



Newsletter 2024

Dendrochilum species - flower detail
Devon Orchid Society Show, October 2023



In this issue..

Wither orchid growing?

The results of the online survey by Wayne Haywood are in!

They make very interesting reading, and much food for thought.

Challenges for Orchid Societies - part 2

This is part 2 of the article by Ari Matikka, former President of the Finnish Orchid Society. Part 1 created a lot of interest, and Part 2 fits in very well after the survey results.

What's On this year?

These are all the show dates that I currently have. If yours is not here, please forward the details to me and I will put them in next time.

This section will be included in each edition, and hopefully will be very useful for everyone to let know when shows and other events are happening.

Contact:

Myself via :

secretary@british-orchid-council.info



2024

Welcome to the newsletter with a new layout. This is by way of an experiment and hopefully an improvement!

As everyone should know by now, the Malvern Show that was, is moving to Gardeners World, at the NEC, Birmingham.

Clive Lloyd and Chris Barker need everyone's support to make this change a success. Otherwise we will lose the show that has become the such an highlight of the orchid year in the UK.

Details will be sent out by email, as they become known, either directly from Clive or via the BOC distribution lists, so please keep an eye out for any of these and remember to check your Spam folder now and again.

The other change this year is that the RHS orchid Show is returning to the Lindley Hall, Westminster, just for this time. There are major road closures around Wisley which prevent it being held there in 2024, but it should return to Wisley next year, 2025.



Coelogyne cristata - EYOF



Miniature *Dendrobium* species

The first two shows of the year are nearly upon us-

The first one is-

Saturday 24th February

Bournemouth OS Show

this show has moved to a new venue for 2024 at :

The Hamworthy Club
Magba Rd., Canford Magna

There are full details in the flyer at the end.

And following very close behind -

Saturday 2nd March

Sheffield Orchid Society
will be held at :

St Johns Church Hall
Abbeyle Road South
Sheffield

Again full details are on the flyer at the end. This includes a QR code which takes you directly to the Sheffield Orchid Society website where there are details about the show and the society.

Just so that you know about this one:

Friday, Saturday and Sunday

15th to 17th March

London Orchid Show

Lindley Hall,
Vincent Square

Westminster, London

All of the photos in the newsletter this time came from the Devon Orchid Society Show at Burnham Nurseries held last October



Hybrid *Phalaenopsis* -a beautiful clean plant



The striking and strange lip of
Coelogyne barbata

ORCHID GROWING SURVEY

This survey was designed and carried out by Wayne Heywood of Devon Orchid Society. Wayne presented the results at the recent BOC meeting. As many of you would not have been there, I am including, below, a copy of Wayne's presentation. The original pie charts were difficult to read but these should be a lot better, - thanks Wayne! You may need to zoom in, in order to read the details. The results throw up some very interesting points and food for thought for societies regarding their future and the direction that orchid growing seems to be going in.

ORCHID SURVEY RESULTS - Wayne Heywood, January 2024

The aim of the survey was to gauge the health of amateur orchid growing in the UK. Especially as one of BOC's aims was the better understanding of its users

Origins: Malvern Show 2023

There was a good response by September; however, the survey extended to the end of December to maximise take-up.

The presentation will cover: People; Plants; Prognosis; Prescription

PRESCRIPTION

This matter concerns everyone but hopefully provides food for thought

Some suggested areas for futures consideration are:

Voluntary Database of specimen, rare and hard to get plants

Formal record of not just national but important collections out there in private hands

Plant / seed exchange programme

Plant Heritage, to which I belong, open to conversation over use of their database if you would like details of person to speak to

Offer of use by me of survey platform for BOC or individual societies to run more surveys

Opportunity of greater granularity (heat map, focus on structures as well as people and plants)

Views 732	Starts 516	Submissions 446	Completions 86.4%
--------------	---------------	--------------------	----------------------

PEOPLE

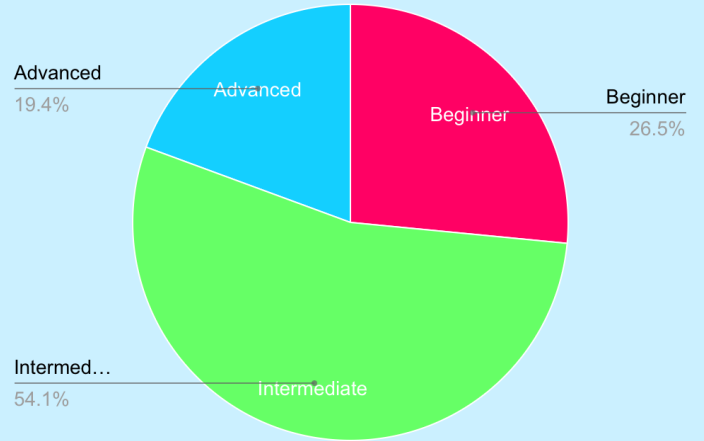
48.5% of those surveyed did not belong to any society.

Almost 80% been growing for 5 years or more, half of that number for over 20 years.

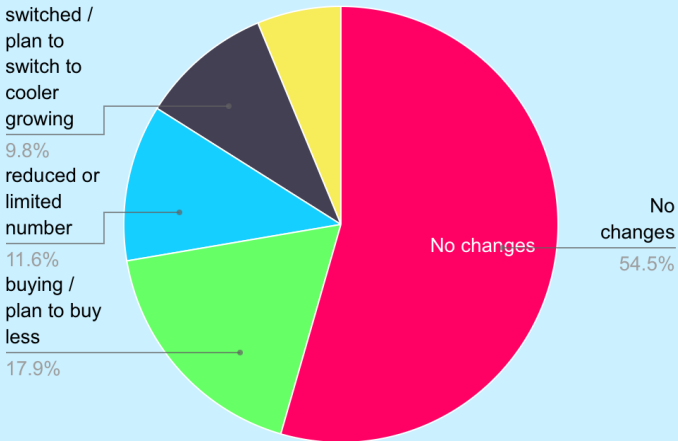
20-25% relatively new to orchid growing and classed themselves as beginners.

Most (53%) considered themselves intermediate level, while 20% considered themselves advanced.

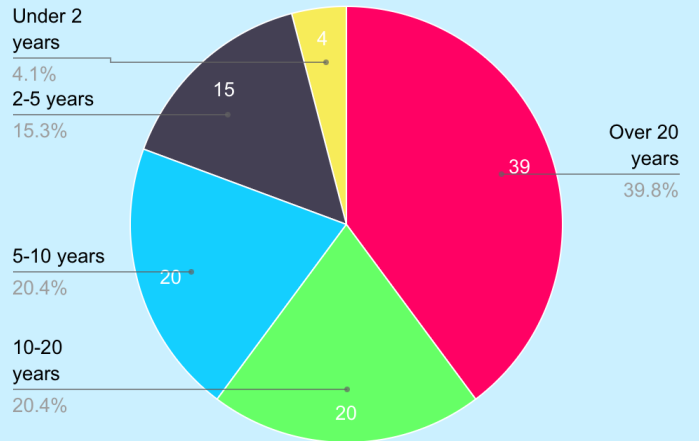
Type of grower classify themselves as



Changes in behaviour since pandemic, energy/ cost of living crises



Years of Growing Orchids



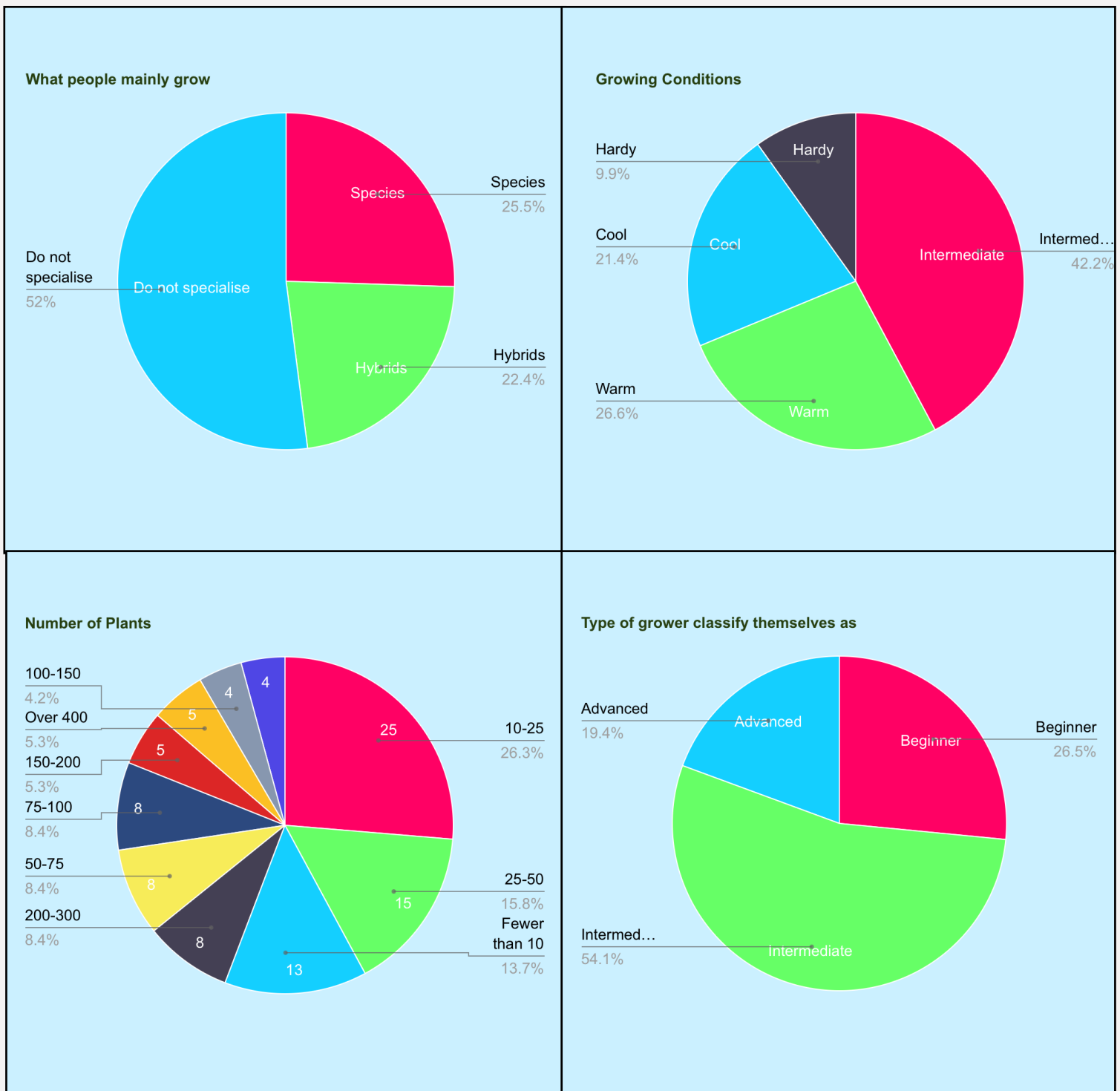
PLANTS

1:10 surveyed fewer than ten plants. One in four had between 10-25 plants. More than half surveyed had 50 plants or less. However, still some large collections out there. 18% upwards of 150 plants, 20% between 50 and 100.

Most plants (80%+) grown in intermediate conditions. 50% cool and 40-plus percent still grow warm notwithstanding cost of living crisis and rising energy costs. Hardy accounted for 20%.

Half those surveyed did not specialise. Of the remainder, roughly the same numbers grew mostly species (25.9%) as did hybrids (22.5%). Almost half said they had specimen and / or rare and hard to get plants in their collections.

Unsurprisingly phalaenopsis and other more readily available plants such as dendrobium and cymbidium among the most widely grown. However, a wide range of other genera scored highly and are evidently popular in collections suggesting not only their availability via specialist nurseries, but also people's tastes and circumstances (smaller homes, growing interest in terrariums etc.). Almost 1:5 grew hardy orchids.



PROGNOSIS

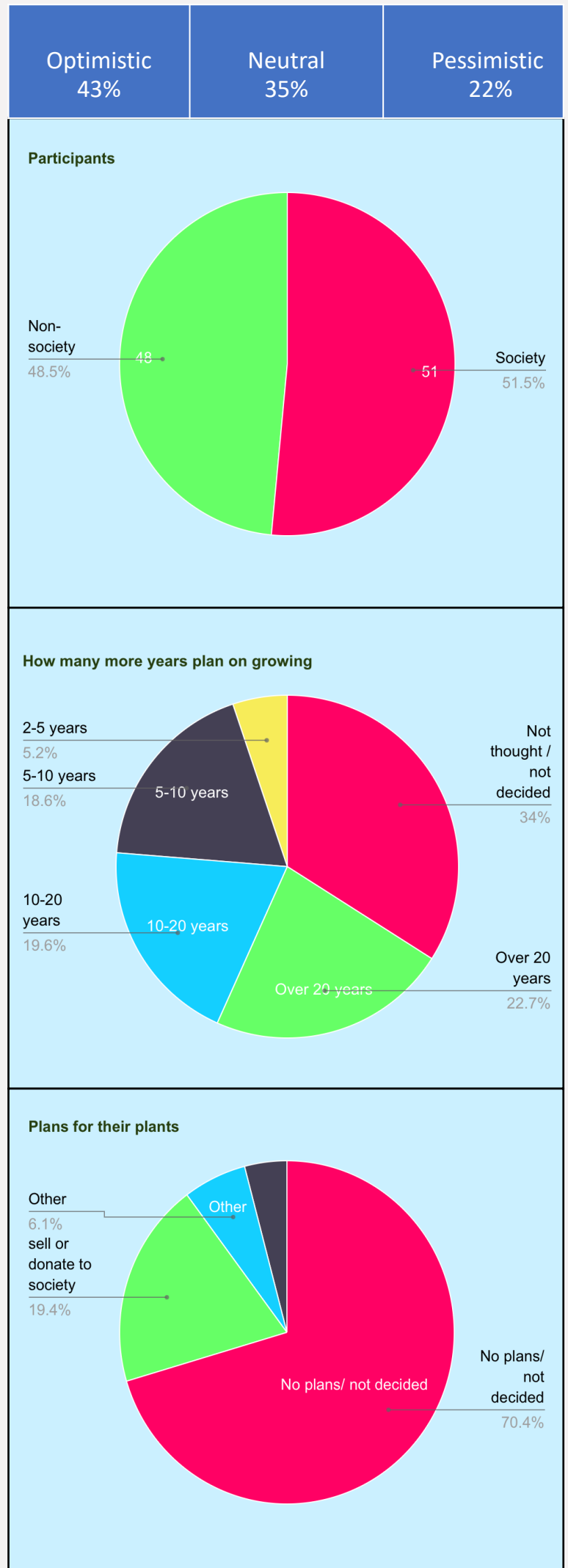
On balance, glass half full rather than half empty.
 No immediate cliff edge and still time enough to plan.
 Though views may differ between society and non-society members.

Less than 1:10 planned to give up growing in next 5 years. Almost 40% saw themselves carrying on at least another 5-20 years and encouragingly over 20% growing for a further 20 or more years.

Good news, despite cost of living crisis and rising energy costs, 60%+ made no changes.
 1:10 have or planning to switch to cooler growing or stop buying plants altogether. Only 7% actually stopped buying plants altogether.

More concerning for those of us with an interest in the preservation of specimen and rare plants in private hands, who have witnessed their demise, deterioration and disappearance from the show benches over a good many years, is that 7 in 10 of those surveyed haven't given any thought to what should happen to their plants when they give up growing orchids.

Worrying also re new blood and that over 80% of those surveyed had introduced fewer than two people (e.g. a friend or family member or other) to orchid growing in the last year or so.



Challenges for Orchid Societies - Part 2

This is the second part of the article by Dr Ari Matikka that appeared in the last Newsletter. It seems to be very appropriate to include it here, following the results of the Survey carried out by Wayne Heywood. Together these make thought provoking reading. This makes the Newsletter much more wordy than usual, but it seems very worth while. The theme of the future of Societies and problems they are facing will be continued....

Dr Ari Matikka is a former president of the Finnish Orchid Society and currently sits on the board of the European Orchid Council. He is particularly interested in developing the activities and management of orchid societies.

NEED FOR ADAPTATION

Societies face a crossroads. They can either cater to an aging demographic with dwindling resources or pivot and adapt to rejuvenate their membership base. Especially, exhibitions and magazines easily slip into danger zone. Membership magazines, with their declining circulation, are becoming a financial strain. Moreover, finding skilled editors willing to work for mostly minimal compensation is a challenge. Organising exhibitions demands a significant volunteer force and passionate enthusiasts.

Without innovation and rethinking, orchid societies risk becoming relics of the past. The allure that once drew older generations to orchids and society activities no longer resonates with newer generations. So, how can orchid societies evolve?

FINDING A NEW PURPOSE

If the current way of working is not attracting new members, then we obviously need to offer something new. Here is an example: the hobby's narrative can shift from merely admiring thriving orchids at home to raising awareness of the looming threat of biodiversity loss and the destruction of orchid habitats and actively participating in orchid conservation, also at homes. The ongoing climate change provides a compelling backdrop, offering both motivation and support for awareness.

While few can venture to biodiversity-rich regions, everyone can contribute on a grassroots level, and collective efforts can make a difference. Practically, societies can inspire members to champion the survival of specific orchid species. Encouraging younger members to either nurture five endangered orchid species at home or contribute to local habitat conservation can be a starting point. Schools can take here an important role.

As roles become defined, communication becomes paramount. Societies can act as hubs, coordinating conservation efforts and tracking progress. The digital age offers tools to facilitate this, but tailored software for coordination and reporting helps or is even essential.

This sifting focus should permeate society activities and information dissemination. While a few societies can spearhead these efforts on a pilot basis, a unified approach across the orchid community is crucial.

Current exhibitions, though commercially successful, paint a rosy picture, often glossing over the grim reality of orchids in the wild. While these events captivate audiences with vibrant displays, they seldom hint at the species that are vanishing or have already been lost. It may be audacious to disrupt this format, introducing elements that might unsettle visitors. Yet, exhibitions remain a potent medium to engage and convey crucial messages.

MARKETING FOR THE FUTURE

The ultimate goal is clear: engage the younger generations. The responsibility lies with the current members and their governing bodies. Crafting a successful marketing campaign demands clear message, objectives, a strategic action plan, dedicated resources, and time. The concern is that many societies might be late to the game.

To resonate with potential enthusiasts, the message must be tailored to the target audience. For example, if we pivot to the "save the orchids" narrative, it might resonate with the TikTok-savvy youth. This generation,

bearing the brunt of environmental neglect, might find a personal stake in the plight of orchids. While it's not the most pressing environmental issue, it offers a tangible avenue for individual impact.

Plant hobbyists in their 30s and 40s used to be the main source of new members. Not so much now. The narrative of nurturing orchids at home might still be appealing. Exotic house plants are clearly a trend.

There is no reason to exclude orchids. The challenge is to understand the hesitance to join societies. Without this knowledge, there is little point in going any further. Now we only know that something else the societies currently offer is needed.

Defining the target audience streamlines and economizes outreach efforts. Digital advertising tools, like Google Ads, can target specific demographics. Platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp might appeal to those in their 40s, while younger audiences might frequent Instagram, TikTok, Twitter (X), Snapchat, and many others.

Short video content is crucial. For platforms like YouTube, videos should be concise, ideally between 5-10 minutes. Interactive content, like games or quizzes, can engage users and highlight gaps in their orchid knowledge. *More suggestions in the box.*

BUYING TIME BY REIMAGINING MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

While awaiting the new approach that will change everything, we must act to preserve at least the current status quo. The digital migration of members challenges traditional revenue streams. Societies must either diversify income sources or curtail expenses.

Activities should focus on online platforms and occasional in-person events. If membership declines, printed magazines, with their associated costs, may become unsustainable. This especially true in multilingual countries with added publishing costs. If we want to rejuvenate the membership, printed magazines are not the way to go. They are becoming an economic burden and most importantly, the younger generation is not interested in print. It's a big leap to move to web-based publication and the move is sure to drop out members, so the timing and the execution must be well thought out. Moving to online articles can reduce costs, potentially allowing for a reduced membership fee. While charging for online content may be unrealistic, fostering a community through comments and discussions is still invaluable.

Short video clips, especially member-generated content – show us your orchid collection – can foster community engagement. A closed community platform may lower the inhibition to share personal orchid experiences compared to public platforms like Facebook.

Offering free online care guides, especially for most common species, can reach a surprisingly broad audience. Engaging the passive audience of home growers will benefit of innovative strategies, like photo competitions ("Orchid of the Month" awards). However, instead of a rigorous judging process, in this case the focus should be on mass engagement, excluding seasoned growers.

Traditional members' meetings have seen dwindling attendance, not necessarily due to a lack of interest, but perhaps because of changing lifestyles and priorities. Instead of frequent meetings, societies could pivot to fewer, more impactful one-day events with comprehensive agendas. Encouraging localized small group activities fosters community spirit, especially if led by passionate individuals. Providing online access to meetings caters members who face logistical challenges in attending in-person events, ensuring inclusivity.

Exhibitions remain a cornerstone of society activities. They serve as a testament to the society's vibrancy and are instrumental in promoting the orchid hobby. Depending on the resources at hand, these can range from intimate bazaars to grand orchid showcases. When executed effectively, they can also be significant revenue generators.

CALL TO COLLECTIVE BRAINSTORMING

Though, it probably will always be a few key persons that are willing to sacrifice a lot of their time for the society to thrive, it is crucial to involve all members in charting the future course of the hobby. The orchid nurseries are built on the orchid hobby in mutual dependence. Basically, so are also scientific collections and research.

Opening discussions on attracting new members and diversifying revenue streams can yield innovative ideas. The collective wisdom of the community, from seasoned growers especially to novices, can provide fresh perspectives and drive the society towards a vibrant future. A more comprehensive picture of the current situation is needed. The European Orchid Council could be the actor that provides a platform for discussion, coordinates, and shares the ideas generated.

It will take great minds to find viable ways to redefine orchid society. The current concept is challenged. The new one must be accepted by new target groups. Without a clear content and focus, all promotion efforts will be in vain.

SUGGESTIONS:

Potential Partnerships: Collaborate with botanical gardens, conservation organisations, and educational institutions. These partnerships can amplify reach, share resources, and co-host events.

Influencer Collaborations: Engage with plant influencers on platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok. Their endorsement can introduce orchid societies to a vast and engaged audience, especially the younger demographic.

Community-Driven Initiatives: Launch initiatives like "Orchid Grower of the Month" or "Conservation Champion" to encourage member participation and showcase their efforts.

Education: Introduce orchid cultivation as part of biology or horticulture courses in schools or organise workshops in educational institutions.

Interactive Learning: Use Augmented Reality (AR) or Virtual Reality (VR) for virtual garden tours or to explain orchid anatomy.

Events & Celebrations: Collaborate with shopping or community centres for temporary displays or pop-up sales.

Themed Events: Organise events around specific themes like "Orchids Around the World" or "Orchids in Art & Culture".

Youth Council: Form a committee of younger members to give insights into what their age group would like from the society.

Feedback Loops: Regularly solicit feedback from members and attendees of events. This feedback can guide future activities, ensuring they align with members' interests and the changing dynamics of the hobby.

Leveraging Technology: Embrace digital tools for communication, event management, and member engagement. Consider developing a mobile app for the society, offering features like care guides, and event calendars.

Content creation: Use EOC's article collection and share your own articles through it. Use ChatGPT and other AI tools to produce articles or assist in writing content.

Virtual Workshops & Webinars: Invite experts to host online sessions about orchid care, new species, or historical aspects.

Working Groups: Form different working groups where members specialise in growing the same selected species, perhaps in parallel with their own collection. Group members share experiences, collect data relevant to their response species and publish their findings through the society's channels. The society is thus structured around areas of interest rather than geographical location. Schools could use the same method.

Collaborations & Partnerships: Collaborate with local businesses for discounts or mutual promotions. Form alliances with other orchid societies globally to share resources and knowledge.

Continuous Adaptation: The world is evolving rapidly, and so are hobbies. Regularly reassess the society's strategies, be open to change, and adapt to the shifting landscape.



What's on 2024

These pages are a work in progress, which I hope that you will find useful.

These are the dates for the society shows, RHS committee meetings, GWL and the London orchid show. There are also some trade events included as well. There are also the show flyers I have received to date at the back.

If any members have shows, open days etc that they want included please let me know. in addition, if there are any mistakes, let me know.

All of the dates have been obtained from information available on the relevant society web sites. A list of societies and their website links follow. I have checked every link, and these should be correct. you will find that these are now clickable directly from the page. It is worth everyone's time to check that their society details are correct -

1) on here and 2) on their web site. Some societies don't have their show details on their web sites; so please check that these are up to date.

Situations and circumstances may change. So please double check any show details with the relevant society web page, Facebook page or show manager before setting out to travel any distance to a show.

There are other online diary of events that may include items that are not included in this one.

The best one I have come across is managed by Pumpkin Beth and is well worth checking out.

<https://www.pumpkinbeth.com/2022/04/calendar-orchid-talks-orchid-plant-sales-orchid-events/>

2024

February

Sat 10th Mathers Foundation Guided Tour (booking required)

Sat 24th. Bournemouth OS Spring Show.

Sat 24th Feb to Sun March 10th, 23rd WOC, Taiwan

March

Sat 2nd Mathers Foundation Guided Tour (booking required)

Sat 2nd Sheffield OS Annual Show

Sat 2nd Wessex OS Annual Show

Fri 15th RHS Orchid Committee meeting

1.30pm: Council Room, 80 Vincent Square, at RHS Orchid Show

Fri, Sat & Sun 15-17th RHS Orchid show, Lindley Hall, Westminster

Thurs-Sun 21st-24th Dresden EOC

Sat 23rd. Solihull OS Annual Show

Sat & Sun 23-24th Cornwall OS at Falmouth Spring show

April

Sat 6th Mathers Foundation Guided Tour (booking required)

Sat 6th Hinckley and District OS Annual Show

Sun 7th OS of East Anglia Spring Show

Sat 13th OSGB Spring Show

Sun 14th North East of England OS Annual Show

Sat 20th RHS Orchid Committee meeting

11.30am: Mathers Foundation, Pulborough, W. Sussex

Sat 20th Spicesotics Pop-Up sale (see flyer for details)

Sat 27th Central OS Annual Show

Sat 27th Cornwall OS Annual Show

May

Sat 11th Mathers Foundation Guided Tour (booking required)

Sat & Sun, 11th & 12th Scottish OS Glasgow Botanic Gardens Orchid Fair

Mon 20th RHS Orchid Committee meeting

8.00am: RHS Chelsea Flower Show

June

Sat 8th Cambridge OS Annual Show TBC.

Thurs-Sun, 13th-16th UK International Orchid Show at BBC Gardeners World Live

Sat 15th RHS Orchid Committee meeting

1.30pm: International Orchid Show, Gardeners' World Live, Birmingham NEC

What's on 2024

How to use the links :

1. Find the society and date of the show from this calendar
2. Click on the relevant link in the list of societies (next page)

July

Sat 6th North of England OS Annual Show

Wed 10th RHS Orchid Committee meeting

11.30am: University of Cambridge Herbarium, Cambridge

August

Sat 3rd RHS Orchid Committee meeting

1.30pm: RHS Garden Harlow Carr, Harrogate

Sat & Sun, 3rd & 4th Harrogate OS Orchid Weekend

September

Sat & Sun, 7th & 8th Orchid Study Group Welsh Orchid Festival

Sat & Sun 14th & 15th Burnham Nurseries 75th Anniv. WeekEnd

Sat 14th RHS Orchid Committee meeting

11.30am: Burnham Nurseries, Newton Abbot

Sun 22nd Darlington OS annual show

Sat 28th Bournemouth OS Autumn Show

Sun 29th East Midlands OS Annual Show

October

Tues 8th.RHS Orchid Committee meeting

11.30am: RBG Kew

November

December

Tues 10th RHS Orchid Committee meeting

11.30am: RHS Council Room, 80 Vincent Square, London.

Orchid Societies currently members of BOC in alphabetic order

Further information about each society may be found on their respective websites which contain a wealth of information about orchids, their history and their culture. They are well worth browsing

Bournemouth Orchid Society

<http://www.bournemouthorchidsociety.org.uk/>

Bristol & West of England Orchid Society

<https://sites.google.com/site/bristolorchids/home>

British Paphiopedilum Society

<https://www.paphiopedilum.org.uk/>

Cambridge Orchid Society

<http://cambridgeorchidsociety.btck.co.uk/>

Central Orchid Society

<http://www.centralorchidsociety.org.uk/>

Cheltenham & District Orchid Society

<https://sites.google.com/a/cheltenhamorchids.org/www/>

Cheshire & North Wales Orchid Society

<http://www.canwos.org.uk/>

Cornwall Orchid Society

<https://cornwallorchidsociety.com/>

Darlington & District Orchid Society

<http://www.darlingtonos.org/>

Devon Orchid Society

<http://www.devon.ukos.com/>

East Anglia Orchid Society

<http://www.osea.org.uk/>

East Midlands Orchid Society

<http://www.eastmidlandsorchidsociety.co.uk/>

Essex Orchid Society

<http://essexorchidsociety.org.uk/>

Hardy Orchid Society

<http://www.hardyorchidsociety.org.uk/>

Harrogate Orchid Society

<http://harrogateorchidsociety.co.uk/>

Hinckley & District Orchid Society

<http://hinckleydistrictorchidsociety.synthasite.com/>

Lea Valley Orchid Society

<https://leavalleyorchidsociety.com/>

North East of England Orchid Society

<http://www.northeastofenglandorchidsociety.co.uk/>

North of England Orchid Society

<https://www.orchid.org.uk/>

Orchid Society of Great Britain

<http://www.osgb.org.uk/>

Scottish Orchid Society

<http://www.scottishorchid.org/>

Sheffield & District Orchid Society

www.sheffieldorchids.co.uk

Solihull & District Orchid Society

<http://www.solihullorchidsociety.co.uk/>

South East Orchid Society

<https://southeastorchidsociety.jimdo.com/>

South Wales Orchid Study Group

<https://www.orchidstudygroup.org.uk/>

South West Orchid Society

<http://www.sworchids.uk/>

Suffolk Orchid Society

<http://suffolkorchid.co.uk/>

Thames Valley Orchid Society

<http://www.heritageorchids.co.uk/Thames%20Valley%20Orchid%20Society.htm>

Wessex Orchid Society

<http://www.wessexorchidsociety.org.uk/>

Other Organisations members of BOC

Chester Zoo

<https://www.chesterzoo.org/our-zoo/plants-and-gardens/orchids-national-plant-collection/>

Eric Young Orchid Foundation

<https://ericyoungorchid.org/>

King Charles 1 School, Kidderminster

The Mathers Foundation

<https://orchid.foundation/>

Pleurothallid Alliance UK

Royal Botanic Gardens Kew

Royal Horticultural Society

Writhlington School Orchid Project

<https://wsbeorchids.org/>

Sheffield Orchid Society
Orchid Show

St. John's Church Hall,
 Abbeydale Road South,
 Sheffield, S17 3LE

Saturday March 2nd
 2024
 10am to 4 pm



Entry £5
 Tickets from Eventbrite
 Carnivorous plant display
 Amazing displays by seven
 different societies
 Buy plants from Britain's leading orchid
 and house plant vendor - Spicetotic




**ORCHID SHOW
 AND TRADE FAIR**

Saturday 24th February 2024
Open 12.00 Noon – 4.30 pm £4.00 per person
Special Offer: £3.00 only for first 100
Under 18's enter FREE with a paying adult

- Exquisite and intriguing orchids on display
- Refreshments available at cost
- **Free** high quality cultural advice and orchid clinic
- Substantial variety of orchids and other quality items for sale
- **FREE** potting demonstrations - bring your plants for **FREE** advice
- **RE-POTTING SERVICE** from £2.00
- Large Raffle - Tombola and Book sales

Orchid learning zone
 • Including Kids and Family **FREE** craft activities

Trade attractions:
 Burnham Nurseries - Laurence Hobbs Orchids
 Orchid Botanics - Steve Neville Ceramics
 Fine Artwork - Gift cards - Fine Jewellery

Show Venue: The Hamworthy Club
Magna Rd Canford Magna Bournemouth
Wimborne BH21 3AP
Free Parking on Site

For more details contact Chris Broomfield:
 chrisbroomfield@ntlworld.com or 07712479056
 www.bournemouthorchidsociety.org.uk




[See our FB Page.](#)



UK POP UP

PLANT SALE
20th April
 10am - 4pm

TOWNLEY HALL
 The Fulbourn Centre, Home End, Fulbourn,
 Cambridgeshire CB21 5BS

ORDER NOW!

SPICESOTIC PLANTS  www.ecuagenera.com

These have been reduced quite a lot in size, but are still readable if you zoom in a bit on the text.