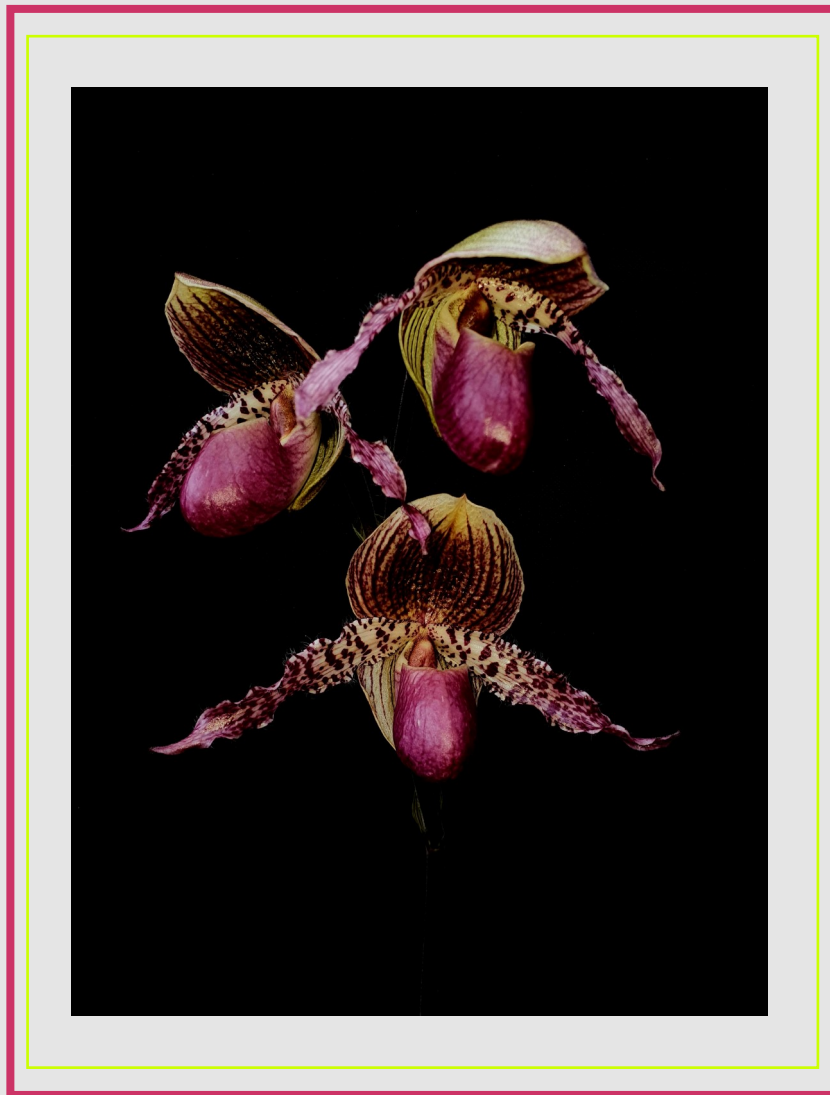


Top Orchid

Summer 2022



Bournemouth Orchid Society



Programme 2022

- Friday 24th June - **John Haggard**
 - Epipactis and it's Cultivation
- Sunday 17th July - **Garden Party**
 - Hosted by Graham & Pat Smith
- Lynmoor Farm, Newmans Lane, West Moors, Dorset, BH22 0LW 2.30 pm.
- Friday 26th August - **Mike Powell**
 - Terrestrial Orchids: Ridiculous to Sublime
- Saturday 24th September - **Autumn Show**
 - Allendale Community Centre
Hanham Road, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 1AS
- Friday 28th October - **Francis J. Quesada Pallares**
 - Borneo Orchids

Friday 25th November - **Helen Millner**

- Growing Mounted Orchids in the Home
 - Front cover: *Paphiopedilum* Transvaal
 - All Photographs and artwork by Marius Grzelik unless otherwise stated.
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Editor's Page

We have had an eventful few months

1. The coach trip to Wisley, but what's perhaps more important, The Society's Orchid display at the RHS Orchid Show in Wisley. As always prepared by our fantastic show team and their hard work. We left the show with a Silver Medal so a big thank you to all the members who lent their orchids for the Show.
2. A 'mini' coach trip, including 18 members, to McBean's Orchids and The Mathers Foundation. Links to both places can be found on our website to those interested in finding out more about these two places.
3. AGM and 'The Plants Auction' – which is always great fun, even if some of us had to take out a second mortgage to pay for all the plants we bought. Carol, I feel for you.
4. The next stop is Malvern and we want to come back this time with a Gold Medal. We need your plants and as many as possible. Please get in touch with [Chris Broomfield](#), [Nick Fry](#) or [Ken Griffiths](#), who will be very happy to arrange the orchids collection, look after them as if they were their own and return them after the show. We need the plants at the latest on the morning of Wednesday 15th June. You can find the contact details for the guys on the last page.
5. I'm looking for volunteers to write 'The jobs for the season' for our magazine, please do get in touch with me on new.mg1978@gmail.com. With four issues a year, if we have a couple of contributors, it will be an easy task.
6. Lastly if you have anything you would like to share with the rest of the membership, I will be more than happy to include it in the Top Orchid, this would be a great addition to our quarterly magazine, lots of pictures are also welcome.

Marius Grzelik



Encyclias and Prosthecheas

Sally Mill 29th April 2022

Reporter: **Stephanie Rowland**

We were very fortunate to have a fantastic talk by Sally Mill on *Encyclias* and *Prosthecheas* during which she shared her knowledge and her experience of observing these beautiful orchids in the wild and growing them.

Both groups of orchids come from similar habitats and require similar cultivation. *Prosthechea* prefer a slightly damper environment and bloom 'upside down' with the lip upper-most which can help to identify them. Recently many *Encyclias* have been reclassified as *Prosthechea* so this is more of a 'general' rule!

Due to Sally's work and busy lifestyle, she wanted orchids she could grow in the home. These orchids appealed to her as they are generally small to medium sized plants, they can be grown in pots (although smaller types prefer mounting). Most are beautifully scented with many flowering through the summer and blooms lasting 4-8 weeks. She now has 60 different species.

Sally explained her choices of medium. For larger plants she uses a mixture of 2 parts medium bark, 1 part each of fine bark, chopped cork and giant perlite/pumice. For smaller plants and those that require wetter conditions, she uses a mixture of 3 parts fine bark, 1 part each of chopped cork, giant perlite/pumice and sphagnum moss. The chopped cork is obtained from wine, (or prosecco) corks which she chops up, (a very good exercise in recycling and good reason to open a bottle every now and then, excuses that I shall be using anyway!). Sally grows her plants in pottery pots as the plants appear to like these.

Sally has found that *Encyclias* and *Prosthecheas* can be intolerant of Hydroleca. She tried Hydroleca as crocking in her pots and found it toxic to her plants which then took several years to recover from the experience. She now uses Perlag instead. This is a form of pumice with similar properties to the ground on which many *Encyclias* and *Prosthecheas* can grow on, as many of these orchids are epiphytic, some can also be lithophytic or terrestrial.

Most *Encyclias* prefer "pretty bright light" whilst *Prosthechea* prefer slightly more shade and both species generally prefer intermediate temperatures.

When in growth, Sally waters once a week adding feed every other watering. Many of these orchids require a rest with little to no water or else they tend to rot. Sally rests hers from the time the current pseudobulb is fully grown to when a new growth is observed and only watering when the pseudobulbs begin to shrivel. Depending on the species, this period can range from none to several months such as *E. oestlundii* which was in rest for 5 months.

Pests and diseases are thankfully few. Slugs and snails find the leaves tough but will go for a nice fresh flower spike. They do suffer from 'Cattleya' scale which Sally has battled with and recommends the red 'Bug Clear' as unfortunately Provado aerosol has been discontinued for environmental reasons. They tend to get spotting at the tips of the leaves, the cause of which is unknown, possibly bacterial but commercial growers experience it too hence docked leaves!

Sally has been lucky to travel to Central & South America to see these in the wild through holidays organised by Ecuagenera and shared with us some of the amazing pictures from her travels and of her collection.



Forest in Ecuador

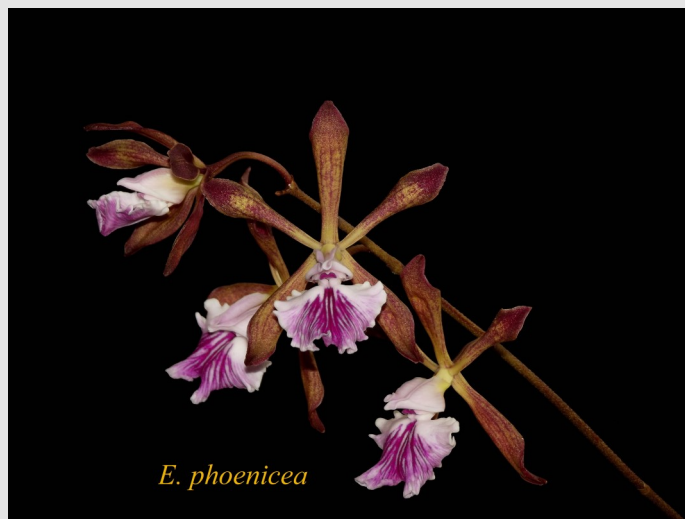
She started by showing a picture of the forest in Ecuador. The tree in the picture was mostly dead but smothered in Spanish moss, lichen and epiphytes and this was the sort of environment that these orchids could be found.

They often share their habitat with Bromeliads, ferns and moss. We saw examples of species found in different areas. Many are found in dense forests, where a lot of rain falls resulting in waterfalls and some deafening raging torrents. Sally gave descriptions of orchid species and where they can be found in the wild.

Mexico 500-2500m

P. guttata, *P. calamaria (tripunctata)*, *E. adenocaula*, *E. pollardiana*, *P. michuacana* from the Michuacan State. *P. pterocarpa* is often lithophytic. These species endure an extended dry period and so require an absolute rest in cultivation.

Central America
& the Caribbean



E. bractescens grows in scrubby forests up to 1000m in Copan, Honduras forming huge clumps everywhere, *E. phoenicea* is endemic to Cuba, is difficult to grow with 3cm flowers that smell of chocolate!



Prosthechea abbreviata

Central America 500-2500m

E. ceratistes which can grow to 4ft tall, *E. hanburyi*, *E. guatemalensis*, *E. microbulbon*, *E. stellata*, *P. ionocentra*, *P. abbreviata* found in wet forests.



Central America 1500-2500m

P. campylostalix, *P. brassavolae*, *P. chondylobulbon*, these require a shadier spot and are more difficult to grow as they prefer damper conditions but are prone to rot. Several grow in cloud forest and as long as they're given a bright spot, they're surprisingly easy to grow.

P. vitellina, *P. garciana* from Venezuela not as easy to grow, *Euchile mariae* from Mexico, *Euchile Marina* - a hybrid between *E. mariae* and *E. citrina*.

Northern South America, below the cloud forest.

E. chloroleuca, *E. diurna*, *E. profuse*, *E. guayasensis*, *E. granitica* is rupicolous, *P. livida* - these enjoy bright, intermediate conditions.

Central America below 1500m

E. cordigera, *E. cordigera semi-alba*, *P. baculus* which only ever flowers two blooms on a spike, back-to-back.

These grow in scrubby, dry forests and require bright, warm with an absolute rest and are not so easy to grow well.

Equador species are *P. grammatoglossa* and *P. grammatoglossa* 'Estrela'

Often seen *Prosthechea* species growing terrestrially in a mixture of pumice at 2000m in rather hot and dry conditions on the side of the very active volcano Cayambe!



E. cordigera semi-alba



E. cordigera

Central South America lowlands, particularly Brazil



E. argentinensis, *E. dichroma*, *E. oncidoides*, *E. pachyantha* (*paraensis*), *E. unaensis*, *E. bracteata*, *P. widgrenii* with unusual pure white blooms.

Sally finished by describing her setup at home. In a south facing window she has heated trays using thermostats that are set at 18°C. On top of these she has 1cm thick water matting and upturned saucers which she places her orchids upon. *Encyclias* that enjoy these conditions are *E. alata* var. *rossii*, *E. patena* v. *patens* (*flava*), *E. osmantha*, *E. randii*, *E. seidellii*.



She also gave some examples of some *Prosthechea* that are very easy to grow due to their widespread distribution; they can adapt to bright, (not direct), light in intermediate to warm conditions and can be grown in the greenhouse or home.

P. cochleate, *P. fragrans*, *P. radiata* which Sally called the “King of fragrance” and *P. vespa*

This was a very informative talk with lots of valuable cultivation advice, I have already repositioned a couple of my *Prosthechea* in my home since and am researching suitable bottles with cork for the orchids of course. Hic!

Pictures contributed by:

[Stephanie Rowland and Sally Mill](#)

BOS Visit to The Mathers Foundation

7th May 2022

Reporter: **Nick Fry**

Thanks to Brian Gould, I was tipped off that The Mathers Foundation were offering ticketed (Free) access to their foundation on the 12th March 2022. Following Ken's kind distribution of a general notice, four of us, Glen, Diane, Christine and myself, obtained the last remaining tickets for the event. It turned out it proved to be a very wet start. No matter, we were all focused on the goal!

On arrival we were given a hearty welcome By David Mather who had kindly remembered me from our introductory visit during 2021.

Coffee, tea and a selection of fine cakes were available free of charge during the two hours that the collection would remain open. Mindful that during the booking process, we were encouraged to donate £5 each to their sponsored charity, La Reserva Orquideas, Columbia, with the aim to conserve orchids, and indeed all other inhabitants, found at this site. All handed over their donations with pleasure, for such a worthwhile cause. NB, I have since been informed that David raised £130 on the day and he wishes to pass on his thanks to all for their donations.

For those unaware, the foundation was set up as a UK charity during 2019, with the aim of conserving and researching orchid, primarily *Oncidium* alliance, species and hybrids. Already the foundation, with the expert help of Jim Durrant, nursery manager, looks after some 4000 cool growing orchids together with 9000 *Pleione* bulbs!

Since our initial visit in 2021, the *Oncidium* collection has been granted National Collection Status in 2021. In my view there was never any doubt about them achieving this honour, given the sheer extent and quality of the *Oncidium*, both hybrids and species that they look after.



Oncidium glasshouse

The glass houses benefit from state-of-the-art growing conditions including full automation and 'carbon neutral' heating. The primary heating system is 90% wood pellet fuelled, supplemented with 10% solar heating. There is a gas heating system installed as a back-up with a further back-up provided by oil heaters. In the Oncidium house David has installed two horizontal thermal screens. These are fully automated and extend as conditions dictate. They are mainly used to retain the heat, thus being more efficient with heating consumables, around the plants during cold nights.

One thing Jim does not like being automated is automatic pot watering. He likes to check each pot and deliver the right amount of water that the plant needs. Judging by the sheer size of some of the pseudobulbs, Jim knows what he is doing!



Pleione polytunnel



Pleione polytunnel

New for 2022 is the inclusion of Ian Butterfield's fine collection of *Pleione* and the opening of a separate Cymbidium house. Also worthy of note is that QR codes have been included on all plant labels, so that all information held on each plant can be readily accessed at point of view. I consider this a really good edition that reinforces the importance of viewing the collection first hand.

The first 'house' we were taken around was the new *Pleione* polytunnel. This is kept frost free and currently houses some 9000 *Pleione* bulbs! Jim explained that the Foundation has already received many requests for these bulbs from Chinese growers, apparently willing to pay between £50.00 and £125.00 per bulb! Perhaps we are growing the wrong plants?

Jim confirmed that he had not cultivated *Pleione* before, however; he has potted them up in suitably drained pans. The compost consists of 10% large perlite, 45% medium bark plus 45% New Zealand Sphagnum moss, all over a layer of Hydroleca type clay pebbles for good drainage.

Regarding pest control, Jim advises using a general pest control spray with SB used at other times. He reminded us that SB, besides controlling pests, is also a plant feed, therefore; you need to cut down on fertiliser quantity when applying this product.

Two Pleione's that were in flower and of note, was the species *Pl. forestii* and a fine hybrid named *Pl. Roy Barrow*.



Pleione forestii

Pleione Roy Barrow



Jim then moved us all into the Oncidium House where coffee and fine cakes were provided. We were all allowed to meander up and down the isles between the movable benches. For those not familiar, the benches run on pipe rollers so that you only need one isle width giving access between all the benches. This ensures maximum bench space for growing!

Regarding the general culture of *Oncidium* alliance plants, Jim recommends potting them in small pots using a mix of 60% New Zealand Sphagnum moss, 20% fine bark and 20% large perlite. As they are slow growing plants, he recommends a weak feed supplemented by added calcium nitrate, not registering above 0.5 milli siemens. Do check that your fertilizer is not high in nitrogen as this can cause problems to pseudobulb development. These plants need to be kept moist at all times and aim to keep temperatures between 10°C and 27°C. Be sure to provide high humidity during hot summer days and ensure shading is sufficient as they are mostly low-level light requirement plants. Basically, look at the leaves and if they are getting 'tanned', i.e., reddened, then increase the shading.

Jim pots on the plants yearly and, due to moss breakdown, fully repots every four years. The reason for this strategy is that these plants have fine roots which are very easily damaged when fully repotting plus many easily 'sulk' if the pot is too large.

Since my last visit, the young *Oncidium* have grown on nicely with many now in flower. Besides many fine hybrids, there are an impressive number of species. Jim explained, regarding the hybrids, it is their intent to build a collection of old significant hybrids. I suspect that occasionally these would be used for crossing with either the species or modern hybrids where the cross would be considered worthwhile. I wait with anticipation!



Cyrtochilum macranthum



Cyrtochilum serratum



Cyrtochilum pardinum

In flower, and worthy of note, was a broad collection of not often seen *Cyrtochilums*, many fine *Oncidiums*, both species and hybrids, plus some other closely related hybrids. Besides *Oncidium*, this house now contains small collections of *Masdevalias* and *Miltoniopsis*.



Small *Miltoniopsis* collection

Oncidium Gallery:



General view of the *Oncidium* House



Onc. Cache es Domoiselles (Deloraine x De Quetteville) 'MF Star'



Oncidium lykaiosii



Oncidium alexandrae 4N



Oncidium McBean's Ashira 'Lyoth Giant'



General view

Then Jim led us all into the new, and indeed cooler, *Cymbidium* house, where both their large and miniature *Cymbidiums* are housed. The Foundation aims to produce about 1000 a year for both garden centre and wholesale trade. Jim explained that mini-*Cymbidiums* are now coming back into fashion with *Phalaeonopsis* starting to fall from favour. In fact, he explained, that top of the fashion trend is indeed green foliage plants!

Noting that *Cymbidiums* take up so much room, the foundation aim to only make one cross per year. Another factor limiting production is that *Cymbidiums* are now produced so cheaply abroad.

Jim recommends that a suitable compost for *Cymbidiums* is 75% medium bark mixed with 25% large perlite. However, he demonstrated that you can grow them in many types of compost, proving his point by showing one grown in metal beer bottle tops alone! I suppose you can then claim that both the plant and the grower have enjoyed their drink!

Regarding flowering, they need 15 consecutive nights of 12°C differential plus they need to know it is still winter, by dropping the night temperature to a minimum of 8°C. Note that the size, and indeed the number of flowers produced, depends on providing sufficient humidity i.e., their flower performance is linked to the environment you provide for them.



Cymbidium house

A couple of flowering *Cymbidiums* worthy of note were *Cym.* Dorothy Stockstill 'Forgotten Fruit' and *Cym.* NR (*erythraeum* x Mighty Mouse).



Cym. Dorothy Stockstill
'Forgotten Fruit'



Cym. NR (*erythraeum* x
Mighty Mouse)

Plant sales:

Plants will not be offered for sale from their reference collection, however; Jim, with the assistance of David and Gill, are carrying out a breeding programme which should be producing plants for sale by next year. However, given the number of *Pleione* bulbs they are expecting to produce, they intend to sell surplus bulbs later this year. All profits raised will be used to support, and I suspect develop, the collection.

The Mathers family also personally support other orchid related projects. These currently include a Kew expedition to New Guinea in 2023, and the digitalisation of the RHS Orchid painting collection.

The return journey from Pulborough was much more pleasant than the journey out, accompanied by better weather and again stimulating banter all the way back to Diane's.

Our website includes a link to The Mathers Foundation website where you can view what this important foundation is doing as it develops.

Thank you to all attendees for your help with your pictures, and indeed Diane for the nice refreshments. Your personal view on which plants you liked has added to the scope of images, both plant and other included. Finally, I would like to thank Diane, Christine and Glen for your friendly companionship which made a great visit brilliant!

The Mathers Foundation team:

[Jim Durrant](#), [Gill Mather](#), [David Mather](#)



Pictures in this article Contributed by:

[Nick Fry](#), [Glen Jamieson](#), [Diane Blackham](#) and [Christine Lepine](#)

For those wishing to obtain a sales list of *Pleione* bulbs, please e-mail admin@orchid.foundation formally requesting a copy.



Points competition

2021/2022

Points secretary: Glen Jamieson

Open Class:

1st Chris Broomfield with 159.66 points

2nd Marian Grimes with 147.91 points

3rd Colin Aitken with 127.5 points

NAME	MAY	JUN	AUG	OCT	NOV	DEC	APR	TOTAL	POS
COLIN AITKEN	17	15.5	34	29		32		127.5	3
CHRIS BROOMFIELD	15.66	16	31	28	34		35	159.66	1
TRACY BROOMFIELD	15.66		32					47.66	
ROGER FRAMPTON	17	17.125	35				28	97.125	
MARION GRIMES	15.66	17.25	27	27		29	32	147.91	2
DAVID KNIGHT		16.75						16.75	
MICHAEL NATHAN	16							16	
ROWLAND-PILGRIM ,S	16.33	14.75				31	37	99.08	
NEVILLE ROBERTS	16.33	17	32				35	100.33	
KAREN SENIOR	15.66						34	49.66	
CHRIS TRINDER		15.75						15.75	
ROSEMARY FRENCH FREEMAN						30		30	



Points competition

2021/2022

Points secretary: Glen Jamieson

Experienced Class:

1st **Mary Pharaoh** with **206.83** points

2nd **Alan Sapsard** with **197.33** points

3rd **Ken Griffiths** with **194.5** points

NAME	MAY	JUN	AUG	OCT	NOV	DEC	APR	TOTAL	POS
DIANE BLACKHAM	17	16.5	31				34	98.5	
CHRISTINE CARTER	16			32			32	80	
JOHN DENNIS		16						16	
NICK FRY	17		34		34		34	119	
KEN GRIFFITHS	17	16.5	33	32	31	32	33	194.5	3
MARIUS GRZELIK	18	17.75		37			33	105.75	
SALLY MILL					37		34	71	
MARY PHARAOH	17.5	16.33	38	34	35	32	34	206.83	1
MIKE POWELL	17.66	18.167	34					69.827	
ROGER RUSSELL	17	18.25		30		33	33	131.25	
ALAN SAPSARD	17.33		34	36	38	36	36	197.33	2
LYNN SMITH	17	18.25		34				69.25	



Good Habits

by: **Marius Grzelik**

Always brush and floss your teeth before bed, well yes, I'm sure Ken would be very pleased if we all did that. But this article will be actually about orchids.

1. Sterilise your tools.

Spreading infections from one orchid to another can happen when using the same tools on multiple orchids. This is why it is so important to keep your tools clean and cleaning them each time we move on to the next plant. I use 'Selgiene' to sanitised my tools. It kills bacteria and reduces a number of viruses. Every time I cut off something from an orchid, I spray the tools with this product. You can also expose the tools to a high temperature with a torch or flame on your cooker and that would be really advisable if you worry about vi-ruses. Some growers use bleach or swimming pool chlorine.

2. Look for bugs in new orchids, isolate them from your collection or treat them regardless.



Pests are our enemies and they can do serious damage, we can lose an orchid in the worst scenario. But even if they don't kill our orchids they can leave marks on the leaves, which will stay visible for many years to come. I personally treat every new orchid, regardless of where it came from. I have always handy a mix of 400ml rubbing alcohol, 600ml water, a few drops of washing up liquid and 20ml of Pyrol Bug & Larvae Killer. I remove a new orchid from the medium they were in and spray the entire plant with the mix mentioned above. I spray leaves on both sides, canes, sheaths, roots etc. I leave a plant to dry out completely then it will be ready for potting up. I've used this method for over a year now and have no problem with any pests in my greenhouse so far. Ken our esteemed Chair-man uses a mix of 500ml rubbing alcohol, 500ml of water and one tablespoon of Neem oil and suggests repeating the treatment at fortnightly intervals until the plant is clear.

3. Always print a label when repotting an orchid.

It pays off, always have the labels handy when dividing your orchids. It is very easy to place the divisions back in the grow room thinking: 'I'll remember what they are'. I can guarantee that after a few months you won't actually remember what they are and I bet that many of us have orchids around without their labels, while we wait patiently for them too bloom. So, print the labels straight away.



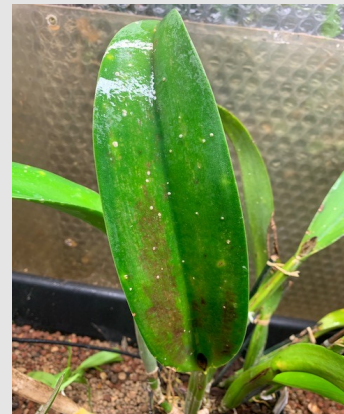
4. Check your own orchids for pests, look for discolouration etc.

Even our own orchids can have some pests lurking un-noticed, they can be old infestations waiting to multiply when we don't expect them, or new bugs coming in when we start opening the windows, doors, vents etc. This can occur especially in the spring and during the summer but also in the autumn when pests look for a place to overwinter. So, check your orchids regularly, check weaker plants, plants which stopped growing as they used to. Look for a discoloration on the leaves. This is a very simple routine and can prevent unwanted bugs spreading throughout your entire collection.



Gentle reminder but VERY important:

Please check your plants before sending them to a show. We all try to keep our collections free of bugs and the last thing we need is to exchange and share bugs with our fellow members orchids.



5. Check the names periodically, especially before shows.

Our experts at Kew are on a mission, changing the names of orchids all the time. We are supposed to keep up with all the name changes and that is very important when submitting orchids to a show. Check your plants, especially before the shows. Here is a link to the Kew website where you can check the names are correct: <https://wcsp.science.kew.org/home.do>



- The pictures illustrate the damage caused by scale and spider mites contributed by: [Ken Griffiths and myself](#).

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