasetum orchids are actually male bees (drones), who are attracted to flowers by feromones, which are produced by

male flowers. These feromones have a nearly narcotic effect on male bees – the drones really desire for flowers, trying to gain as much feromone as possible. Immediately after pollen is blasted, the flower stops produce feromone, and male bees with pollen on their bodies have to fly to a female flower, which starts producing the same feromone. Catasetum orchids are ones of few plant genera in the world which are using bee drones in pollination. So, these orchids are not only beautiful but also they are true plant curious and could become a gem of every orchid collection

Catasetum, Cycnoches, Mormodes and Clowesia are sympodial orchids with cigar-shaped pseudobulbs. They are growing in warm and hot seasonally dry forests of America, either epiphytical or terrestrial, and they have deciduous leaves in the upper part of a pseudobulb. Catasetums are large, while Mormodes and Clowesia are medium sized orchids.

Catasetum pileatum (called Mother of Pearl Orchid) has astonishing red, white or green more than 4 inches wide flowers; it was a floral emblem of Venezuela before Cattleya mossiae. Catasetum barbatum has fancy bearded lips, Catasetum bicolour has fragrant large flowers, and flowers of Catasetum gnomus resemble in shape a gnome. Catasetum imperial has splendid pink large flowers and is used excessively in hybridisation, and Catasetum maculatum has exotic, spotted flowers. Catasetum tenebrosum has effective flowers with black petals.

Cycnoches, or Swan orchid, also contains extremely lovely species such as Cycnoches cooperi, Cycnoches warszewiczii, Cycnoches egertonianum, Cycnoches loddigesii, Cycnoches peruvianum, Cycnoches pentadactylon and Cycnoches lehmannii and differ from Catasetum for having a long column in male flowers, resembling swan neck.

Mormodes genus resembles Catasetum except for the fact that inflorescences of Mormodes come from the middle of pseudobulb, whereas Catasetum has its inflorescences in a basal part of a pseudobulb. Mormodes atropurpurea has dark purple splendid flowers, Mormodes aurantiaca has yellow-orange with purple spots flowers, Mormodes buccinator has beautiful bright yellow flowers, and Mormodes igneum has fire-red ones.

Clowesia doesn't have unisexual flowers; its flowers are actually hermaphroditic but exceptionally lovely. Clowesia rosea has lovely white-pink numerous flowers, Clowesia dodsoniana has white-green tender flowers, and Clowesia warszewiczii has large, extremely fancy white with yellow flowers. Also, there are many beautiful hybrids in this group of orchids. For example, Fredclarkeara is a complex hybrid between Mormodes, Clowesia, and Catasetum, which has astonishing dark purple or black flowers.

Growing and care

What about Catasetum type orchids care !– it's not very difficult but has important peculiarities. First, you should keep in mind that these orchids have dry and warm strict dormancy when they drop their leaves and do not grow at all. When (usually at spring) new growth is visible, you should pot your orchid to a container with a substrate, made of medium bark, sphagnum moss, and cocoa chips, and do not water your orchid until new roots are clearly visible (watering not in proper time could cause rotting). Then, when new roots are about 2-3 inches in length you should begin watering and gradually increase it. When your orchid is actively growing and has at least two forming leaves, it needs plenty of light (Cattleya level of light), warmth, ample watering (which is crucial) and a lot of fertilizers with high Nitrogen content. Catasetum type orchids are heavy feeders – they are extremely fast growers because in nature they have a relatively short rain period and have to grow large pseudobulbs in a short period of time. When leaves of the orchid become to turn yellowish, it is a sign that your orchid starts getting dormant. At the same time, you may see yellow and green leaves on the same plant. At this point, you should start gradually reducing watering, light, fertilizers and temperature. When orchids have dropped leaves completely – don't water at all. You can put orchids which are complete dormant into a closet because dormant Catasetums don't need light at all. Some orchid enthusiasts took them away from pots and cut off roots (because they are dying and new growth produces new roots at spring), and you can also cut backbulbs so they will produce new growth next growing season.

ARTICLE CONTINUED

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I put this article in because I got a first with a hybrid ,catasetum Fanfare at Durham and they are beginning to interest me . Hope you also find it interesting .

by Kawamoto Orchid Nursery

ORCHIDS FOR EVERYONE 2 DAY EVENT

This is now a well established event in the HOS orchid calendar and usually attracts large numbers people and this year was no exception . Whether there was any increase on last year I don't know but it certainly felt like it. Most members who attended were kept very active over the 2 days, answering non stop questions. Along with the help desk ,repotting demonstrations ,bark sales and the window growing demonstration, everyone was kept busy . The talks on 'Window Growing' on the Saturday by Liz Groves and 'What are Orchids' on the Sunday by Bernard McDonald were very well attended and I believe lots of questions were asked after, which especially pleased Bernard. He said it was very satisfying to know that people were interested enough in his talk to stay back and ask questions.



CONTINUED

PICTURES FROM THE DISPLAYS

DENDROBIUM HABIKI



DENDROBIUM DAWN MAREE



CYMBIDIUM KANRAN
BIG PANDA



PAPHIOPEDILUM TRANSVAAL



CATTLEYA HYBRID



PAPHIOPEDILUM LYNLEIGH KOPOWITZ



EPIDENDRUM CAPRICORNUM



CONTINUED



LIST OF DURHAM SHOW AWARDS

FIRST

CLASS	PLANT NAME	OWNERS NAME
Laeliineae species	Epidendrum embreei	Bob Marsh
Phragmipedium Species	Phragmipedium bessese	John Gay
Cymbidium Species	Cymbidium dayanum	Ivor Pawson
Paphiopedilum Hybrid	Paphiopedilum Vanguard	Ian Dorman
Dendrobium Hybrid	Dendrobium Hibiki	Ian Dorman
Any other Hybrid	Catasetum Fanfare	Ivor Pawson
Oncidiinae Hybrid	Aspasium Everglades	Ivor Pawson

Best Plant in show	Society	OWNER
Espasium Everglades	Harrogate Orchid Society	Ivor Pawson

SOME OF THE WINNING PLANTS



Paphiopedilum
philippense



Maxillaria cucullata



Cymbidium
dayanum



Lielea Cattleya African beauty



Phragmipedium besseae



Masdevallia Machu Pichu



Dendrobium
Hibiki

