



British Orchid Council

....promoting orchid growing...

So Christmas is nearly upon us and I'm sure many of us are looking forward to seeing family and friends at least for a few days over the holiday. A respite from what has been a trying year for everyone—to say the least! I really hope this vaccine will work out and prove effective and problem free although things aren't over yet. But there does seem some hope on the horizon at last, that we might return to normality sometime next year.

Unfortunately as I'm writing this (Sat. 12th Dec.) the news about Brexit does not look good and as orchid growers we may be facing real difficulties when it comes to purchasing plants next year. A couple of weeks ago I received the included article from Kevin Davies, chairman of the Orchid Study Group in Wales. He raises some very interesting points connected to Brexit and which are well worth considering by everyone. So please take the time to read what he says carefully, he makes some very pertinent points.

If you have any ideas, practical suggestions or comments regarding the article please do get in touch. We will be thinking again about this in the New Year, by then it should be apparent just how much we will be affected. If we want our hobby to continue we will need to work together in very different ways in the future.

The following sad news was received a few days ago, and I'm sure many of you knew Geoff, who was a wonderful grower and orchid enthusiast

Geoff Hands. It is with the greatest regret and sadness that I have to tell you that Geoff Hands, after a very short illness associated with the Coronavirus, passed peacefully away in Royal Bournemouth Hospital on the evening of 6th December.

Geoff was one of our senior statesmen in Bournemouth Orchid Society, always willing to give advice and share his vast knowledge of orchids which he had accumulated over many years. He will be greatly missed by all of us both locally and nationally.

Ken Griffiths, Chairman, Bournemouth Orchid Society



Reminder: closing date Midnight 31st Dec.

We have had some wonderful entries from the Hardy Orchid Society — thank you guys!

Don't forget to send **your** entries in, full details are on the last page

photo2020@british-orchid-council.info

And do check out the website to see the beautiful photographs entered so far— this link should take you straight there

<http://www.british-orchid-council.info/BOC2017Database/ViewGallery.php>

Like many of your readers, for several months now, I have been concerned about what Brexit might mean to us all as orchid growers and the prohibitive costs of importing plants following the Christmas period.

To this end, in recent weeks, I have been purchasing as many plants from abroad as my greenhouse space will allow, not only because I enjoy growing orchids, but because they are also the subject of my academic research work.



However, not everything is as bad as it at first appears. Between us all as an orchid-growing community in the UK, we must have far more different species in cultivation than any nursery could possibly provide. From time to time, we all have surplus divisions, seedlings and mature plants that have either outgrown their home, or don't (or perhaps never did) suit our conditions. In the past, we have tended to swap or sell these within our individual societies, but what if a system was set in place that allowed their exchange across all UK orchid societies? Imagine how such a system could revolutionize our hobby. For the first time in the history of orchid-growing, each of us would be forced into becoming a producer rather than a consumer.

The purchase of orchids has been too easy in the past, and we have all been guilty. If the plant dies, so what? we can always buy another. But if we were involved in producing that plant, we would have a completely different outlook and our insatiable consumer attitude would change.

Imagine also what that would mean to ex situ conservation. It's important that rare and endangered plants are distributed amongst a number of collections, so that should, God forbid, the owner becomes incapacitated or dies, the future of that species in cultivation in the UK is assured. Let's not forget what happened to orchid collections Europe-wide during the war years and how voucher material of many orchid species was destroyed as museums and botanic gardens were bombed, and how the contents of many of our larger orchid collections were sent to the USA for their safety, never to return. What's that old adage about putting all your eggs in one basket? I'm sorry to say, but if we want to be able to access the more unusual orchids in future, we have a choice – either pay through our noses or be proactive and start propagating. We certainly can't depend on the authorities to make importation easy for us. Of course, this would mean someone volunteering to set up and co-ordinate such a system. Ripe seed capsules could also be sent to those of us who have facilities for sowing and raising seedlings.

If the deluge of Brexit threatens to overwhelm us, then we need to start thinking about building an ark. Undoubtedly, Brexit will affect many aspects of our orchid-growing, but it might also be the factor that spurs us on to better things. After all, every cloud has a silver lining, or so they say! So, the choice that faces us is to do nothing and look forward to stormy days ahead or motivate ourselves and keep looking for the rainbow.

Dr Kevin Davies, Chairman, Welsh Orchid Study Group

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



PHOTO2020— this year's BOC Photographic competition.

Who can enter?

Anyone who is a member of a BOC affiliated orchid society this includes overseas members.

Also anyone who is associated with BOC or affiliated to a society.

If you're not sure, just ask. Contact details below.

When can I enter?

Right now!! Today if you want to!

Final entries must be emailed by midnight **31st December**—
we won't be able to accept any entries that miss the deadline.

Just warning everyone up front, so nobody will be disappointed and to avoid any misunderstandings!

What sort of pictures can I enter and how many?

The theme for the competition is

'A picture of an orchid or orchids'

So there really is wide scope for everyone.

You can send pictures of orchids in the wild, a studio portrait of an orchid or anything in-between.

The maximum is **TWO** pictures per person



How do I enter?

This year we are asking everyone to enter their own pictures by email.

We know that some societies would have problems organising this in the usual way, and this will ensure that everyone has an equal chance to enter. This is what you do:

1. Email your photographs to:

photo2020@british-orchid-council.info

2. Include the following details: *Your name, name of plant, your society name*

3. Make sure your photographs are in jpeg format. Any problems with that just ask by emailing to the email above.



How will judging be done?

As this is intended to be a photographic competition the emphasis will be placed on the quality of the images.

Please make sure that the images are in focus, with the proper exposure and well balanced/composed. They can be taken on any sort of camera and smart phone pictures are welcome!!

Details of judging will follow in due course, but please note we intend to get results out by the end of January next year.

That's all for now— but if there are any questions or you need any help do get in touch. I am really looking forward to seeing everyone's lovely photographs!