

POLLINIA



Dendrobium heterocarpum

NEWSLETTER OF THE IRISH ORCHID SOCIETY

Cumann Magairlíní na hÉireann

Volume 11 Issue 1

An Fómhar

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THE IRISH
ORCHID
SOCIETY



Shane Kerr (Chairman)
Tom Petherbridge
(Treasurer)
Marie Hourigan (Secretary)
Scott MacNaughton
Úna Breathnach

POLLINIA

(pol-LIN-ee-uh)

The compact packets of pollen found in orchid flowers. Plural of *Pollinium*.

Waxy pollen clumps or grains usually found in the anthers of most orchids; often yellow, distinct, and found under the pollen cap of the column.

Pollinia contain the male reproductive cells.

Latin *pollin-*, stem of pollen "fine flour, dust."



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(renewable in June of each year)

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|--------------------------|--------------|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Adult Single | €20.00 |
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Cumann Magairliní na
hÉireann



THE LAST DAYS OF THE ORCHIDS

Dear Ketsanee Seehamongkol,

I'm becoming increasingly concerned at the illegal selling of orchids, both in Thai markets and, especially, on eBay UK & Ireland. While very few illegal plants are aimed directly at Irish users of eBay, they are able to purchase them very easily on eBay UK. Personally, I'm at a loss as to what other action I can take over here. It is basically impossible to contact eBay, they have made it extremely difficult. All I can do is identify illegal sellers on eBay UK and fill in a form requesting that they are breaking eBay rules. However, at no point are you asked why you think they are breaking the rules, but sometimes they must work it out because these sellers vanish. Unfortunately, they reappear under a new name and are allowed to trade. I suspect that eBay isn't really concerned by these illegal traders as they generate quite a bit of profit for eBay and their sister company, PayPal. I truly would like an opportunity to to meet with, or at least communicate with someone in eBay about these traders and the great harm they are causing.

Why are these traders selling illegally? One might ask, a very fair question. They are illegal because they do not offer or have access to export licences nor CITES licences, also this prevents them from obtaining the very crucial Phytosanitary certificate, crucial because it assists in preventing pests, virus and other diseases being exported to countries where plants are unable to cope with such infestations.

When I ask these Thai traders if they would be willing to supply this paperwork, in fact some have started offering it with their plants, "if you wish", they then ask ridiculous amounts of money. I started asking them this question several years ago to establish whether they were CITES registered in Thailand or not, they got wise to me and started answering that they can supply them, but the cost is so huge (in some cases I was quoted £150 and £100 sterling for paperwork that I know is a lot cheaper than that) that you are put off asking for it just to buy one plant from them. The danger these people cause are the

destruction of CITES registered farms in Thailand and my business here in Ireland.

The other real danger of course is to Thai farms. Unless this form of selling plants internationally isn't stopped quickly there is the real possibility that CITES will step in and prevent Thailand, as a whole, from exporting. It happened in India, it's happened in other countries, with bans being such long-term that many, many people lost their livelihood. It's only in relatively recent years that the ban was lifted from India.

Today, I was saddened to read a Facebook post of a Thai hobbyist who put up pictures of hundreds, if not thousands of orchid species on display in a Thai market. That person proudly proclaimed with delight that the plants had been taken from the wild by the mountain tribes and taken to the market on a Saturday for selling. I was further dismayed to read that this person wrote how they much preferred orchids from the wild than from the farm. I have written to that person but they are adamant that what they are doing is right and that I am wrong for disagreeing.

I'm saddened by this attitude. I feel, sometimes, that I'm alone in this battle and that perhaps I don't understand the Thai way of life, as this person tells me, and that I should just mind my own business and give up.

Kind regards,

BILL HUNTER

<http://www.species-specific.com/>

Ketsanee Seehamongkol is President of Dokmai Garden in Thailand

Dokmai Dogma is a blog associated with Dokmai Garden, a private botanical garden in Chiang Mai in northern Thailand. Dokmai Garden is a place to learn about tropical organisms: flowers, vegetables, trees, birds, fish, mammals, butterflies and mushrooms. Their plant collection surpasses 1000 species and varieties.

After five years of studies of Thai orchids, orchid trade and national parks, Dokmai Garden launched **The Orchid Ark** on April 3, 2011. The Orchid Ark is a contribution to the efforts in saving the wild monsoon orchids, and you can help too. Read more here: <http://www.dokmaigarden.co.th/orchidark.php>

Orchid grower Bill Hunter from Ireland published this shocking comment on their web page 'Last Days of the Orchids'. "The aim of the 'Last Days of the Orchids' is to show the lack of action during the time of orchid extermination, so that future generations can understand the ignorance of the masses and the despair of the powerless few." See: <http://tinyurl.com/c6q3bq5>



INVASION OF THE ORCHID SNATCHERS

Ruthless hunters track their prey around the globe, snatching stunning individuals from their homes before they can even be named.

The beauties only surface in the shadiest of nurseries and high prices for their lives are agreed under the counter by hungry-eyed collectors.

This is not the plot from a harrowing tale of people smuggling but the fate of rare and highly prized orchids.

The plants have inspired frenzied collection since the 18th century with their lustrous blooms and incredible variety.

Now, scientists say the illegal collection of orchids is pushing species to the edge of extinction, with dire consequences for biodiversity.

With some vulnerable species available on the black market before they can even be formally named, biologists and customs officers alike are battling to preserve the captivating plants.

Sex appeal

Admired for their beauty, orchids make up the largest family of flowering plants (Orchidaceae) with over 26,000 species.

The plants vary enormously from tiny 3-4mm *Bulbophyllum minutissimum* to 20m long vanillas: lianas that grow high up in rainforest.

What unites them is the unique way they germinate from seeds, developing a tuberous mass of cells to form a seedling plant.

For orchid admirers however it is the sensual differences between the plants that inspire such admiration and many are driven wild by the unique shape, scent and sight of new species.

Victorian Britons referred to the condition as "orchidelerium", an insatiable lust for collecting the plants.

From delicate ghost orchids to the beautifully coloured petals of *Cattleya*, the aesthetic appeal of orchids is obvious.

But the individuality and appeal of orchids also makes them vulnerable.

"Orchids are naturally rare with many species only being known from a handful of populations," says orchid expert Dr David Roberts from the Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology at the University of Kent, UK.

"Smuggling only affects the groups that are specifically in demand which isn't all orchids. However for the groups that are sought after, such as slipper orchids, it is a big problem."



The Gold of Kinabalu: orchid treasure on the edge of extinction

High price

Rare species can fetch a pretty penny; a single stem of the Rothschild's Orchid (*Paphiopedilum rothschildianum*), known as the Gold of Kinabalu, is reported to command prices of around €5,000.

After its discovery in 1987 this slipper orchid, remarkable for its imposing horizontal petals, was stripped from the wild by orchid smugglers bringing it close to extinction.

Despite reintroduction of the plant from cultivated seedlings, it is still described as endangered and its few known wild locations in Kinabalu National Park in Sabah, Malaysia are kept a closely guarded secret.

However, not all species are afforded the same protection.

Last year, Asian orchid expert Dr Jaap J Vermeulen studied an orchid collected by conservationists in a national park in Sarawak, Malaysia.

But before he could describe the new species to science, it had been introduced to the black market.

"*Bulbophyllum kubahense* is a particularly beautiful species with a dense [cluster] of fairly large, white, heavily purple spotted flowers. That makes it desirable to orchid growers," Dr Vermeulen explains.

"Traders found the species in a conservation area, and first thought that it was a particularly luxuriant form of another, similar looking species... Plants appeared in nurseries in Sarawak, Singapore and Thailand."

Through his analysis, published in the journal *Plant Systematics and Evolution*, Dr Vermeulen confirmed that the plant was a "true novelty".

"It is beautiful, and it is rare: only known from a single locality near Kuching, Sarawak. That will put the price up, and with it the collecting pressure on the natural population," he warns.

Populations stripped

This is not the first time an orchid has been endangered before it has even been formally described.

Such is the demand from collectors, smugglers scour the globe for new species of orchid, sometimes removing whole populations of plants before anyone else knows of their existence.

Dr Vermeulen cites examples from peninsular Malaysia and Vietnam but the most famous example comes from Peru.

Phragmipedium kovachii was first found in 2001 and is referred to as one of the most important natural history discoveries of the last decade.

A foot tall with striking purple blooms, it is a distinctive member of the lady's slipper family, named for their slipper-shaped petal pouches.

Orchid dealer James Kovach bought the orchid from a roadside vendor in Peru and travelled back to his native US with it.

Within days, the Peruvian authorities asked the US Fish and Wildlife Service to investigate the plant, as all *Phragmipedium* are banned from export under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

This purple giant is one of the decade's top natural history discoveries

After its initial description, illegally plucked specimens of *P. kovachii* were reportedly changing hands amongst frenzied growers for as much as \$10,000.

Kovach received two years probation and was made to pay a fine of \$1,000 for violating the endangered species act.

The orchid still bears the name "kovachii" but is now limited to a few authorised growers in Peru.

Although conservationists acknowledge the prosecution, they say the fines are not high enough to deter smugglers from their billion dollar enterprise.

"To a dedicated collector of wild-sourced orchids, price has no bearing," says Dr Richard Thomas, from the wildlife trade monitoring network Traffic International.

Dr Thomas says it is "notoriously difficult" to estimate the value of illicit trade.

Ruthless collection

According to Traffic's figures, the legal trade in live orchids in Europe alone involves more than 370 million plants.

These orchids adhere to the CITES regulations: they come from licensed nurseries that hold the appropriate permits for international trade.

In these nurseries, single specimens are duplicated through micropropagation: creating thousands of cloned plants for the consumer market.

Despite advances, this process is costly and time-consuming.

The cloned plants are also considered inferior by collectors that value the variety in wild orchids' blooms.

"There are a small number of hard core 'collectors' for whom only a wild-sourced orchid will do, and they can be ruthless in their pursuit of this goal," says Dr Thomas.

"This can have a devastating impact on newly discovered species, where there is likely to be a demand created for the plant almost overnight."

Protecting the future

The UK's rarest orchid, *Cypripedium calceolus*, receives round-the-clock police surveillance where it grows on a Lancashire golf course.

But this level of protection is not globally consistent.

In the rainforests of South America and Asia, protecting individual species is an epic task.

Beyond the practical difficulties of surveying entire rainforests with limited resources, conservationists also have to contend with the pressures of developing nations.

According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature's orchid specialist group, tropical orchid habitat is vanishing as timber is removed, minerals mined and land cleared for roads and housing.

Some collectors insist that, by removing orchids from areas under threat from human development, they are protecting the future of species.

For some orchids, their only hope lies in ex-situ conservation: cultivation in nurseries is the only thing keeping species like *Paphiopedilum vietnamense* from extinction.

In the interests of biodiversity however, conservationists maintain that orchids must be protected in their natural environment.

"For species with highly restricted ranges and severely threatened habitat, any removal of wild specimens poses a significant threat," says Dr Thomas.

"The loss of any one species is a tragedy - the world needs rich biological diversity to survive. Species have taken millennia to evolve, but can be lost in days."

ELLA DAVIES
BBC Nature

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/12774613>

Cover Image: *Dendrobium heterocarpum* in blossom in a forest reserve in Thailand. From the Orchid Ark. [<http://goo.gl/XiOtk>]

Further information: info@dokmaigarden.co.th

NATIVE ORCHIDS OF AUSTRALIA

Common Elbow Orchid *Arthrochilus huntianus* (re-named by Clements and Jones as *Thynninorchis huntianus*). "Thynninorchis, D.L.Jones et M.A.Clem., **Orchadian** 13(10): 457 (Feb. 2002)". Originally it was in the genus *Drakea*, the related Hammer Orchids.

David Jones, in his book, says it is amongst the most specialised of all Orchids.

It is classed as a "leafless saprophyte", and as the new generic name suggests, it is pollinated by males of the Thynnine Wasp genus. The "elbow" structure allows the flower to move when a male wasp lands on it and tries to mate with the flower. That movement takes the wasp over to the pollen-housing, which is on the right hand side (of this flower), where the wasp would get a dab of sticky pollen on its head or back.



Thynninorchis huntianus - Elbow Orchid

Flowering November to April, mainly December to January.

Up to 15cm tall, flowers - 1 to 8, to 20mm long.

Images courtesy of Colin Rowan of Retiredaussies.com

<http://goo.gl/Gu9ES>



MINUTES OF THE A.G.M. OF THE IRISH ORCHID SOCIETY

Monday, June 12t, 2012 7pm

Apologies

Ulli Peiler. Norin Mulligan.

Total attendance 15 members. Meeting began at 7.10pm

Minutes of the AGM 2011 were read out by Marie Hourigan,

Matters Arising from the 2010 minutes

Tom Petherbridge wanted to clarify that most members would not be paying membership subscriptions this year so it may be wise to put a note in **Pollinia** next April 2013, as a reminder that the free year is expiring and membership subs are due in June 2013.

Motion to approve the Minutes was proposed by Brendan Sayers and seconded by Úna Breathnach.

Chairman's Address (Summary)

Shane Kerr welcomed everyone to the eleventh Annual General Meeting of the Irish Orchid Society which was his third as Chairman.

He began with a reminder that last year was the tenth anniversary of the society and that it had been decided to reward all members for their loyalty by offering free membership for 2012-13.

He then outlined the chief landmarks over the year beginning with a lively members' night In September which included a light-hearted look at some of the plant photographs sent in to the website by the public for identification and was followed by a feasting of the eyes on some photos of the extraordinary European Bee orchid family.

The October members' night was in contrast rather sleepy and to him this emphasised the importance of member participation in terms of bringing plants, photos or just giving anecdotes.

November's meeting covered a look at some of the ugliest and most macabre specimens from the orchid world. There was no shortage of black flowers, vampires, ghosts, stench, and sinister predatory monsters, flying ducks, hammers and dragons! Shane commented that the bizarre nature of orchid flowers is a reminder that they are the product of evolution aimed at pollination and not for our benefit.



The Christmas Soirée was probably the most enjoyable the chairman could remember and starred Mary Bradshaw with her presentation covering the World Orchid Conference in Singapore under the technical directorship of her husband Bob “Spielberg” Bradshaw. It was also that month which Indoor Plants and their friends joined and Shane thanked them for bringing sparkle to the meetings.

After the winter break there was a humorous talk presented by Brendan Sayers with the lesson to learn that you should not always believe what you read on the internet. Afterwards there was a “sell-out” Pleione sale which not only boosted society funds but which was hoped would give added value to membership.

In March Stuart Dunlop from Donegal gave an entertaining talk with unbridled enthusiasm on Irish wildlife as conveyed through the macro lens of his camera which would add another dimension to orchid field excursions.

Shane was pleased to say that the Orchid Fair organised by the National Botanic Gardens in April was again successful and thanked all those who manned the society stand and exhibited plants.

Shane went on to mention one of the most enjoyable events for him this year, which was the society orchid art competition held between St Dominic’s school, Cabra and the National College for Art and Design (NCAD). This was largely organised by member and talented artist Greta Pertel. The student’s works were exhibited for judging at the Orchid Fair. The aim of this competition was to give participating students an introduction to orchids while simultaneously having fun. Shane said he was honoured to attend the NCAD in May to present on behalf of the society prize money of €250 to the young winners. Shane thanked everyone involved including the National Botanic Gardens for this venture but above all Greta.

Shane described the orchid deflasking workshop held in May and commented that a similar event may be held next year pending good survival rates of the plants. Looking forward to the next year, Shane stated that the society remained in a strong position financially and it is up to the membership to be forthcoming with suggestions on how best to utilise the funds.

Shane’s opinion was that further imaginative educational initiatives similar to the art competition should be undertaken which will give us both pride and kudos.

Shane thanked everyone for working together this year in particular Marie Hourigan, Tom Petherbridge and Brendan Sayers and reminded Brendan that since he’d become Chairman it had never rained on the trips to Bull Island.

In pride of place he congratulated Larry May for his unwaning dedication to **Pollina** which was applauded by everyone present. Shane pleaded with members to use this resource to publish their own articles or photographs.

Shane Kerr

Treasurers Report [Please see Page 27 herein]

Please see account statement.

The Treasurers' report was proposed by Shane Kerr and seconded by Marie Hourigan

Election of Committee Members (if applicable)

No new members were elected onto the committee.

Marie H. recapped that the committee consists of

Chairman	Shane Kerr
Treasurer	Tom Petherbridge
Secretary	Marie Hourigan
Committee members	Scott MacNaughton Úna Breathnach

Any Other Business

Tom asked that the layout of the IOS stand at the fair be moved from the porch into the main Teak House. Marie Hourigan and Brendan Sayers agreed and said it would be rearranged next year.

Shane briefly spoke about the website and how popular it was becoming that the data Lisa Coffey had supplied, suggested that visitor numbers had doubled in the last year and the page on the Irish Orchids was the most visited page on the website. Lisa commented on how popular she has noticed that the website has become and that maybe we should look into PayPal for subscriptions. It was agreed that Lisa would go about setting this up, with a review of the system within the year.

Shane Kerr spoke about the Art competition that was run in conjunction with NCAD, The National Botanic Gardens and St. Dominic's College, Cabra which was a resounding success and that it should be repeated next year if possible.

Brendan Sayers said he thought it was a very good idea and it was something that could be moved forward in connection with the NBG. Mary Bradshaw thought that



5th and 6th years might be better and Shane said that the format of the Art Competition could be somewhat changed next year.

Shane Kerr also thought it would be a good idea that we may spend some time looking at cooler, less complicated and easier to grow Mediterranean orchids during the meetings next year. This might be of interest to some members, especially those whom he spoke to at the fair, and had lost a considerable amount of tropical orchids over the previous bad winters.

Mary Bradshaw thought it was not a good idea to simplify the meetings too much and that as a society we should keep our aims high. Brendan Sayers said that with around 100 members it was best to keep the talks as varied as possible and that both Shane and Mary had valid points in relation to upcoming topics/talks for next years meetings.

Brendan Sayers thanked Larry May for all his work on **Pollinia** and Lisa and Shane's work on bringing the website to where it is now. Brendan wondered if a template could be designed for members to use as an easy method of uploading articles/photos for use in Pollinia, a blog or something like that.

Shane also reminded everyone of Larry May's dedication to **Pollinia** and thanked him for all his work in getting **Pollinia** together and to the printers in time. Shane said that even though all the articles may not be directly related to the society or Irish Orchids it never-the-less was enjoyed by the members. He also wished to impress that all articles submitted by IOS members get precedence over all other material, and encouraged members to send in articles or pictures for inclusion.

Mary Bradshaw commented that we seem to have a very healthy bank balance and that we should spend it to further the aims and publicise the society, there was no point in keeping it. Both Tom Petherbridge and Marie Hourigan reminded everyone that there would be little to no subscription income for this year, (owing to the free year offered to members for the 10th Anniversary of the society) and the bank balance would definitely not look so healthy next year.

Susan Sex discussed the idea of having an art auction/sale day. Where artists/ members of the IOS/ general public would be asked to submit a painting or two to enter into a competition. The entrant would pay a fee to have there work exhibited and the art would then be auctioned/sold and a percentage of the proceeds would go to the society.

The idea in principle was agreed to be a good one but needed some work and discussion.

Marie Hourigan reminded everyone that the next meeting was on Bull Island on July 4th at 6.30pm and the next meeting in the NBG was in September when we would be having a members night also there would be no official trip to Sligo this year.

The meeting finished at 8.10pm, a raffle took place after the meeting and Bob Bradshaw showed us a documentary on orchids in The Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park in Florida. ●

RECENTLY IN FLOWER IN THE NATIONAL BOTANIC GARDENS

Prosthechea cochleata

The National Flower of Belize, commonly known as the cockleshell Orchid or to the natives of Belize the black orchid or Mexico Pulpo, meaning octopus.

In the wild it can be found in bloom nearly all year round. In cultivation this plant can potentially start to flower in spring and continue flowering for up to six months.

The inflorescence is up to 50cm long and bears non-resupinate flowers, meaning the lip is held at the top of the flower instead of the bottom like most other orchids. The flowers are 6.3cm to 7.5cm in length and are sometimes fragrant in the morning.

This orchid has had a variety of synonyms, *Epidendrum cochleatum*, *Anacheilium cochleatum* and until recently *Encyclia cochleata*.

The genus *Encyclia* has been broken down in recent years due to advances in DNA research and this particular species has moved into the genus *Prosthechea*.

The name *Prosthechea* is taken from the Greek for appendage (*prostheke*) and refers to the appendage on the back of the column of *P. glauca* which is the type species for this genus.

It occurs throughout Central America and into Southern Florida. Commonly found as an epiphyte on trees in swamps and in dense forests above 1,900 meters. The smooth pseudobulbs are ovoid to oblong-elliptic about 25cm high, with each bulb bearing 1-3 non-succulent leaves. It is easily propagated from back bulbs.



Grown in the intermediate house at the National Botanic Gardens, this orchid is kept in good light, fed and watered regularly. It is not a difficult orchid to grow and is quite commonly found in cultivation.

MARIE HOURIGAN.



Prosthechea cochleata

SIR WINSTON'S 'LOST' ORCHIDS PAINTING COULD FETCH
€975,000

His contemporaries suggested that had Sir Winston Churchill chosen painting instead of statesmanship, he would have been a great master.

As if to prove the point, some of his artworks these days fetch serious money.

Which is why experts are particularly excited about the discovery of a previously unknown oil on canvas by the wartime leader, "Still Life With Orchids."

Although Churchill occasionally gave away his work, primarily to family and statesmen he admired, he could not resist attractive women asking him to part with the pieces.

The actress Vivien Leigh was one and another was Margot Sandys, the young wife of his daughter's father-in-law, to whom Churchill gave this painting in 1936.

The depiction of orchids is described as 'technically accomplished' by experts and is going on public view this month. Its sale value is expected to be above £750,000.

The Churchill Archives in Cambridge confirmed that Mrs Sandys first saw the painting at Chartwell, Churchill's home in Kent. It has remained in her family ever since.

David Coombs, the official authority on Churchill's art, will include it in his revised edition of 'His Life and His Paintings'. He said: 'It's really beautiful...I was thrilled to be shown it.'

Mr Coombs added: 'The subject adds to its special interest.

'A Royal Horticultural Society source suggests that they are Cattleyas with a Miltonia.

'Such complex and delicate forms would be difficult to tackle even for a professionally trained painter and it reveals not only his liking for the flowers, but his... characteristic determination to paint them whatever the difficulties.'

Churchill credits painting with helping him to overcome the depression that gripped him after his resignation as First Lord of the Admiralty following the disastrous Dardanelles landing in the First World War. He once recalled his rescue by the 'muse of painting'.



Mr Coombs said: "The fact that Margot Sandys saw the present painting... in 1936, confirms its date."

'The 1930s were Churchill's "wilderness years" when he was out of power but also, perhaps not entirely coincidentally, a period of abundant painting.'

He added that, at that time, Churchill came to know the celebrated artist Sir William Nicholson who, Churchill once said, taught him most about painting.

The 46cm x 38cm (18in x 15in) orchids painting is to be sold by the MacConnal-Mason Gallery at Masterpiece, an art fair staged from 28 June to 4 July at the Royal Hospital Chelsea, London, at which bids will be taken.

The other significant auction includes, Winston Churchill's dentures sold in July 2010 for \$23,723, to a British collector for more than three times its estimated price tag at an auction in England.

The Daily Mail



Stilleben mit Blumen, 18.11" x 14.96"(46cm x 38cm) Created: not given Oil/Canvas on board Signed Monogram Lot: 2836Auction House: Nagel Auktionen Low Est.: \$42,369 (€30,000)High Est.: \$42,369 (€30,000) Hammer Price: \$218,910 (€155,000) 06/29/2011

This painting has not been sold. Mr David Combs has emailed the Editor that the painting was acquired by the MacConnal-Mason Gallery for €155,000, which gallery hopes to make a profit six times its investment.

Congratulations to Ulli Peiler who recently won the book prize in the *Magairliní* contest. *Magairliní* is our Members-Only blog: <http://www.pollinia.org/magairlini/>

There will be another book prize contest in a few months; look for it and enter.

BULL ISLAND JULY 4TH 2012

On Wednesday July 12th, a dozen members of the IOS and two dogs, collected at 6pm at the visitors centre on North Bull Island [*Oileán an Tairbh Thuaidh.*] The weather forecast had been fairly bad (lots of rain) so I was surprised to see so many had made the effort. Fortunately for us the sun shone with a fresh breeze.

After a quick introduction from everyone and a little talk by Brendan Sayers, we headed off across the sand dunes. As expected it didn't take long before we found our first orchid.

Dactylorhiza fuchsii or Common spotted orchid, flowers from May to early August. It can grow up to 70cm tall and is quite common on roadsides throughout the countryside. The variation in this species is tremendous and it hybridises easily with others in this genus. There is usually a very impressive group of hybrids to be seen on Bull Island but this year there were not to be found.

The other two species in this genus were also spotted, Northern and Early Marsh orchids, *Dactylorhiza purpurella* and *Dactylorhiza incarnata* respectively. Both flower from May to July are reasonably common on Bull Island and in other parts of the country.

Moving on we saw *Anacamptis pyramidalis*, commonly known as the Pyramidal Orchid, was in plentiful supply; it was hard not to stand on it. The flower spike can have up to 100 tightly packed pink flowers. The lip is deeply 3-lobed but can vary greatly. It colonises its space very quickly and is also quite common throughout the island. The Six-spotted Burnet Moth is one of its main pollinators but alas none were spotted on this evening.

The Marsh Helleborine (*Epipactis palustris*) was of course just coming into flower and there was no shortage of plants. They were literally coming out of the water. It flowers from early July through to nearly September, so there is plenty of opportunity to view this species during the summer months. It is locally abundant because of its extensive creeping root system, so if you see one you won't have to look hard to find lots more.

The ever elusive *Ophrys apifera* or Bee orchid, (right) managed to elude us this year. Hopefully we will have better luck next year and the usually quite common *Neottia ovata* (Common twayblade) was also in short supply.





North Bull Island IOS Orchid Hunters, July 4, 2012

At about 8pm it was time to make our way back to the visitors' centre and call it a day. Thanks to all who turned up for the evening walk and hopefully we'll see as many members if not more next year.

Marie Hourigan

Reference:

Ireland's Wild Orchids: a field guide

by Brendan Sayers and Susan Sex

Visit: <http://www.orchidireland.ie>



Six-Spotted Burnet Moth on *Anacamptis pyramidalis*, 2010

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The Art of Happiness

Above is the title of a book of advice given by the Dalai Lama on how to obtain joy but to me I cannot think of anything more pleasurable than to simply create a smiling face. So the idea of an orchid painting competition for school students seemed an ideal way to achieve this while injecting some painless botanical education.

It is easy to suggest such a competition but it is another thing to undertake the project. We were delighted when society member Margareta Pertl who is an accomplished orchid artist and art teacher took up with challenge with gusto. Greta organised the competition for second year students from St Dominic's Girl School, Cabra and the National College of Art and Design (NCAD) in Dublin. The art students with kind permission from both the colleges and the National Botanic Gardens were given release to visit the orchid house at the gardens in March.

On arrival, Brendan Sayers gave an introductory guide to orchids to which the young participants listened intently. They were then invited to use their preferred painting style or medium to paint an orchid of their choice. The completed paintings were exhibited at the Orchid Fair in Glasnevin in April when the public and teachers had the opportunity to vote for their favourites towards prizes to be awarded to both colleges.

The quality of the works was marvellous and what was especially remarkable was the diversity of styles and interpretation. Some chose tropical explosions of colour while others produced fine pastel reflec-

tions not unlike those popular in Victoria-na and then there were the superbly detailed drawings from some obviously gifted hands. From my perspective this made judging virtually impossible as all captured the essence of an orchid.

In May, I was honoured to be invited to present the prizes at the award ceremony at the NACAD on behalf of the society. The scale of this event made me realise just how much of an impression the competition had made on the students, proud parents and teachers. Prize money totalling €250 and certificates were handed out amidst a room of beaming smiles. I then gave a rather verbose speech to the students emphasising the importance of self-belief and for them all to be mindful that first prizes in life should never be taken that others are second best! The paintings went on to National University of Ireland, Galway as part of a "Fascination of Plants Day" exhibition held that same month.

I would like to thank everyone who got involved in this wonderful project especially Mary Largey, Deputy Principal, St Dominic's School, Cabra, Patsey Bodkins of the NCAD and Dr Zoë Popper, NUI, Galway and of course Margareta.

Society members have given warm feedback on this effort which I think has given us all a lift in the knowledge that our modest little raffles have created a great deal of happiness to young people who have so much pressure placed upon them these days.

SHANE KERR



Brendan Sayers views the painting exhibition, NBG Spring Orchid Fair



Brendan Sayers presents a pollinium for examination



Margareta Pertl (centre) surrounded by the proud competition winners at the NCAD in May



IRISH ORCHID SOCIETY A.G.M. 11th JUNE 2012

INCOME

	2010/2011	2011/2012
	€	€
SUBSCRIPTIONS	1985	509
LIFE MEMBERS	0	0
BIG RAFFLE	530	305
RAFFLES	152	144
BANK INTEREST	0	65
COMMISSION/CALENDERS/CARDS	132	15
TRIP	0	0
ADVERTISING	0	0
COMPOST SALES	57	25
LOMAX DONATIONS	0	0
PLANT SALES	37	0
GIFT	250	0
TOTAL	3143	1063

EXPENDITURE

	2010/2011	2011/2012
	€	€
WEB	152	273
POLLINIA	1343	1160
STAMPS	258	200
BANK CHARGES	0	51
SPEAKERS	898	282
OSGB	75	75
MISC	25	24
PLANTS	0	113
ADVERTISING	0	0
COMPOST	0	50
TOTAL	€ 2751	€ 2228

PROFIT/(LOSS) YEAR	392	-1165
CASH AT BANK	7832	8657
UNCASHED CHEQUES	0	-1032
CASH AVAILABLE	7832	6460
STOCK		114
STAMPS		100
NET SOCIETY WORTH	€ 7832	€ 6674

THE UNSEEN WORLD OF STUART DUNLOP

There is something electrifying about individuals who have a full-throttle enthusiasm for life. Stuart Dunlop is one of those characters. He hails originally from the west of Scotland and is now settled in Raphoe, Co. Donegal where he works as a computer technologist. Stuart has a love of cooking and has been a contestant on RTE MasterChef Ireland. He also has an active appreciation for music and plays the bodhran in folk sessions at his local pub but it is his extraordinary knowledge of our native wild life and in particular insects as viewed through the macro-lens of his camera that makes him someone truly special.



In March, Stuart gave an illustrated talk to the members of the IOS in Glasnevin entitled “The bigger picture, wildlife on your doorstep” which covered the theme of the inter-dependency of plants and animals including orchids in our countryside. It is difficult to convey his presentation in words as it was essentially a platform for his stunning photography. Stuart opened a window into a world normally unseen that even experienced naturalists would have little knowledge. His fascinating talk covered hoverflies, fungi, lichens, enigmatic micromoths, long-eared owls and our familiar native orchids. He even gave a low-tech chat about his photographic equipment modestly bypassing a mention of his skill and immense patience in achieving his work.



Ichneumonid

However the highlight for me was his obvious devotion to the Ichneumonids. These are a group of parasitic wasps recognisable as having long antennae, narrow abdomens and possessing needle like ovipositors which are used to inject eggs into the pupae (caterpillars) of flies, moths and sawflies. The larva then develops inside the caterpillar eventually killing it when it is ready to pupate.

As Stuart startled us with illustrations of this event, I began to have flashbacks to scenes from the sci-fi film alien! [See: <http://goo.gl/Ool5Z>]

Although I was aware such wasps existed in the tropics from watching television documentaries, I was astounded to hear, although I'd never noticed one, that there are 1,750 species in the British Isles (80,000 species worldwide) and we thought the orchid family was huge! An important point Stuart made was that these wasps can infect up to 10% of caterpillars and so play a key role in the population control of their host.

Another surprising fact we learned that night was that hoverflies are important pollinators of some crops usually thought of as wind-pollinated such as wheat and that reminded me of Einstein's sobering quotation that "if all the bees were gone, humans would be gone within four years."

For those of you who could not attend his talk, I recommend you read his continually updated inspirational pictorial narrative on his blog: **DONEGAL WILDLIFE: A regularly updated pictorial narrative of the wildlife around Raphoe, Co. Donegal, Ireland.** [<http://www.donegal-wildlife.blogspot.ie>]

And why not try one of his recipes such as "Salad of Grilled Spatchcock Poussin" available on the RTE Food website! [<http://tinyurl.com/cf5pbj>]

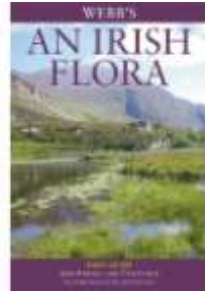


SHANE KERR

Northern Marsh Orchid
Dactylorhiza purpurella

WEBB'S AN IRISH FLORA

John Parnell and Tom Curtis
 Cork University Press
 Hardback, 8th Edn: March 2012
 Printed Pages: 560
 Size: 135 x 194mm
 ISBN: 9781859184783
 €35



This handbook will provide the reader with a clear and reliable means of identifying those plants which grow wild in Ireland. This book is a comprehensive re-working of the classic and standard Flora of Ireland which was last published 16 years ago: this will be the eighth edition of that work. It has been brought fully up to date through incorporating the latest in botanical research and it reflects contemporary and modern approaches to plant classification based on recent advances in genetics.

Trees, shrubs and climbers in winter are now covered for the first time. Also included is a list of plants that have legal protection in Ireland. Webb's an Irish Flora is illustrated throughout with hand-coloured drawings.

This book is about the higher plants that grow wild and which are commonly naturalised or otherwise encountered in Ireland. It is designed to help you identify and provide you with background information on plant morphology, distribution and rarity and to educate all those interested in recognising the species of the flora of Ireland.. There are 11 pages of Irish Orchidaceae

Previous editions of the book have been used by workers outside of the specific field of study of plant identification – such as environmental consultants, the general public, students, professional and amateur botanists etc. There is a genuine demand for a Flora whose subject matter refers explicitly to Ireland whilst placing that flora in a wider context. Furthermore, a concise flora of a discrete geographical area is of interest internationally to many professional and amateur botanists and gardeners.

The book has, is and will be used in student training (it is used as a basic botanical text book in some Universities in Ireland) and on training courses for professionals wishing to improve their skills and for all those needing to improve their levels of botanical expertise.

John Parnell is Professor of Systematic Botany at Trinity College Dublin (TCD) and Dr. Tom Curtis is an Ecological Consultant and a Research Associate in Botany at TCD and an Adjunct Lecturer in Botany and Plant science, NUI Galway.

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October 2012

Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

November 2012

Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

December 2012

Sun	Mo	Tue	We	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

October 1st 7pm – Members' Night

This evening is open to members to ask questions and as always exhibit any plants in flower.

There will also be recommendations on where to shop online for the best value for orchids. There will be some photos of unusual orchid genera available for cultivation but not discussed at previous society meetings

November 5th 7pm – Orchid Art

This evening will be predominately a members' night but a short illustrated talk on orchid art will be presented followed by proposals for next years' exciting art competition.

December 3rd 7pm – Christmas Soirée

There will be the traditional review of review of the past year and the Society plans for the year ahead followed by party snacks. This event is also an opportunity for any member who wishes to present a talk relating to their orchid growing year.

Speaking about Art – Why not visit the website of society member Jennie Castle to see her stunning ceramics! <http://www.castlerinstudios.com>

Happy Samhain!

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