



Journal
of the
Native Orchid Society
of
South Australia Inc



Acrochorda cordata

NATIVE ORCHID SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA
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www.nossa.org.au.

The Native Orchid Society of South Australia promotes the conservation of orchids through the preservation of natural habitat and through cultivation. Except with the documented official representation of the management committee, no person may represent the Society on any matter. All native orchids are protected in the wild; their collection without written Government permit is illegal.

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**JOURNAL OF THE
NATIVE ORCHID SOCIETY
OF
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MARCH 2007 VOL. 31 NO 2

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NEXT MEETING 27 MARCH 2007

Tuesday, 27 March, St Matthew's Hall, Bridge Street, Kensington. Meeting starts at 8:00 p.m. Doors to the hall will be open from 7:15 p.m. to allow Members access to the Library and trading table.

The AGM this year marks the 30th Anniversary of NOSSA. A number of members present at the first meeting will be attending. **PLEASE BRING A PLATE OF SUPPER.**

DIARY DATES

Tuesday 27 March 2007

AGM and celebration of our 30th Anniversary

Saturday 31st March

Midge orchids in the South Para Reservoir Reserve

Saturday 28th April

Knotts Hill - *Eriochilus*, *Genoplesium* & *Leporella*

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

Wed, 4th April at the home of Bodo Jensen. Meeting commences at 7:30 p.m.

FEBRUARY MEETING

Plants Benched

Epiphyte species. *Dockrillia prenticei*; *Liparis reflexa*

Epiphyte hybrid. *Plectochilus Lynore*

February Speaker

True to his word, Dr Mike Duncan gave a talk titled “!Vamos! – Australia’s Newest Travel Show Extravaganza (Crete, Ecuador, Peru)”. A wonderful and fast moving show that certainly competes well with TV’s Getaway or the Great Outdoors with the occasional ad from dubious travel agencies. While being aware of the colours and elaborate forms of many of the tropical orchids I was unaware of and surprised by the bold colour and patterns of the bee-orchids in Crete. A very educational and entertaining evening.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION - NOSSA NEWS

IF A RED DOT APPEARS ON YOUR JOURNAL IT INDICATES THAT YOU HAVE NEGLECTED TO RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION AND THE APRIL JOURNAL WILL BE YOUR LAST.

FIELD TRIPS FOR MARCH AND APRIL

Plus – Field trips planning meeting for the next 12 months

Saturday 31st March - a search in the South Para Reservoir Reserve for local Midge orchids.

Meet at Susan Secomb’s place for coffee, ready to head out by 10.00.

25 Whiteman Road, Williamstown

This runs off Yettie Road (the Whispering Wall, Barossa Reservoir road) and is well sign posted from the northern end of the main street, not far from the Post Office

Ring 85246248 or 0409091030 if you’re lost

Bring a picnic lunch to share on the verandah and we will follow the field trip with a meeting to plan the next 12 months’ trips. Bring your ideas and special sites.

Saturday 28th April (the last weekend of the school holidays)

A half day trip to Knotts Hill to search for *Eriochilus cucullatus*, *Genoplesium* aff. *rufum* and *Leporella fimbriata* buds. Knotts Hill is off Peters Creek Road. Meet by 10.00 opposite the oval in Yaroon, a small town 1 km north of Kangarilla, on the Kangarilla / Clarendon Road. There is a toilet block. As usual the early birds get to have a coffee break and chat before we head off. (thanks to Cathy for the details for this trip)

THREATENED ORCHIDS

The following dates are scheduled as working bees (in conjunction with other interested environmental groups) to improve the “lot” of some of our threatened orchid species.

Members interested in helping are advised to bring gloves and secateurs (or similar loppers).

Wed April 4 – Clare (Leighton Rd), 10:00a.m., weeding topped lavender. For details please contact the Secretary. *Caladenia argocalla*.

Sat April 14– Belair N.Pk., 9:30a.m., meet at the front car park. *Pterostylis cucullata*.

Sat May 12 – Belair N.Pk., 9:30a.m., meet at the front car park. *Pterostylis cucullata*.

TUBER BANK REPORT - 2006-2007

Malcolm Guy

The tuber bank completed 22 orders which were made up of 320 serves and consisted of 65 species. A profit of \$334.85 was achieved.

Thank you to the members who kindly donated the tubers.

NOSSA Judging Meeting Dates 2007

Confirmed at the March judges meeting.

Sat Mar 3
No meeting in April
Sat May 5
Sat June 2
Sat June 30
Sat Aug 4
Sep Spring Show (no extra meeting)
Sat Oct 6
Sat Nov 3
Sat Dec 1

All meetings will be at 18 Cambridge St, Vale Park.
Meetings start at 9.30 am and finish around 11.30.

30TH ANNIVERSARY: Join us at the March Meeting to celebrate 30 years of NOSSA. Bring a basket supper and share in the cake after the Meeting.

The APRIL meeting is to be preceded with a New Members meeting with a session with Reg Shooter on “Introduction to Native Orchids of SA”. This will be at 7.15 – 7.45, prior to the meeting.....Coordinator: John Bartram.

CORRECTION: It was stated in the December Journal article ‘*NOSSA the first members*’ that Mr and Mrs Don and Bubs Wells were not present at the first meeting. I have been assured by Don that they were.

ANNOUNCEMENT

It is with regret that the ANOS Conference and Show to be held in Brisbane - 29th August - 2nd September has been cancelled.

An alternative is yet to be offered but may be announced on the following web site:
<http://www.anos.org.au/conference>.

ARTICLES/ITEMS FOR THE JOURNAL

Closing date is Friday 6th April for the April Journal

There were only three plants benched at the February meeting, all epiphytes. It was interesting to note the different methods of growing them. The species, *Liparis reflexa* was potted in the normal way in a plastic pot using bark as a medium. This was only a small specimen with one flower spike of spidery olive green flowers. The genus *Liparis* contains some 250 species widely distributed around the world, 10 species occur in Australia most of them endemic to this continent. They grow either as epiphytes, terrestrials or lithophytes.

Liparis reflexa only grows on rocks i.e. as a lithophyte, where, in its natural habitat of North-eastern NSW to southeastern Queensland can form into large congested patches. It is a very easy orchid to grow and flower in cultivation and even when not in flower the shiny mid-green leaves on small globular pseudobulbs are very attractive. It is not a plant you would like to have indoors when it is in flower as the smell is quite pervasive reminiscent of animal urine which gives rise to its common name of "Tom Cat's".

Another orchid, *Dockrillia prenticei* was treated quite differently being mounted on a flat piece of natural cork bark which is really the only way to successfully cultivate this species. This species is often confused with the closely related *Dockrillia lichenastrum*. It is distinguished by having upright, short terete leaves as opposed to flat ground hugging leaves of *lichenastrum*. The flowers are almost identical and some botanist express the view that *prenticei* is a variety of *lichenastrum*. This is an easy species to grow enjoying cool humid conditions in a shadehouse and given the space on a mount, such as we saw at the meeting, will quite quickly grow into specimen size. The flowers are quite small and not produced in large numbers they vary in colour through pink, white, cream or mauve with red stripes and an orange labellum.

The last of the three plants benched was a hybrid. *Plectochilus Lynore*. *Plectochilus* is a man made genus between the two genera: *Plectorrhiza* & *Sarcochilus*. The parents of *Plectochilus Lynore* are *Sarcochilus Mavis* & *Plectorrhiza tridentata*. *Sarco.* *Mavis* has the dominant species *Sarco. ceciliae* as one parent in its background and is very obvious in its progeny both in flower form and vegetatively. It prefers to sit on its host rather than having its roots buried in the growing medium. The plant benched at the meeting certainly achieved that; it was sitting on a half coconut husk with the roots running all over top of the mount. There was just the one spike of flowers carrying small 15mm pink flowers that, at first sight, looked very much like *Sarco. ceciliae*.

Rat Attack

Les Nesbitt

With the first terrestrial leaves showing, and many more ready to emerge any day, it is time to eliminate rats or they will quickly eliminate your orchids. The lazy days of summer with fruit in every garden have gone and food is getting scarce. The rats are hungry and will eat terrestrial flowers and leaves and when those are gone they will dig up the tubers. Mice can also be a problem. Last year rats decimated my terrestrial collection in late March-early April.

I saw a rat in the front garden in late February so I said to myself these rodents have to go now. I set out the waxy green block type rat poison in various spots in the glasshouses and shadehouse. Some disappeared overnight so they were replaced. Other baits were not touched. After about 10 days we found 3 dead rats in the back yard. There may be more bodies in hidden places. Some baits will be left in the shadehouse until the winter.

Place the baits carefully where they cannot be reached by pets or small children. My terrestrials now have a better chance of producing flowers in season. I do not grow them to feed ?*?! rats.

ORCHIDS OF THE GRAMPAINS FOLLOWING BUSHFIRE

PART 2

by **Thelma Bridle**

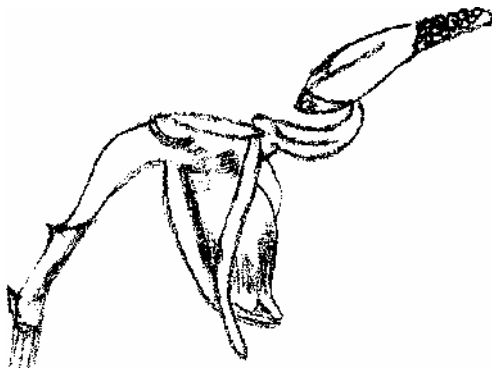
Further to the Grampians trip in late September, ANOS Victoria organised a Grampians long weekend in early November 2006, and Phil and I attended this with some trepidation as to whether we would see any orchid species considering the very minimal rainfall in the intervening month. Many hours of intensive searching by the dedicated organisers and others preceded the visit and a potential disaster turned into a triumph.

Driving from Halls Gap to Dunkeld there was surprising and noticeably more vegetation than in September and the burnt trees were now extensively adorned with leaves covering upper trunks and branches.

The many *Thelymitra benthamaina* seen in bud previously were now flowering in profusion, which is an uncommon sight, and with up to 9 greeny-yellow flowers, blotched red per stem they were highly favoured by the photographers on the trip.

A single carmine-pink *Stegostyla (Caladenia) congesta*, with its labellum covered with dense black calli was flowering by the roadside. Duck orchids were a frequent occurrence in white sand, *Caleana major* up to 25cm high with 2 flowers plus a bud in some cases. In a couple of locations *Paracaleana minor*, the little ducks with warty heads were in profusion, this species only just beginning to flower.

A highlight of the trip was having the opportunity to see *P. disjuncta* – a first for most. With a group numbering nearly 50 participants we were taken in small groups to see a single plant, in an area where about 100 plants had recently been found this season. Previously known from only one site on private property in the Grampians this species is being studied for conservation. *Prasophyllum elatum* was found in both flower and seed. *Pyrochis nigricans* flowers were finished. Some flowers and leaves had dried completely black, hence the name undertaker orchid, whilst those developing seedpods remained quite green.



Paracaleana disjuncta

I was very surprised to see a few *Burnettia cuneata* in bud and flower. The plants were in shaded areas of the swamp and it appears they come up over a long period, as the major flowering had been in September. We also found fattening seedpods from amongst a few plants which had flowered a month earlier. In the swamp, *Thelymitra juncifolia* was in bud and *Calochilus campestris*, with its short bright red beards was flowering. *Calochilus paludosus* with long reddish beard hairs and visible naked apex had been recorded earlier in sandy heath.

Diuris punctata was growing in an open paddock in the usually lush, but this year rather dry, Victoria Valley. The privately owned paddock has been retained for conservation and we could only imagine how orchid-rich the surrounding area must once have been. Besides the tall purple donkeys waving in the breeze there was evidence of other *Diuris spp.*, *Microtis sp.*, *Caladenia spp.* and *Thelymitra spp.* together with many small spring flowering herbs.

Mount William had been badly burnt in the bushfire but as we drove up it was obvious that pockets had missed the burn, possibly due to the speed of the flames or changes in wind direction. A few roadside stops were made to investigate the burnt areas of the higher slopes, although most orchid searching was done at the carpark. *Prasophyllum brevilabre* was just beginning its flowering season in a burnt area with *P. elatum* in full flower. A little further up *Stegostyla gracilis* was in flower, although with no perfume on a cool mountain morning. *S. alpina* with its relatively long and broad leaf was flowering a month earlier than normal, *Chiloglottis* aff. *valida* right beside the bitumen was coming into flower and *Bunochilus mascilentus* was in flower. This recently described species (Jones, 2006) is endemic to the Grampians and has hairs all around the edge of the labellum.

Two rufa group greenhoods – *Oligochaetochilus maximus* and *O. setifer* were found at lower altitudes in open eucalypt forest. *O. maximus* had a reddish brown flower and 2 long forward pointing hairs on the labellum and *O. setifer* had a prominent labellum covered in hairs pointing in all directions.

Our final treat for the weekend was a single *Thynninorchis* (*Arthrochilus*) *huntianus*, the elbow orchid. This small leafless orchid had a hinged labellum with long red and white glandular hairs which release pheromones to attract a male *Arthrothynnus huntianus* wasp. The wasp is fooled into thinking the flower is a female wasp ready to mate, but the orchid's aim is for pollination to occur. These finds and more added up to a total of 38 orchid species over the weekend

Many thanks must go to all those who helped to make this such an enjoyable trip, especially to Margaret and Ivan Margitta for locating the orchids and organising accommodation, Mike Duncan for his entertaining and informative presentation on the 'Orchids of Crete', Andrew Pritchard for showing us *Paracaleana disjuncta* and other orchids and to all the members of ANOS Victoria whose good company makes orchid trips all the more enjoyable.

A Note From Peter McCauley

During my last visit to Victoria I sat down with Gary Backhouse and asked him to give me details of errors within 'his' book [Wild Orchids of Victoria].

Gary was not given the chance to proof read the final before it went to Czechoslovakia for printing and hence is somewhat annoyed at the outcome.

Here is what he indicated about the photographs:

Page 70 Photo C & D are duplicated on page 69 as Photo C & B

Page 86 & 87 Photo E appears on Page 83 as Photo E

Page 87 Photo H appears on Page 83 as Photo F

Page 87 Photo I appears on Page 83 as Photo G & H

Page 87 Photos H & I appears on Page 84 as Photos A & B

Page 87 Photo E appears on Page 85 as Photo D

HAVE OUR ORCHIDS CHANGED?

Cathy Houston

This month the Native Orchid Society of South Australia celebrates its thirtieth “birthday”. A review of the first five years of the Society’s Newsletters/Journals (yes, they were newsletters in the earliest days) reveals some interesting points. By 1979 “A total of 110 species [of orchids] and 14 varieties” were accepted. The following are some interesting aspects about the knowledge of, and what was then current thinking about, our orchids at that time. It must be remembered that no comprehensive book on South Australian orchids existed in those days, especially not any field guides. The most useful “tools” the members had to work with were Blacks Flora of South Australia and W.H. Nicholls “Orchids of Australia”. In 1979 “A Checklist of Orchidaceae on South Australia” by J.Z. Weber: Changes introduced in the new ‘Black’s Flora’ by R. Bates, appeared as a full issue of the Native Orchid Society of South Australia Journal.

Today we sometimes struggle to grasp all the fine differences when orchid species, or species-groups, are split, but spare a thought for those wanting to identify with what they have seen in the field back in about 1979. An article by R. Bates describes the “Variations within the species *Caladenia dilatata* R.Br. in South Australia”. “There are, at present, two recognised varieties” viz. *C. dilatata* var. *dilatata* and *C. dilatata* var. *concinna*. Within these two varieties are further more divisions into distinct sub-varieties or races! At that time there were six distinct forms recognised; how much easier today, now that they are named as species. These would now include *C. tentaculata*, *C. verrucosa*, *C. stricta*, *C. toxochila* and *C. conferta*.

Recognition of what could be species has long been apparent. Take for example the article written in 1980 about two forms of *Pterostylis nana*, viz. what we commonly refer to as the ‘Hills’ form and the ‘Mallee’ form. This article documents the obvious morphological differences and illustrates this with line drawings and a map showing distributions of the two. Electronic Orchids of S.A. currently recognises five possible species of *P. nana* for South Australia. These are probably all un-named, since David Jones, in “Native Orchids of Australia”, does not recognise true *P. nana* in our state. Similarly, an article written in 1981 discusses the *P. alata* - *scabra* - *robusta* complex. The author recognises there are “at least four species of this group in South Australia”. This is the first time the authors acknowledge they should be elevated to species, not just accepted as varieties or forms. At that time *P. robusta* was treated at varietal level, viz. *P. scabra* var. *robusta* or *P. alata* var. *robusta*. Ultimately most of these have been elevated to species level (*P. dolichochila*, *P. erythroconcha*, *P. robusta*, and *P. striata*).

It was noted that in 1978 David Jones and Ray Nash were currently working on *Pterostylis*. Further to that Les Nesbitt notes that of the sixty or so *Pterostylis* in Australia, South Australia has twenty-two species. One wonders what the count is now. It is well known that David Jones is currently/still working on the *Pterostylis* group, with more species being recognised regularly.

In a series of articles produced about “Our rarest orchids” in 1977 we find the comment “Very few of our orchids are thought to be extinct... . “ One wonders what that number would be considered to be today. The same article talks about the demise of *Pterostylis cucullata* and the possibility that it may no longer exist in the wild. Certainly this is one of our highly endangered species for which recovery actions are being undertaken these days. [N.O.S.S.A. members have an opportunity to assist with this work starting on April 14th – see diary dates.] In 1977 there was excitement when, following a field trip to Belair National Park one member returned the following day and “the elusive *Pterostylis cucullata*” was seen “growing in association with *P. curta*”. In 1981, following a discussion and review of endangered orchids in South Australia, R. Bates writes “There are a number of endangered species in S.A. which have not yet been named. It is not unlikely that some of these will become extinct before they are even described properly.” With such a large number of as yet undescribed orchids in our state, let us hope this does not happen.

Naturally occurring hybrids and the naming of such, has been debated regularly within botanical circles. In 1978 this insight is shown by Ray Nash who “guided us to a nearby patch of *Thelymitra*

macmillanii,..... Ray's view is that this will probably turn out to be a hybrid, possibly between antennifera (which it closely resembles) and rubra or luteocilium." In 1980 *T. decora* [*T. x truncata*] was featured as one of South Australia's rarest orchids. It was thought to be of hybrid origin and three forms were recognised then. The probable parents were *T. ixioides* x *T. longifolia*, *T. ixioides* x *T. pauciflora*, and *T. ixioides* x *T. mucida*. Today with the naming of many species within the *T. pauciflora* complex, it is now being recognised that there are even more combinations producing similar type flowers, e.g. *T. juncifolia*, which gives rise to the spotted features, x *T. brevifolia*.

Name changes always raise controversy. A brief explanation giving some insight into this complex area can be picked up when an author is expanding on the front cover illustration of *Corybas*. "In fact, they should never have been called *Corybas* in the first place. They were discovered by Robert Brown during the Flinders Expedition (1801 – 1805), and illustrated by the Austrian Ferdinand Bauer, another of the members of the expedition. Brown called them *Corysanthes* from the Greek "korys" (a helmet) and "anthos" (a flower), and they were known for many years by that name. However, in this instance, justice was never truly done, because the decision was made to call them *Corybas*, the name previously allotted by R.A. Salisbury in 1805, on the strength of seeing Bauer's illustrations." More recent times have seen that injustice righted with the name reverting to *Corysanthes*, something brought about through the work of David Jones. Similarly, the latest naming of *Corunastylis tepperi* follows this, The International Code of Botanical Nomenclature, a name that was recognised by R. Bates in an article written in 1981! However, Bates concludes that *P. tepperi* and *P. nigricans* are synonymous, so the latter prevails, but "further work needs to be done"! He is also the author of an article depicting some name changes in 1980. If our readers are confused by "new" names, then just think what it was like for those in 1980 when, among others, *Caladenia carnea*, and all its five varieties, is changed to *C. catenata*, with all its varieties, two of which are *C. catenata* var. *gigantea* and *C. catenata* var. *minor*. Two others were elevated to *C. pusilla* and *C. alba*.

At one time our esteemed orchidologist was asked to comment on a list of name changes being proposed for the revision of Black's Flora of S.A. "My first reaction was to state that everyone would be happiest if no changes were made"! However, in fairness to that gentleman, it must be said that by the time he had worked through a lengthy consultation with botanists covering much of Australasia, a revision of type specimens and other material and associated literature, he was clearly of the opinion that the changes were warranted.

Have our orchids changed? Maybe, but what has really changed is our knowledge and understanding of these unique plants. Based on that knowledge, opinions, attitudes and ideas have changed. Thirty years ago it was not "policy to differentiate between the numerous forms of *C. patersonii* in this State ...". Today we have numerous named species in this complex, without actually any *Caladenia patersonii* as such.

The final word must come from Peter Hornsby when he said "The ultimate aim should be for the reader to know which plant is being discussed, rather than whether or not the title is absolutely correct."

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Native Orchid Society of South Australia Journal.

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|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| 1. 1977 Vol. 1 #5 | 2. Vol. 1 #9 | 3. 1978 Vol. 2 #2 | 4. Vol. 2 #6 |
| 5. Vol. 2 #7 | 6. 1979 Vol. 3 #1 | 7. Vol. 3 #6 | 8. Vol. 3 #9 |
| 10. 1980 Vol. 4. #3 | 11. Vol. 4 #4 | 12. Vol. 4 #6 | 13. Vol. 4 #7 |
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ABOVE: *Arachnorchis rigida* near Kersbrook, 9 Sept

**ORCHIDS SEEN ON VARIOUS
FIELD TRIPS OR OUTINGS
IN AUGUST
AND SEPTEMBER 2006
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Photographed by Robert Lawrence



ABOVE: *Arachnorchis behrii* at Roachdale Reserve, 9 Sept



ABOVE: *Pheladenia deformis* from Warren CP and South Para Reservoir, 24 Aug



ABOVE: *Pterostylis foliata*
Warren Reservoir, 21 Sept



Above: *Oligochaetochilus pusillus* Kulpara, Yorke Pen, 27 Sept



ABOVE: *Pterostylis nutans* near Warren CP, 31 Aug



ABOVE: *Pterostylis foliata* at Warren Reservoir, 21 Sept



**ORCHIDS SEEN ON
VARIOUS
FIELD TRIPS OR
OUTINGS
IN AUGUST
AND SEPTEMBER**

**2006
- 2**

**Photographed by
Robert Lawrence**



Above and left: *Plectochilus Lynore*

Below and left: *Liparis reflexa*



Left:
Dockrillia prenticei

**PLANTS
BENCHED
AT
FEBRUARY
2007
MEETING**

Photos: D. Hirst