

Native Orchid Society
of
South Australia Inc.



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**NATIVE ORCHID SOCIETY
OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC.**

P.O Box 565,
UNLEY S.A 5061

The Native Orchid Society of South Australia promotes the conservation of native orchids through cultivation of native orchids, through preservation of naturally-occurring orchid plants and natural habitat.

Except with the documented official representation from the Management Committee of the native orchid society of South Australia, no person is authorised to represent the society on any matter.

All native orchids are protected plants in the wild. Their collection without written Government permit is illegal.

PATRON: Mr T.R.N. Lothian

PRESIDENT:

Mr G. Carne
Telephone: 332 7730

SECRETARY:

Mr R. Bates
Telephone: 289 2836

VICE-PRESIDENT:

Mr R. Hargreaves

TREASURER:

Mr R. T. Robjohns

COMMITTEE:

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Mr J. Peace
Mr W. Walloscheck
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LIFE MEMBERS:

Mr R. Hargreaves
Mr R. T. Robjohns
Mr L. Nesbitt
Mr D. Wells

REGISTRAR OF JUDGES:

Mr L. Nesbitt

EDITOR:

Mr G. Carne
118 Hewitt Avenue
Toorak Gardens S.A. 5065
Telephone 332 7730

TUBERBANK CO-ORDINATOR:

Mr P. Matthews
Telephone: 261 2359

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APRIL 1993 VOL. 17 NO. 3 JOURNAL

APRIL MEETING

Tuesday 27th April, 1993, 8.00 pm; at St Matthews Hall, Bridge Street, Kensington. Doors to Hall will be open at 7.00 pm for those wishing to use the Library or Trading Table. Our Guest Speaker for the evening will be Mr. Paul Reece who will speak on Terrestrial Orchids of the Eastern States. Paul is an exceptional photographer, well travelled and very knowledgeable about our native Terrestrial Orchids. Those who have attended Paul's presentations in the past will know that we can look forward to a most informative and enjoyable evening .

NOSSA OPEN DAY / NEW MEMBERS GROUP

To be held at the home of Fay and Malcolm Maxwell, 8 Coralie Street, Plympton, at 2pm on Sunday, 2nd May

COMMITTEE MEETING

To be held at the home of Gwen and Ron Robjohns, 71 Edmond Ave., Unley at 7.30 pm, Friday April 30.

DIARY DATES

May 4: Dinner at the Walker Arms Hotel. See page 30 for details.

September 18 & 19: Our Annual Spring Show

October 2, 3, & 4: Orchid Survey at Mount Remarkable

October 17: Echunga Social - Picnic and Field Excursion

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FIRST FIELD TRIP OF THE YEAR

Saturday 1st May: *Leporella*, *Eriochilus*, *Genoplesium* Special - Cherry Gardens. Meet at 1 pm at Old Mine in Scott Creek Conservation Park. *Gemnoplesium rufum* is almost finished its flowering and *Eriochilus cuculata* is already in flower (its been an early year! - yet *Leporella fimbriata* may not be in flower by the 1st. Bob Edge is visiting the area on a regular basis and if it looks like a "no - goer" he will indicate so at April General Meeting. If you are unable to attend General Meeting but are interested in attending the field excursion, please contact Gerry Carne (332 7730) prior to the 1st.

NEW MEMBERS

The Committee and Members of the Native Orchid Society of South Australia take great pleasure in welcoming Ms Fay Hodge of Mile End and Steve and Betty Mesaros of McGill as New Members of our Society.

MARCH MEETING

Plants Benched at the March Meeting

Terrestrials: *Spiranthes sinensis*, *Pterostylis revoluta*, *Pterostylis aestivalis*

Epiphytes: *Dendrobium kingianum* x *D. monophyllum*, *Dendrobium speciosum* x *D. fleckeri*, *Dendrobium Virginia* Jutt (*Dendrobium teretifolium* x *D. striolatum*)

Plant Commentary on the Terrestrials was provided by Bob Bates

Plant Commentary on the Epiphytes was provided by Reg Shooter

POPULAR VOTE

Terrestrial: *Pterostylis revoluta* grown by Jan Burford was voted the best terrestrial orchid benched.

Epiphyte: *Dendrobium Virginia* Jupp grown by Roger Herraman was voted the best epiphyte orchid benched.

Due to a paucity of plants, the Commentator's Choice was not solicited.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Minutes of the previous (1991) Annual General Meeting were read and accepted as a true and correct recording of the meeting. The President's Report was accepted as it appeared in the March Journal. The Treasurer's Report which was also published in the March Journal, was also accepted. The President, Gerry Carne, declared all Offices and two Committee positions open. There being only one nomination received for each Office and Position and there being no objections to these nominations, the persons so nominated were duly elected for the 1993 / 1994 term.

The Committee remains relatively unchanged from last year. Mr. Bob Edge, 1992 Vice President, resigned due to other commitments. Mr. Roy Hargreaves will carry this position for 1993. Mr. Gerry Carne will serve a second term as President. The Committee promise a busy, challenging and exciting year for N.O.S.S.A. Members.

COMMITTEE AND OFFICES FOR 1993/1994

At the March 1993 Annual General Meeting the following Officers and Committee positions were elected.

President: Gerry Carne
 Vice President: Roy Hargreaves
 Secretary: Bob Bates
 Treasurer: Ron Robjohns

Committee Positions: Karen Possingham*, Bill Dear*, John Peace, Wally Walloscheck.
 (*Serving second year of two year term.)

At the March 26 Committee Meeting the following appointments were made:

Conservation Officer: Karen Possingham
 Show Marshall: Bill Dear
 Trading Table Convener: John Peace
 Tuber Bank Co-ordinator: Philip Matthews
 Librarians: Joan Peace and George Nieuwenhoven
 Affiliated Societies Liaison Officer: Roy Hargreaves
 Registrar of Judges: Still To Be Appointed
 Editor of Journal: Being Finalised

Patron: Mr Noel Lothian

GUEST SPEAKER

Les Nesbitt, a founder and Life Member of the Native Orchid Society of South Australia, provided a most informative talk on *Rhizanthella gardneri*, the Under Ground Orchid. Les indicated that he believed this very elusive and seemingly rare orchid grows in South Australia and revealed N.O.S.S.A.'s plans to initiate a search for it in this State. Les is preparing an article for a future issue of this Journal on *Rhizanthella gardneri* in which he will provide some interesting general information on the orchid and discuss approaches which may lead to locating it in South Australia. Thank you Les for a most enjoyable evening and for introducing a most important N.O.S.S.A. initiative.

THE VALUE OF KEIKIS

Mavis Goldsack had a specimen plant of *Dendrobium x suffusum* removed from her shadehouse by (an) unknown undesirable(s). The stolen plant was of a particularly good clone. Many years ago, two keikis were given to Roy Hargreaves by Mavis' late husband and well known orchid enthusiast, Harold. Roy brought to the March Meeting, two well grown pots of the Goldsack clone, which he grew from the two keikis provided to him. He was thus in a position to give Mavis a replacement to the plant that she lost. As Roy pointed out, keikis can prove most valuable to this end.

THE HABITAT OF *RHIZANTHELLA GARDNERI*

compiled by G. Carne

Rhizanthella gardneri is one of only two subterranean orchid species known in the world; - the other is a somewhat similar species which is native to New South Wales and Queensland. They remain subterranean except for the apices of the involucral bracts which break a small hole in the soil surface. Their underground habit makes these orchids very difficult to find. As this most unique orchid is found both in Western Australia and in the Eastern States, it seems reasonable to assume that at one time its distribution was once extensive across Australia (and maybe still is) and that it very probably grew in what is now South Australia and likely

still survives in this State. Given the extreme difficulties of locating this 'shy and introverted' species and given the number of plants which have now been located in Western Australia and in the Eastern States, *Rhizanthella* may prove to be a relatively common, albeit unknown, orchid species.

At a recent meeting of the Committee of the Native Orchid Society of South Australia, Les Nesbitt raised the challenge of finding *Rhizanthella* sp. in our State. At the Annual General Meeting of N.O.S.S.A. held in March, Les talked about *Rhizanthella gardneri* and indicated to those in attendance, the initiative of undertaking a search for this elusive orchid in the Southeast of the State. From research conducted particularly in Western Australia, we have (we think) a good idea of the orchid's preferred habitat and there are several areas in South Australia which offer this habitat. We can be encouraged in that in 1985, a farmer from the Southeast, after seeing a specimen of the plant grown by Dr. J. H. Warcup on exhibit at the Orchid Club of South Australia Show, reported having ploughed up a similar plant some years earlier. Les is preparing an article for this Journal on *Rhizanthella* sp., its characteristics, how it was located in Western Australia and how we might go about locating it here.

Roy Hargreaves has over the years and in particular, recently, accumulated considerable literature on *Rhizanthella gardneri*, much of it from Dr. Warcup's personal collection of papers, several of which he himself authored. In reading through some of these papers, I came across several observations about its habitat and I thought that since N.O.S.S.A. Members would begin a search for the genera this year, it would be of value and interest to provide some discussion on its habitat.

From B. L. Rye, S. D. Hopper and K. W. Dixon - Rare Western Australian Plants 8; 1982; W. A. Department of Fisheries and Wildlife

The known geographical range of the Underground Orchid extends approximately 500 km through the Western Australian wheatbelt. The average rainfall in this area varies from 300 to 600 mm but is generally about 350 mm.

The orchid is invariably associated with thickets of the Broom Honeymyrtle (*Melaleuca uncinata*) always occurring within about 1.5m of the Melaleuca's lignotubers. At the Munglinup locality, the orchid occurred in brown sandy clay in a tall open shrubland of several mallee species with an understory dominated by *Melaleuca uncinata* and an open heath of many smaller shrub species.

From K. W. Dixon and J. S. Pate; 1984, Kings Park Research Notes - Number 9.

First discovered and described in 1928, the underground orchid *Rhizanthella gardneri* has remained one of the most elusive members of our native flora, being discovered accidentally during clearing of bushland for agriculture only a further seven times up to 1979. Since then, mainly due to the present investigation, localities where populations of the orchid are known to still survive have been increased to five, all but one of these involving unoccupied Crown Land.

Including the initial discovery and description of *Rhizanthella gardneri* in 1928 (Rogers 1928) all sightings up to 1979 of this highly unusual totally underground orchid were purely accidental, and resulted directly from clearing operations in the central wheatbelt.

Due to the supposed extreme rarity of the species, an initial undertaking was made from members of the survey team not to disturb or damage specimens in any way likely to endanger their survival, at least until such times as sufficient numbers of the species had been discovered to justify a special request to the Wildlife Authority for a single specimen or parts of specimens to be taken for strictly scientific purposes.

Landsat images were used to determine uncleared private and Crown land areas and obtain some indication of the type and condition of the vegetation and the recent fire history of the regions to be surveyed. In some instances the presence of extensive stands of *Melaleuca uncinata* could be surmised from the Landsat images, and appropriate follow-up engaged upon by ground surveys.

An area was considered worthy of searching as a potential *Rhizanthella* habitat, if the host shrub was present either as the dominant upper or second stratum within thicket, scrub or mallee formations. Only those areas of *M. uncinata* greater than 500 m² were deemed worthy of intensive investigation, since even if such areas were proved to contain the orchid, effective protection of such small sites would be improbable.

Following each initial survey, areas judged to be most promising were revisited and searches on foot then undertaken to determine whether flowering material of *Rhizanthella* could be discovered. The search method employed the use of hand forks with curved tines, commonly used by Australian gardeners and not unlike the classic European "truffle rake". The technique involved scraping litter from within and adjacent to the base of each of a successive number of plants of *M. uncinata* carefully disrupting the top few millimetres of soil beneath the litter at each successive scraping to look for emerging inflorescences.

It can be generally hoped that by maintaining the *Melaleuca uncinata* associate of the orchid in a suitably healthy state, one might confer continued benefits to the *Rhizanthella*. In other words management of the orchid translates to successful management of the whole vegetational system which supports the thickets of *M. uncinata* in which *Rhizanthella* is known or suspected to reside.

From J. H. Warcup; "The *Rhizoctonia* endophytes of *Rhizanthella*(Orchidaceae). Mycol Res. 95 (6) 1991.

In Western Australia *Rhizanthella gardneri* has only been found closely associated with the shrub *Melaleuca uncinata* as ectomycorrhizal companion plants. Seeds of the orchid, however, germinated and formed protocorms in association with *Thanatephorus gardneri* on four species of *Eucalyptus*. Whether *R. gardneri* can grow to maturity in association with eucalypts remains unresolved.

From A. S. George: *Rhizanthella gardneri* R. S. Rogers - The Underground Orchid of Western Australia: American Orchid Society Bulletin Volume 49, Number 6 June 1980.

Rhizanthella gardneri R. S. Rogers, collected opportunistically seven times from 1928 to 1960, was rediscovered in 1979. They remain subterranean except for the apices of the involucral bracts which break a small hole in the soil surface The flowers are non - resupinate and produce a sweet, faint scent.

Crypanthemis slateri is the only other known subterranean orchid. Discovered in November 1931, it is similar in habit and gross morphology to *Rhizanthella gardneri*. Its habitat, however, is somewhat different, being Eucalyptus open forest with little understory. The soil is "barren and stony." At flowering the top of the capitulum is about 2 cm beneath the surface flowering occurs in October. (*Rhizanthella gardneri* flowers from May through July - Ed.) Although several orchids were found close to plants of another saprophytic orchid, *Dipodium ptmctatum*, no direct association seemed to occur, and there is no association with other living plants.

ACTION BY THE DEPARTMENT OF ROAD TRANSPORT TO CONSERVE *PTEROSTYLIS ARENICOLA* by Bob Markwick

A reconstructed section of the Princes Highway between Tailem Bend and Meningie was officially opened in April 1992. The June 1992 edition of the Department of Road Transport's newsletter "Transtalk" contained an article on the history of the Princes Highway, and in particular, touched on ecological and environmental issues considered during planning for the new alignment.

Consultation with the Aboriginal Heritage Branch of the Department of Environment and Planning and the Lower Murray Aboriginal Heritage Committee resulted in an archaeological survey of the new road-alignment. Affected sites were recorded and one was excavated with assistance from members of the Aboriginal community.

Of more direct interest to N.O.S.S.A., were references made during the opening ceremony by the Department's Executive Director, Mr Rod Payze, concerning the conservation of *Pterostylis arenicola*, which, in part read:

".... I am proud, too, that the Department was ecologically and environmentally sensitive to concerns about this area raised by both the Nature Conservation Society and the Woods and Forests Department.

The road was realigned to minimise damage to this, the only significant area of pure *Callistris preissii* (native pine) remaining in this region.

Another issue investigated was the potential impact the road might have on an area containing endangered greenhood orchids. This was raised by the Nature Conservation Society. There are only three known populations of this species in South Australia and one of those is in this area. The route selected for the road avoided the orchids."

It is pleasing that a large organisation such as the Department of Road Transport is not only mindful of its statutory obligations, such as those under the Aboriginal Heritage Act, but will listen to, and more importantly take heed of concerns voiced in respect of conservation issues, such as those mentioned by Mr Payze.

The Department and all of the Officers concerned deserve warm congratulations.

TERRESTRIAL ORCHID CULTIVATION

by Les Burgess

These notes concern my cultivation in my mixture which is 50 percent Propagating Sand, 49 percent Hills Soil and 1 percent Blood and Bone.

In my opinion we treat our native orchids too kindly in captivity in our shade houses by using too heavy a soil, - in nature I have seen *Caladenia*'s growing in gravel heaps.

Due to the unusually cool evenings in March, Terrestrial Orchids are beginning to show earlier this year so water must be kept up to them, but water in the mornings instead of the evenings, as they do not like to have cold wet feet at night and it also limits slug and snail movements.

All Terrestrials, apart from *Pterostylis cucullata* and its Hybrids should be starting to show from now on. The Eastern states Terrestrials and Hybrids should be beginning to flower.

If you do not have any of the earlier flowering orchids remember the names when they are benched so that when plants or tubers are available, you can purchase them.

I found out by watching benched orchids that you can put together a terrestrial orchid collection that flowers nearly 12 months of the year.

Fertilizer I do not use as I have found that over-use will kill plants and mutations will occur. That is why I only use a little blood and bone when I repot.

This month and from now on, terrestrial orchids will be benched in quantity at club meetings; so write down their names so that you can remember them as they become available. Most terrestrial orchids are available - those that are not are either rare or growers are having difficulty growing them.

10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE R. S. ROGERS ORCHID HOUSE

by Bob Bates

February 1993 marked the 10th anniversary of the R. S. Rogers Terrestrial Orchid House.

The orchid house was the brain child of N.O.S.S.A. Past President, the late Jim Simmons. During the late 1970's Jim researched the life and achievements of the great S.A. orchidologist Dr. R. S. Rogers. In 1980, Jim conceived the idea of an orchid house at the Adelaide Botanic Gardens which contained only Australian native orchids for study and suggested it be named in honour of Dr. Rogers. In 1981, Jim modified the concept of the orchid house so that it should house predominantly South Australian orchids, and approached the N.O.S.S.A.

Committee about setting up such a project. In 1982, Jim wrote to the Australian Orchid Foundation (A.O.F.) and they presented a cheque for \$1,000 toward the project. Jim then consulted Dr. Brian Morley, director of the Adelaide Botanic Gardens and toward the end of 1992 a satisfactory site was chosen and arrangements made for construction of a commercial quality shadehouse.

In February of 1983, the house was erected with the assistance of the N.O.S.S.A. committee including Jim Simmons, Roy Hargreaves, Les Nesbitt, Ron Robjohns, Jim Jacobs(who designed and supervised its erection) and George Nieuwenhoven. It was constructed of galvanised steel piping covered with Sarlon shade cloth to measurements of 18 ft by 12 ft by 7 ft high with three longitudinal weldmark benches. The floor was of crushed white dolomite. Some 30 pots of terrestrial orchids were placed in the orchid house. Most of the species were from the N.O.S.S.A. rescue digs or were donated by Les Nesbitt.

By the end of the year over 50 pots were in the orchid house. During the next 8 years the collection built up to over 250 specimens. There were setbacks of course, with some tubers desiccating in summer temperatures of 45° or rotting away in wet times. One year over 20 adjacent pots of *Caladenia* damped off.

Each year at repotting time excess tubers were provided to the Tuber Bank. Seed was collected and sent to various institutions or sown on the pots (with very little success - there was amazingly a lot more contaminated accidental seedling establishment from pots which burst before being harvested. This resulted in species such as *Microtis arenaria* and *Pterostylis nana* taking over several pots).

Flowers were studied by visiting botanists and drawn for use in several publications. A great deal was learnt from growing similar species together under the same conditions. Altogether some 500 different species were tried for the 250 species surviving in 1992.

From the very beginning we were told that the Botanic Gardens site of the R. S. Rogers Orchid House was temporary and therefore it was no surprise when we were told it had to be moved to the Black Hill Flora Research Centre in 1992. This was in some ways a good thing as the Botanic Gardens site was becoming increasingly shaded from the growth of the tall trees and the orchids were not really looked after. Occasionally sub-committees had been set up to care for the plants but always the work was done by one or two people (almost entirely by Roy Hargreaves and Bob Bates - Ed) - at Black Hill there would be more light and more care given as the site was part of a complex of plant houses.

During 1992 the orchids of the R. S. Rogers House had to pass strict quarantine tests for Phytophthora. Finally in February 1993, almost 10 years to the day from its original establishment, the R. S. Rogers Orchid House was transferred to Black Hill. All tubers were potted into the standard Black Hill mix. Previously some 100 different soil mixes had been used! It will be interesting to see how they fare at the new site in the new standard mix.

With this new beginning we hope for bigger and better things. The R. S. Rogers orchid collection will become the largest collection of native terrestrial orchids in Australia, not owned by N.O.S.S.A. but by all the Native Orchid Societies of Australia and that in times to come, all Societies will provide tubers for the collection.

N.O.S.S.A. OPEN DAY VISIT TO BILL FISHER'S NURSERY

by Graham Burford

When Bill asked us how many members to expect for the visit, we said that it depended on a number of factors, the weather being one of them, and on the Sunday of our first Open Day Visit for the year, the weather looked like being a dampener. The clouds in the south were black, and with the forecast of rain it would not have been surprising had only a few of the faithful turned up. Surprise, surprise, we had one of our best attendances with some twenty five members attending during the afternoon.

Bill introduced himself and talked about the establishing and running of his nursery. His backyard is devoted entirely to orchids with shade cloth from back verandah to back fence and from side to side fence. Plants are benched on galvanised mesh benches with ample walking and working space between rows, and with gravel pathways. Bill was introduced to the "disease" of orchid growing in the same way as many of us were. He was

given a *Cymbidium* shot back bulb, which he grew and flowered and was hooked from there. Consequently his early interest was with Cymbidiums but these are gradually being reduced in number, (mature plants take up so much bench space), and his main interest now is with Australian Natives, in particular *Dendrobium*s and *Sarcocylus*.

He buys mainly flaked seedlings and these are deflaked and planted out into community trays in a well lit spare bedroom. They are grown on a single bed frame with an electric blanket and sheet plastic as a transition stage and hardened off and brought outside as warm weather permits. Plants offered for sale were well acclimatised, had been repotted and were growing strongly.

We took two small plastic containers of *Sarcocylus hartmannii* for Bill to knock out and show us how these would be individually potted. These plants were growing in sphagnum moss and had made up into nice little plants with good roots. They had been grown from seed in flasks by Heinrich Beyrle and were kindly donated to the group last year. Thanks to Heinrich for his generosity. We drew raffle numbers to determine the order of choice as members selected a plant and everyone present received one. They were potted into a mixture of fine bark and perlite.

The threatening rain looked even more threatening as members perused the plants for sale and Bill was kept busy answering questions on plants and crossings, and referring to reference books. Sales were brisk and Barrie Nurse assisted as cashier for Bill. I'm sure that members will agree that the plants offered were excellent value for money and I think that everyone present bought at least one plant.

The showers did eventually come, but the day had not been spoiled, the group enjoyed themselves, and we left many empty spaces on Bill's benches. It was interesting to note that with each plant sale the code number was recorded and Bill could calculate at his leisure how many plants had been sold and what stock was left on the benches of particular crossings. Thanks Bill for a good afternoon.

SPEAKERS FOR 1993

April 27 Paul Reece will talk and show slides on Orchids of the Eastern States.

May 25 Tim Newbury (the person who judged our 1992 photographic competition) will show us how we can take better photographs of orchids and other flora and fauna.

June 22 Bob Bates will talk about and show slides of Rare and Endangered Orchids of South Australia.

July 27 Brigetta Sorensen will provide an update of her research on *Pterostylis arenicola* and other flora. In addition the Conservation Group will talk about some of their activities and initiatives.

August 24 Rosalie Moore will talk on the Genus *Sarcocylus* and how she grows them.

September 28 Nick Marinos will present his highly acclaimed audio-visual on Alpine Australia.

Les Nesbitt will talk about the Australasian Native Orchid Conference which is being held in Toowoomba in September and Reg Shooter will talk on the World Orchid Congress which is being held in Glasgow Scotland.

November 23 Our Annual Auction and Christmas Supper.

The following article is taken from The Australasian Native Orchid Society Victorian Group Inc , April 1993 Bulletin.

Australian orchids in the wild do not receive much fertiliser. Epiphytes enjoy the benefit of decaying leaf litter and the occasional bird dropping and terrestrials generally have to cope with poor soils. So, naturally, the first question is "Do we need to fertilise?" The group considered the answer to be "Yes" - growing plants in artificial conditions denies the orchids their natural food source. In any event we all want to grow healthy, strong, disease resistant plants and fertiliser helps us do this. It is arguable that as orchids get very little natural fertiliser the plants are not designed to absorb it in large quantities so heavy feeding is wasteful.

It was generally agreed that some fertilising is desirable but only when the plants are in active growth. Fertilising when plants are dormant is a sheer waste of money and downright dangerous for the plants.

The three principal ingredients of fertilisers are Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P) and Potassium (K). The proportion of each is now required to be shown on the container. Other ingredients are often added along with minute quantities of trace elements.

- Nitrogen encourages lush plant and leaf growth.
- Phosphorous encourages strong stem growth.
- Potassium encourages better flower size and count.

During the period of early season growth, a fertiliser high in Nitrogen is appropriate. As growth reaches maturity, nitrogen is no longer needed in such quantity but phosphorus is needed to build and strengthen the plant and leaves and potassium to encourage flowering.

There is an enormous range of fertilisers to choose from. They fall into two groups - organic and inorganic.

- Organics include Nitrosol, Fish Emulsion, Maxicrop, Blood and Bone, Hoof and Horn, Dynamic Lifters and natural manures.
- Inorganics include Campbells, Aquasol, Thrive, Osmacote and Phostrogen

Concern was expressed that the solid manures might tend to clog epiphytes' pots and lead to over retention of moisture and then root rot.

One suggestion was to place these fertilisers in small bags made from pieces of old pantyhose and place on top of pots or tie above mounted epiphytes. The plants then get their dose of fertiliser with each watering. Such a problem, of course, does not occur with terrestrials.

Points raised in discussion were:

- * slow release fertilisers were popular - can be incorporated into the mix or one application at the beginning of the growth season is sufficient.
- * Mounted plants require more frequent watering hence more frequent fertilising than potted plants. It was noted that urea based fertilisers are totally inappropriate for mounted epiphytes.
- * Do not use chemical fertilisers if you have charcoal in the mix; the charcoal will absorb the salts and lead to root damage.
- * The nine month slow release Osmacote pellets were recommended as being convenient and easy to apply. One application about September is all that is necessary.
- * Frequency of application varied between members from 'occasionally' or 'whenever I think of it' to 'once or even twice per week.
- * It was generally agreed that 'a little bit and often' and half recommended strength is the way to go.
- * Vary the menu - alternate the use of various fertilisers - you would soon get sick of turkey for every meal.
- * All fertilisers are pricey commodities so don't be afraid to buy in bulk. Big dollar savings are to be had from buying in large quantities. Ever thought of sharing a bulk buy with friends?

*One grower used a variety of high nitrogen fertilisers on his epiphytes until February then switched to Phostrogen until the weather cooled off, then stopped.

*Fertilising seems to be a very personal thing. If you are not satisfied with the results of your fertilising regime then by all means change. But do not slavishly follow what another grower is doing. Everyone's growing conditions are unique, so experiment with those plants that are easiest to replace if something goes wrong!

*NEVER fertilise a dry plant - you could burn the roots and do irreparable damage.

Conclusions from the discussions seemed to be agreed by all:

1. Yes, do fertilise your plants
2. Fertilise only when plants are in growth. In epiphytes this is generally August - April depending on the weather.
3. A little is all that is necessary - half strength or less.
4. Frequently and regularly is better than occasionally.
5. Don't use one fertiliser exclusively - alternate between two or three
6. As the season progresses change to low nitrogen fertilisers

N.O.S.S.A. NEWS AND NOTICES

Name Tags

Those who have not received their N.O.S.S.A. name tags for 1993 should see Ron Robjohns at the April General Meeting (or subsequent meetings). All members are encouraged to wear these badges for meetings and other N.O.S.S.A. functions as it helps forgetful people such as myself remember who you are and therefore promotes a friendlier Society.

Name Badges

N.O.S.S.A. will be placing an order for permanent, plastic name badges. Examples will be on display at the April General Meeting. An indication of interest will be called for during the meeting. If you are unable to attend to meeting, but would like a name badge, please contact Ron Robjohns or myself. Cost will be about \$5.00.

Wine Glasses and Carafes

Wine glasses and Carafes with the Society Emblem *Leptoceras menziesii* are again available for purchase. The Carafes make excellent vases and look particularly attractive with the gold emblem.

Dinner at Walkers Arms Hotel

Our Annual Dinner at the Walker Arms Hotel is being held on the 4th May (as indicated on the front page of this Journal). Those attending should place a \$10.00 deposit with Ron Robjohns at the April General Meeting, or if unable to do so, advise Ron as such. It's still not too late to indicate an interest in participating in this yearly social event.

Debco Bark

Bill Dear is arranging to purchase a pallet of Debco treated bark. This is the ultimate bark for growing orchids. Four size grades are available. The cost for a 50 litre bag will be \$15.00 which is about half normal retail. Bill will have (hopefully) some samples and information at the April meeting.

Seedling First Flowering

First Flowering Seedlings will be judged as a separate division at this years Spring Show in September, as they were last year. This year, unlike last year, however, all entries for this division will be displayed together.

Mount Remarkable October Long Weekend

In order that accommodation might be arranged, Members who intend to take part in the survey of Orchids at Mount Remarkable over the October Long Weekend should contact Gerry Carne or another Committee Member. Caravans, Tents and motel units are options but being a long weekend, our intentions must be made early.