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Pictures: BILL SMITH



RARE FIND: The bee orchid in Norwich, with Big Yellow assistant manager Andrew Miller, inset

NORWICH

# Birdman certainly also recognises his bees

Birder Chris Durdin really knows his bees as he spotted a rather unusual orchid growing in the shadows of Carrow Road. As he was cycling past Norwich City's ground, his eye was caught by a striking bee orchid. Mr Durdin, who runs a wildlife holiday company taking visitors to remote locations to appreciate rare flora and fauna across Europe, could not believe his eyes. "I saw a bee orchid in full flower and some people with strimmers about to mow the grass. I called them over to have a look. They realised what was growing there and then helped me to look for

other examples and found three more," said Mr Durdin, of Thunder Lane, Thorpe St Andrew. He went to the office of the Big Yellow self-storage company on Canary Way and explained his find to assistant manager Andrew Miller. "I was very pleased and surprised to be told that we had some rare orchids growing on our site," said Mr Miller, who has been at the branch since it opened in 2001. He asked his landscape contractors, Malcolm Goreham, and Peter King, of GDC Ltd, of St Olave's, near Yarmouth, not to mow too close to the orchids. Mr Durdin, who was based at the

RSPB's regional office in Thorpe Road, Norwich, and worked for the wildlife charity for 30 years, said that the orchids were almost certainly self-sown. He said: "They produce a lot of seeds, so it is entirely possible that they just landed there and started growing. "Most orchids tend to thrive on often very poor soils because they co-exist with a natural type of fungus which helps them to thrive. I was really surprised to see them in Riverside. It isn't an area normally associated with unusual flowers. They are likely to be flowering for about the next fortnight.