

## British botanists find unknown 'warty' orchid species

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A picture released by the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew on February 5, 2015 and taken on November 27, 2014 shows a previously undocumented species of orchid belonging to the genus *Porpax*, flowering in the glass house at the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew

British botanists have found a previously unrecorded orchid in the mountains of Cambodia, they said Thursday, ahead of a major orchid show at London's Kew Gardens.

The new species was collected in Cambodia's Cardamom Mountains as part of an expedition in 2013 and brought back to London.

But researchers only discovered it was a new species when it flowered in one of Kew's glasshouses in December.

The tubular maroon flower is about a centimetre long but, while other orchids are known for their delicate beauty, it has a more distinctive look.

"What makes it different from the others is that it has big warts on the flower part," said Andre Schuiteman, part of the team who discovered it.

He added that researchers had faced challenging conditions to carry out their expedition.

"There are indeed illegal loggers and sometimes drug smugglers so we had armed guards," he said.

The new species has not yet been named but belongs to the genus *Porpax*.

The announcement came as the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew in west London prepares to host a festival of orchids from Thursday, although the new find is not part of it.

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