

BOC NEWSLETTER

An occasional publication from The British Orchid Council.

August 2010

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Editorial

This edition of the BOC Newsletter is the first for some considerable time, and introduces a new item of interest for BOC Members.

In this edition you will find information about the new BOC Photographic competition, and other items relating to the workings of the BOC and the BOC Database. This online database has been set up for the benefit of all BOC Member Organisations, and in turn, their own members.

We hope that you will use the database (available via the web) to help you find up-to-date information about your local society, and to view dates for shows and events around the country.

The BOC is your national umbrella organisation, and we need to provide the best service that we can, and to enable us to do this we need feedback about the services that we provide, so please feel free to suggest changes, and additional services if you think that these may be of benefit to the community of orchid growers in the UK. Contact details for direct contact are given at the foot of the page; otherwise please send your comments via your BOC delegates.

Editor.

Photographic Competition

The BOC are running a National Orchid Photographic Competition using the web-based facilities already available to members. Pictures can be of any subject, but must contain an orchid.

The competition is open to all individual members of organisations that are themselves members of the BOC. There will be prizes for the first three winners of £50, £30, and £20 respectively.

Each BOC member organisation will be able to submit up to five pictures from its own members, and to put these in to a Gallery held in the BOC Database. The pictures will have to be in digital format, and of a limited size, and the complete Gallery will be available for viewing by anyone via the BOC web site. After sufficient time, each BOC member organisation will be able to vote on behalf of its own members for the top ten pictures in the Gallery, and the pictures with the highest number of points will awarded the prizes.

Awarded pictures will be used for display purposes on the web site, and for other BOC publicity.

The timetable for the first competition is for the system to be available for practical testing in August 2010, with the full uploading to the Gallery to be available

from September 2010 until the end of December 2010. At the end of the year, the Gallery will be locked, and votes may then be cast for the best pictures. This will take place between 1st January 2011 and the end of February 2011. Awards will be made at the BOC AGM in March 2011. In the case of a draw, the BOC Executive Committee will make the final decision.

Preparing and submitting pictures

Each picture should be in a digital format before uploading to the Gallery. Picture from film must be scanned, and the resulting computer file should be submitted for uploading. It is recommended that each picture should be about 1000 pixels wide, and this will give good results for reproduction. A limit on the picture size for uploads is imposed by the system, and this is described in the online upload facility.

It is suggested that each Society may hold a competition for its members at a meeting in the autumn, and that the winning five pictures are then uploaded to the Gallery. It will be the responsibility of the Society's Web Contact to log in to the BOC Database, and then to upload the pictures. Online documentation is provided to help with this.

Voting

After 1st January 2011, each society will be able to vote for pictures in the Gallery. For those that do not have access to the Internet, and for the benefit of all members, it is suggested that a digital slide show may be arranged at a society meeting in order for society members to cast their votes for the best pictures in the Gallery. Each society will have the choice of up to ten pictures for which to cast votes, and the positions are then allocated points by the online system.

The points are allocated as follows: - 1st placed picture 31 points, 2nd 24 points, 3rd 18 points, 4th 13 points, 5th 9 points, 6th 6 points, 7th 4 points, 8th 3 points, 9th 2 points, and 10th 1 point. The winner will be the with the highest number of points at the close of voting on 28th February 2011.

Testing and Practise

During the period up to the end of the year, each Web Contact will be able to upload to the Gallery and delete pictures in the Gallery (only those uploaded by a given society will be able to be deleted by that society). This also applies to voting (votes for subsequently deleted pictures will not be counted!).

This will allow Web Contacts some time to practise with the system. Only when the final five pictures are uploaded, and the 31st December is reached will the

Gallery be locked, and further changes will not be allowed. Each picture is given a unique number, and it is against this number that votes are cast. Picture numbers are fixed on the 1st January. Details of the picture's author are not visible when viewing the Gallery, only the Picture number and title will be shown, so please do not put individual's names in the picture titles!

Finally.....

When the top three pictures are announced, their authors will be publicised, and the awards made known generally. The BOC website will be displaying these pictures prominently, and the Gallery will be archived in preparation for the next competition. The archived Galleries will be available for viewing at any time online. Pictures from the Gallery may be used subsequently, and due acknowledgements will be made to the authors; copyright will remain with the authors and will be managed by proxy by the BOC.

Links

Public access to the Gallery will be via the BOC website at www.british-orchid-council.info.

The British Orchid Council and you!

There are around fifty organisations that make up the membership of the BOC, and these represent orchid growers and societies that have an interest or are solely concerned with the cultivation of orchids.

Any member organisation can send two delegates to represent it at meetings. Officers are elected annually from nominated delegates.

We meet at least three times a year, and regular discussions centre around such topics as Congresses, International Shows, Judging, Conservation, CITES, and the dissemination of information via the BOC website, database and the annual Golden Guide.

The BOC Database

The database is an online facility, and is available to anyone seeking information about local societies and events. The database is kept up to date by the member societies and so should always be relevant to their needs. A Diary of Events (also maintained by members) gives details of all the shows and events throughout the British Isles, and includes details of many international events also.

The BOC website and database are available at www.british-orchid-council.info.

The Golden Guide

Each year the BOC, in conjunction with The British Orchid Growers Association (BOGA), publishes A Grower's and Buyer's Guide to Orchids in the U.K. (The Golden Guide). This lists the members of the BOC, and contains details of BOGA, the diary of events for the calendar year, cultural notes and advertisements, and has become the essential source

of information for orchid growers both professional and amateur.

The next edition of the Golden Guide is due to be published in December 2010, and Members' information should be updated in the BOC Database before October 1st 2010.

BOC Congresses

After an excellent Congress at Peterborough in June this year, when a superb plant of *Bulbophyllum graveolens* "Roger Lane" grown by Sue Lane won Grand Champion Plant, the BOC agreed in principle to hold the next Congress at Hinckley, Leicestershire at the kind invitation of The Hinckley & District Orchid Society. It is proposed that this should take place during the 19th, 20th & 21st October 2012.

The BOC Judging Scheme

The BOC organises an orchid judging scheme where those interested in judging can become accredited BOC Judges. The scheme provides training by holding symposia twice a year where five or so tables of orchids are judged, and trainees' scores are marked against those of a panel of experts. It takes about 30 tables to qualify, so usually an elapsed time of around three years is usual before qualification.

A BOC Judges badge is awarded to those that qualify, and this is a passport that enables holders to judge at events throughout Europe and many other parts of the world.

Each BOC Member organisation may have up to two trainees registered at a time, and a qualified judge mentors each trainee. New trainees are proposed by their society. Application forms are available from David Ridgeway at davidridgeway@btinternet.com.

Sponsored Speakers

At the next BOC meeting (December 2010) it is proposed that there should be a discussion that The BOC could sponsor Lecturers to give talks to BOC Member organisations. This has been raised before, and it was noted that The OSGB are part-sponsoring a speaker from the USA to talk at various venues.

One suggestion was that an expensive speaker could talk to a group from several local societies, and that BOC could help with the cost of such a venture. Groups of BOC Member organisations have received funding before in the form of a loan (for example to South West societies for the Weston super Mare Congress), and this principle could be extended to fund speakers' costs.

Suggestions and requests should be sent to the BOC Secretary (email address below).

Volunteer required!

If you have the time, ability and inclination to help prepare a document of 20 sides of A4 in Microsoft Word format, then please contact the Editor.