

The British Carnivorous Plant Society

By John Watkins, Chairman

In May 1978 the Carnivorous Plant Society was started in London by a small group of enthusiasts who enjoyed meeting, exchanging plants and observing others' ideas on plant culture. At the inaugural meeting a charter was drawn up which included the following aims: to bring together all those interested in carnivorous plants; to help in their conservation; and to provide enthusiasts with a means of exchanging information on growing techniques and conditions of natural habitat. Together with these horticultural obligations, the society fosters an interest in scientific/botanical research and helps and encourages researchers in any way possible.

The society holds nine monthly meetings per annum, where visiting speakers talk to us about subjects varying from plant culture to field trips and expeditions. Members are encouraged to bring along plants to exchange with other

members or to donate to the raffle. In this way many new members obtain their first plants and long standing members add new plants to their collections. In addition to the nine monthly meetings we generally organise two summer visits, one to a member's collection and another to a natural site of carnivorous plants. This year we were lucky to have Richard Lindsay of the Nature Conservancy Council take us to Thursley Common in Surrey, where we saw *Drosera rotundifolia*, *D. intermedia* and *Utricularia minor*.

We publish two journals per annum; these are distributed to all members. They contain letters and points of interest sent in by members as well as full articles on current research, descriptions of plants and guidance on cul-

(Please see BRITISH p. 22)



The British C.P. Society from left to right: David Taylor, projectionist; Eric Binstead, Secretary; Sandy Balhgal, Librarian; John Watkins, Chairman holding silver gilt medal; Phil Norris, Editor; John Arnott, member.

more often than Americans. Thus what we often call a "marl bog" (perhaps colloquially?) is in actuality a kind of fen. Bogs are herein described as originating at pond, lake or stream margins, or upon old fens, and of course contain masses of sphagnum mosses in which certain ericaceous shrubs grow. The whole business of how to classify wetlands is in some disarray. Elsewhere in the issue, Dr. Sparling is described as one of only a half dozen wetlands specialists in Ontario, and even they disagree in some aspects of classifying these vital areas-- what to call any one. This difficulty is partially due, of course, to the nature of wetlands which

may well be composites or spectra of several types intermingled. I would have preferred more than casual mention of the kettle or pond bog, and raised bogs founded on old fens may very often have underlying or adjacent diffuse springs as a water source rather than almost always being restricted to rain. Other than these two minor criticisms, the issue is strongly recommended as "must" reading for those interested in northern wetlands. The discussion, by the way, holds equal usefulness for Americans as well. The issue can be obtained for \$2.00 from the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, 355 Lesmill Rd, Don Mills, Ontario, M3B 2W7, Canada.

BRITISH CP SOCIETY

continued from p. 15

trouble the beginner. Regular newsletters are sent to members to keep them in touch with the society's activities; they also contain points of interest brought up at previous meetings.

For over a year now the society has been collecting books, articles and scientific papers on matters relating to carnivorous plants for the society library. Books are available at meetings, for a loan of a monthly period.

A seed distribution scheme is available for all members. Lists of available seed are sent to members, who can choose the seed they want and send in their orders, together with an S.A.S.E., to the society. Availability of seed is subject to demand and if a particular species is out of stock, we will hold the order until more seed is available. The seed bank is run by a member for other members and is therefore dependent on the membership for seed donations.

Although the central branch of the society has its meetings in London, we now have a South - West Branch, which is situated at the Somerset College of Agriculture and Horticulture, in Cannington, Nr. Bridgwater, Somerset. The branch was formed in February, 1980 and since then

has had two meetings, but aims to have four meetings per annum and intends to start a plant exchange some time in the near future. There are plans for a northern based branch of the the society which would serve members living in the West Midlands.

For two years now, we have been exhibiting as a society at the Chelsea Flower Show. Both times we were awarded Silver-Gilt Medals for our display of carnivorous plants growing in a sphagnum bog setting. This year we exhibited at the Southport Flower Show and were very pleased to be awarded a Silver-Gilt Medal for a similar display.

Since its foundation, the society has had considerable interest from overseas enthusiasts, and we now have members living all over the world. This we encourage as an interchange of ideas and theories, especially since horticultural matters is one of the objects of the society.

The annual membership fee is £4.50. ordinary member, and £4.00, overseas member. A reduced membership fee will be available for members under 16 years of age in 1981. Please direct all membership inquiries to Eric Binstead, Hon. Secretary, 13, Grange Farm Road, Ash Aldershot, Hants. GU12 6SJ, England.