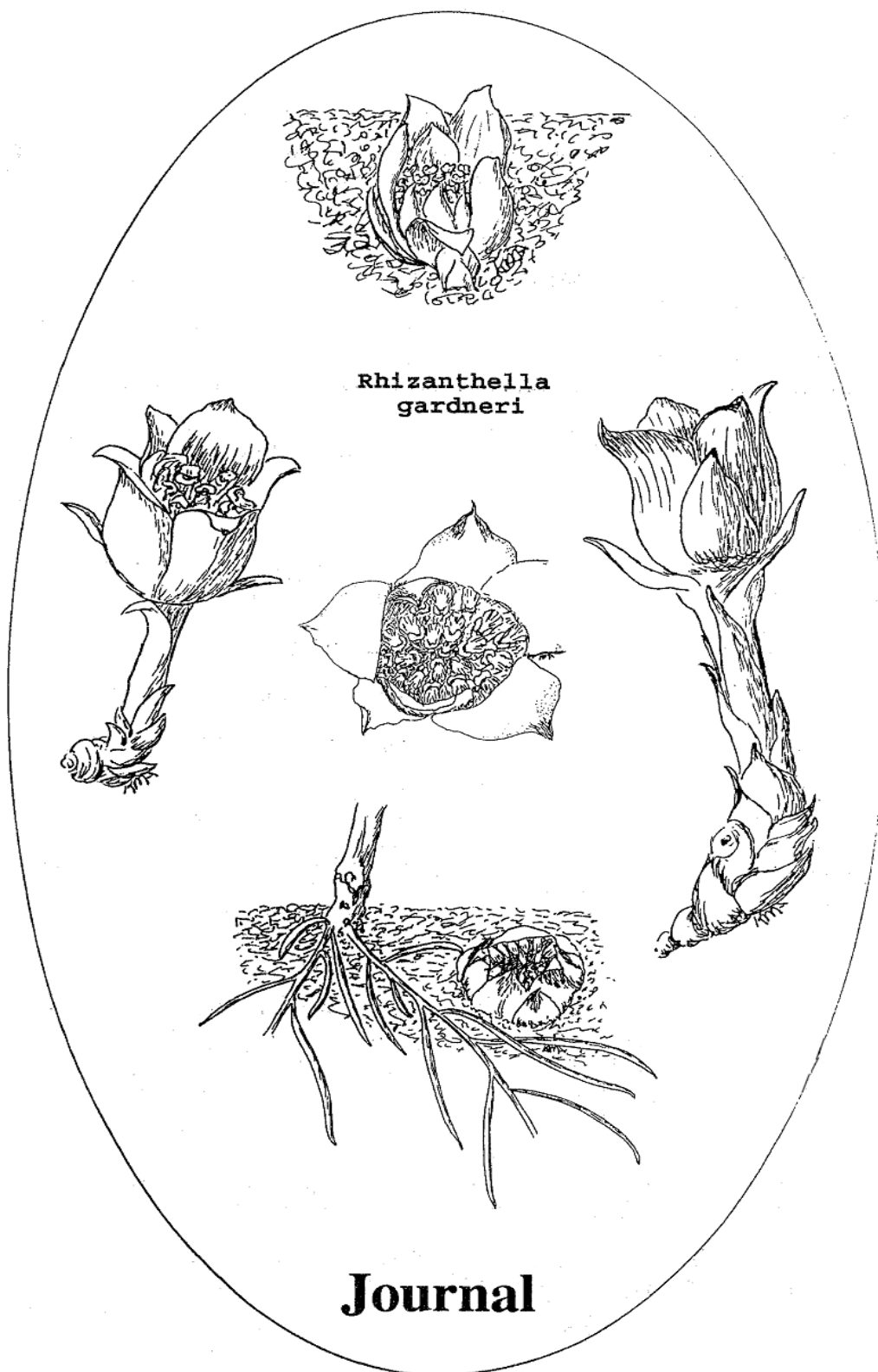


Native Orchid Society of South Australia Inc.



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.

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NATIVE ORCHID SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC

FEBRUARY 1994 VOL. 18 NO. 1 JOURNAL

FEBRUARY MEETING

Tuesday, 22 February, 1994, 8.00 pm: at St Matthews Hall, Bridge Street, Kensington. Doors to the Hall will be open at 7.15 pm for those wishing to borrow from the Library or purchase from/sell through the Trading Table. Slides and photographs which were submitted for our 1993 Photographic Competition will be shown. Gerry Carne's talk on orchid pollination (mentioned in the December Journal) will be- presented later in the year. Bring as many native orchids to the meeting as possible as February is a lean month for flowering plants.

N.O.S.S.A. OPEN DAY

To be held at the home of Bev and Gerald Hawkins, 243 Midway Road, Elizabeth Downs; on Sunday, 27th February at 2 pm. All Members (and guests) are invited to attend. These meetings are a great way to meet and to get to know other Members on a social basis and to learn both the basics and the finer points of growing our native orchids. Long established members and new members are both encouraged to attend.

COMMITTEE MEETING

To be held at the home of Gerry Carne, 118 Hewitt Avenue, Toorak Gardens, at 7.30 pm Friday 25 February.

DIARY DATES

March 23: 8.00 pm Annual General Meeting
April 24: Conservation Group Meeting
May 4: Annual Dinner at the Walkers Arms Hotel
September 18 & 19: N.O.S.S.A. Spring Show

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NEW MEMBER

The Native Orchid Society of South Australia takes great pleasure in welcoming Geoff Bradford of East Brisbane, as a new Member. Glad to have you with us Geoff.

ERROR IN HYBRID LISTING

Colette Makin has found a type setting error in the 5th Edition of the Council of the Australian Native Orchid Society Hybrid Book Page 54 - *Dendrobium speciosum* Crosses:

"x Emmy = Lynette Banks" should read 'x Eureka = Lynette Banks'.

Left out - 'x Emmy = Craig Hewitt'

CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES

Developing a Conservation Ethic

John Moyer
Coolgardie Road, Wardell, NSW 2477

The following article has been copied from The Orchadian, the Journal of the Australasian Native Orchid Society: Summer 1992 - Vol 10 No 6, with their kind permission - Ed.

We have all seen it happen sometime in the past. Toss in a seemingly innocent remark and before long, we have an argument! In our ANOS membership, we have a common viewpoint. We all regard our native orchids highly. But, in these times, is that enough? Our membership also implies other things as contained in the objectives of the ANOS Constitution, and generally embodied in the Constitutions of most ANOS regional groups. And it is probably these objectives which set us apart from other orchid groups. Can we then have differing points of view on these objectives, or pursue some and disregard others? I am certain that if we look at ourselves closely enough, we will find that, in fact, we do little to enhance the standing of ANOS in the broader community or to preserve our native orchids in their natural habitat.

Let's take a look at a few of our "misdemeanours". Some time ago, I gave a talk on native orchids to a local native plant group. During question time, a remark was made about the availability of poorly presented native orchids at the local supermarket. How do we answer questions on this point? That plants are widely available is common knowledge. Do we suggest that people buy these plants and hopefully, with considerable loving care, finally get them to grow, or do we say, "Don't buy those plants, it only encourages the retailer to continue selling them".

What do we do, if perchance we see a plant of suspect origin for sale somewhere that we would like ourselves? In a recent group newsletter, I read of a member's trip up north. He wrote about visiting known orchid environments, and also of a visit to an orchid retailer, even though it is common knowledge that this particular retailer sells a lot of bush-collected plants! Was he going there to admonish him?

Again, recently, I called in at a local species show. The flowers were great and the plant sale-table well stocked, including sad to say, many native species that appeared to be bush-collected and without a NPWS label. Does it really matter where these plants were collected from? Are our Queensland orchids of lesser value than ours in New South Wales? Should we buy these on the chance that our New South Wales plants will not be collected and offered for sale somewhere? That there are far too many places from which we can buy bush collected plants is obvious: roadside stalls, Sunday markets, nurseries, chain-stores, and the bloke who has just returned from a field trip up north, and many of these plants don't have the mandatory NPWS label. Yet, some of us still buy from these sources! We

could buy better plants, cultivated seedlings, plants produced by tissue culture or plant division, from reputable sources. Why encourage the collection of plants from the wild, by continuing to buy from suspect sources.

Occasionally I have taken plants from the bush, and will probably continue to do so. I would like to think I have saved many plants from dying on the forest floor, or from being eaten by wallabies, through their relocation. Although it is technically illegal to salvage plants from trees and branches fallen to the ground during storms, or following forestry operations, in my view it is "less illegal" than some other practices which take place. In fact, our Group's suggestion to relocate plants from threatened areas, has been applauded by the NPWS.

I wonder why many ANOS members risk life and limb crawling around Blue Knob? Surely it is not for the view as there are plenty of other places around with better views. Yet, I read about visits to Blue Knob often in newsletters. I wonder what would happen if those who make it to the top happen to come across a clone of *Sarcochilus hartmannii* in flower? Would it still be there next year for others to admire? That hazardous trip is so unnecessary. Seedling plants of this species can be acquired from a local grower for a couple of dollars. Keep your eyes on the newsletters and note how often an article appears on a "Trip to Blue Knob" or other celebrated orchid areas, just for photography?

Most ANOS groups have an annual show. Further, we nearly all encourage members to bring plants to monthly meetings for judging. I've often wondered whether this competitive spirit is what we should be developing. Does it not, in fact, lead to the quest for that "better" plant? Most would argue, and probably rightly so, that the best plants are those which have been line-bred. But we still see at times, some great plants at our shows growing on bits of tree limbs. At a recent show, I noted half a dozen *Dendrobium canaliculatum* exhibited, all growing on bits of what appears to be *Melaleuca viridiflora*! Now that's a tropical lowland species of *Melaleuca*, and not one that grows in the swamps out of town. And, it just so happens that it is the preferred host tree for *Dendrobium canaliculatum*. It does not do our image much good either, if a member of the viewing public questions show officials about the origins of plants presented in this way. In fact, it can be down right embarrassing if the questioner is at all discerning. Our Constitution does say something about "protecting our native orchids in the natural habitat" doesn't it? It is because of the probable acrimony that would eventuate, that we close a blind eye to those plants shown which appear to be bush collected? Congratulations to the Victorian Group who are at least appearing to be biting the bullet.

I was told at a Group meeting recently that all this talk about conservation was driving members away. At other meetings this year, I listened to a NPWS officer talk about many of the problems involved in conserving and protecting our national heritage, and later, to another speaker highlighting the need for the preservation of a healthy gene pool of all plant and animal species in the wild. For this to occur, the NPWS suggest colonies of at least 100 plants of a particular species. On this basis, some plants are already at dangerously low levels, particularly "Blue Knob" *S. hartmannii* and *S. weinthalii*. Yet many of our attitudes don't seem to have changed much.

I recently inquired of the Minister for Natural Resources, in a private letter, whether such groups as ours would be able to salvage and relocate plants considered in danger through forestry logging operations. He replied, "each case would be considered on its merits". Not, "yes, we would encourage interested groups to do so, since all epiphytic and lithophytic orchids, and some terrestrials, are protected species". Perhaps we should all be becoming a little more politically active, or does it really matter if plants such as the two *Sarcochilus* mentioned above are remembered in name only or as plants in private collections? Does it really matter if our rainforests are logged, our eucalypt forests replaced by pines, or that wild forests are replaced by groves of planted trees? I've never seen a Tasmanian tiger, does it matter if my grandchildren never see a wild koala?

If we are true to the ANOS Constitution, then the answer to the last couple of questions should be, "Yes". But how do we go about developing a conservation ethic? Even among our own membership, it is sometimes hard enough. To do so among the broader community is an immense challenge. Mention "conservation" to some, and immediately you get retorts such as long-haired hippies, dole bludgers and dope smokers. Are we afraid of having these connotations transferred to us if we show some environmental concern? Or do we believe, as apparently many developers and politicians do, that all natural resources are there to be utilised, even if it means the extinction of some species? As a nation, have we still got the mentality that "if it moves, shoot it, if it grows, cut it down"?

We live in a highly competitive world where success is often measured in dollar signs, or trophies on the shelf, where power comes from manipulating the electorate or having influential friends, where poverty is often equated with not having enough get up and go, and where the great motivators are GNP and supply and demand. Our children and theirs should be able to sit under a gum tree and see koalas and orchids up above.

What do we do to develop this conservation ethic? Awareness of the issues involved comes through education and the following are some suggestions.

- * Start at home by making our displays and shows less competitive. All of our plants have an intrinsic beauty, why try to make one "more beautiful" than another? Show off our plants because of this beauty so that others may appreciate it too.
- * Restrict our plant commentaries at meetings to those who know most about the plants, the growers. Let them tell other members why they think their plant is good and how they go about giving it that tender loving care which undoubtedly it receives. I'm sure novice growers would benefit from this approach. Why do we persist in creating a dichotomy within our groups - the good growers with champion plants and others?
- * Use our shows more as exhibitions. Develop a conservation theme, educate the broader community. Let them know that we have some highly developed and unique plants growing in the bush on the edge of town and they and their environment are worth preserving.
- * Lobby our parliamentarians. Wild strains can only continue to exist in wild environments. These need preserving at all times, for all time, not for the life of one parliament, or until the need of another resource arises.
- * Advertise the fact that we care about what is happening out there, and that for some fauna and flora time is running out.
- * Forget about climbing the "Blue Knob". Buy your plants from the guy who raises seedlings or practices tissue culture. We are happy to do this with roses and grevilleas, why not orchids?
- * Actively support the tuber and seed banks and distribute tubers and seed to others.
- * Develop a working relationship with the NPWS and local councils. Survey the local area to find out what is really around and then do something about the preservation of any species considered endangered.
- * Work towards having legislation enacted which protects both our fauna and flora, and their habitats.
- * Keep evaluating what we have achieved and feel good about those positive achievements, no matter how small, and let others know.

- * Keep referring to our Constitutional objectives and, above all, work together with a spirit of unity of purpose, to implement as best we can these objectives.

I am pleased to note here that NOSSA has always endeavoured to honour all of the points put forward by John Moye, although I believe we all tend to slip a little. The Conservation of our native orchids is our most important priority and we have a very strong Conservation Group. Regardless, we are growers, we are very good at growing native orchids and proud of our results, but we can continue to grow our plants and compete in the manner we do at monthly meetings and at our Spring show, and still remain in harmony with the environment. John Peace recommended that we seek permission to publish John's article and I am very pleased that he did as it does carry a very important message and perhaps some of us need a little awakening.

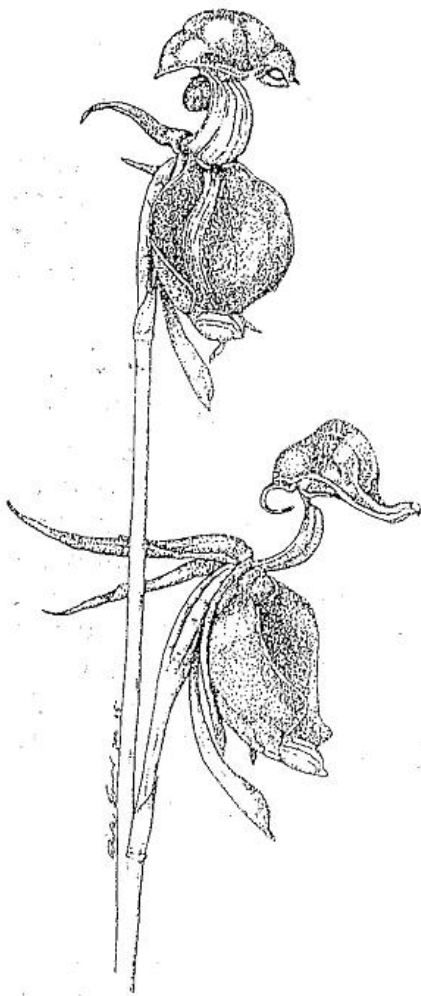
COLETTE MAKIN TO TAKE CHARGE OF OPEN DAY GROUP

Colette Makin will be co-ordinating the Open Day Group meetings for 1994. Colette already has an exciting programme lined up for the year. The first meeting will be held on the Sunday which follows the February general meeting (see page 1 of this Journal). We are very fortunate and pleased that Colette has agreed to take on the position which was so ably filled by Jan and Graham Burford over the past three years.

FIELD TRIP REPORT

DUCK ORCHID / *MONADENIA* WORK PARTY 5 DEC 1993

by Gary Guide



On one of those perfect Summer mornings a group of 30 N.O.S.S.A. members met at the Knott Hill section of Kuitpo Forest. Armed with cameras, digging implements and plastic bags we set off down the track to the best Duck orchid site in South Australia, past late flowers of *Caladenia tentaculata* and clumps of *Microtis parviflora*. There was a neat mix of large ducks (*Caleana major*) and small ones (*Paracaleana minor*). The latter are self pollinated in the Adelaide Hills but the former showed no sign of being pollinated, so we hand pollinated a few. It seems that the sawflies which should do the job in nature are extinct in Kuitpo. The duck orchids were confined to leached white glacial sands. At the top of the path in clay soil the first 'horned' orchids *Orthoceras strictum* were starting to flower.

At this point we turned down the Orkeeta track, which is part of the Heysen Trail (a 500 km plus trail from Cape Jervois to Arkaroola - Mt Babbage). Within 5 minutes, we were into a patch of the alien orchid *Monadenia bracteata*. Flowering plants were carrying 50-60 seed pods, each with 1000+ seeds. These were easily dug up but there were thousands of seedlings. After digging a huge number of these we decided herbicide next spring would be better as *Monadenia* formed dense carpets. Some of us tried the tubers for taste. They were crisp and starchy, not juicy like our native species, but they left a bitter after taste.

Some Members felt that the whole weeding exercise was a waste of time after all. Perhaps we couldn't see the "wood for the trees". There were thousands of pine trees coming up in the bush where the native orchids grow, but no *Monadenia* there. I am old enough to remember when the area we were walking in was pristine bush with thousands of duck orchids. Now it was dense pine forest with occasional tracks lined with *Monadenia*. For some of us it was quite a bizarre experience to be digging up and destroying orchids!

After lunch some of us walked onto the flats east of Knott Hill. Here there were dozens of spectacular golden *Diuris brevifolia* growing with no less than 5 species of *Microtis* and occasional *Dipodium roseum* and thankfully no *Monadenia*.

Thank you to the Conservation Group for organising the trip and to all who attended and helped remove some 1000 *Monadenia* plants.

Orchids Seen:

In flower:

Caladenia tentaculata
Caladenia aff *vulgaris*
Caleana major
Dipodium roseum
Diuris brevifolia
Microtis atrata
Microtis orbicularis
Microtis frutetorum
Microtis parviflora
Microtis aff. *rara*
Orthoceras strictum

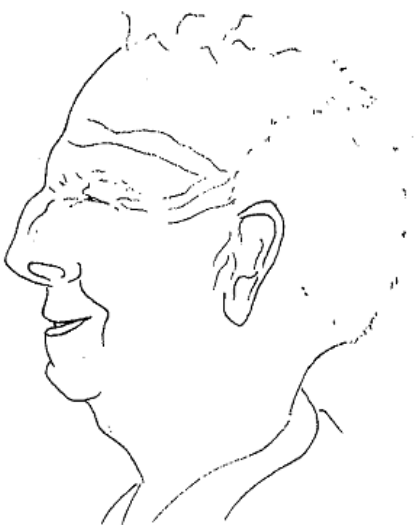
In seed:

Thelymitra (many species)
Calochilus robertsonii
Diuris (several species)
Pterostylis foliata (in the pine forest)
Pterostylis species
Glossodia major
Acianthus species
Corybas species

ROY HARGREAVES

by Les Nesbitt

The following supplements the article about Roy which appeared in the December 1993 NOSSA Journal. At our November meeting Roy was presented with a special award for his considerable contributions to our Society. At least one member, upon reading the November article, believed Roy had passed away. Not so - Roy remains our most active Member! Ed.



Roy was interested in native orchids when I first met him at O.C.S.A. (Orchid Club of South Australia). He had the idea that there should be a native orchid group in Adelaide and he talked to anyone who would listen. He always took a direct person to person approach and encouraged those of us who were growing and showing natives. Roy twisted arms, including mine, to start a native orchid society. He did all the behind the scenes work to make it happen such as organising people, venue, a Chairman, letters, publicity, etc. He made numerous phone calls and car trips at his own expense. For his trouble Roy was made Secretary at the inaugural meeting of N.O.S.S.A. in March 1977, a job that he held with distinction for many years.

Roy was a driving force for increasing membership and promoting N.O.S.S.A. He often paid subs for people, many overseas, so that they could receive the N.O.S.S.A. Journal. Sometimes they paid up, sometimes Roy subsidised them for years. There was many a discussion in Committee about Roy's list.

Roy could be very stubborn occasionally if he didn't agree with an idea. An example that springs to mind was the attempt to increase trading table takings in the early days of N.O.S.S.A. by selling things other than native orchids. Roy said no and that was that.

Roy's life was devoted to N.O.S.S.A. and he will tell you himself that it gave him a purpose in life after his wife died. All of his work was voluntary and done willingly and without prompting. At the same time he was also a hard worker for O.C.S.A. and S.G.A.P. (Society for Growing Australian Plants). He collected and disseminated anything to do with native orchids: newspaper clippings, scientific articles, journals, audio tapes, etc. He became less of a grower himself as time went by. He is famous for his wash trough full of *Pterostylis curta* which produced thousands of tubers for distribution through tuber banks, trading tables, schools and as gifts to new growers over the years. At meetings and shows Roy has always been first to arrive and last to leave. In between he does the things that need to be done. His motto is "A bit of PR goes a long way" and "Get in early". Many a time I have helped Roy reload his little car with props and plants until it groaned and there was no space left inside or on the roof rack. He was an inspiration to us all and set a cracking pace for us younger ones to follow.

The Society owes its very existence to Roy.

THIS YEAR'S JOURNAL COVER - THANK YOU TO CATH ALCOCK

Rhizanthella gardneri, the Underground Orchid known from Western Australia, is the subject of this year's Journal covers. Last year, promoted by a challenge from Life Member Les Nesbitt, NOSSA considered the possibility of finding the orchid in South Australia and, convinced that it should be present, initiated a search for it. We received an excellent lead to the orchid's presence and two excursions were organised by NOSSA Committee Members to a site on the Fleurieu Peninsula from which a description of a plant, which we believe might very well be *Rhizanthella* sp, was made during the war years of the 1940's. A couple of NOSSA Members from the Southeast undertook their own search in the Bordertown - Naracoorte area.

Several articles about *Rhizanthella gardneri* were published in last year's NOSSA Journals and it is hoped Members will re-familiarise themselves about the object of our searches. This year, we plan to intensify the search and see if we really can locate it. After all, the orchid is well known from Western Australia and a similar species has been discovered in New South Wales so it follows it should be present here. It does like to hide!

To promote public awareness of the Underground Orchid, particularly to farmers in the Southeast, Cath Alcock, who lives near Naracoorte, prepared a series of pen and ink drawings of the plant and its habitat. These have been composited by your Editor to form the cover of this month's (and subsequent months) Journal.

THE NATIVE ORCHID SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA TO HOST THE THIRD AUSTRALASIAN NATIVE ORCHID CONFERENCE AND SHOW IN 1996

by Gerry Came

Mr. Barry Collins, President of the Council of ANOS Inc. and Chairman of the Australasian Conference and Show Committee advised me by telephone on Wednesday 2nd February, that NOSSA had been selected to host the Third Australasian Native Orchid Conference and Show, to be held in 1996. It won't be official, of course, until we receive written notice, but the honour has been given to us and being South Australians, we are going to make it the best Conference and Show yet, a truly Australasian Conference and one which will long be remembered by all who attend.

Since our last general meeting in November, two meetings have been held, each involving about 15 -17 Members, to discuss various aspects of the Conference and Show, to select a venue and to prepare a submission to ANOS Council which would demonstrate that we have an ideal venue, state the experience, qualifications and capabilities of Members who have indicated a sincere interest in being on the Conference Committee, should we prove successful in our submission, and to indicate our strong desire to be chosen as hosts and the commitment that we would give.

On 4 January, ten NOSSA Members were given a tour of the Conference Facilities at Flinders University. We were shown several lecture theatres, an area which will be ideal for staging an Orchid Show, restaurants and on-campus accommodation facilities. The campus has a bank, a chemist which offers film development services, and even a post office. We were all most impressed with what Flinders had to offer us and the University setting is spectacular to say the least.

The Conference is only two and a half years away. We have a lot of work ahead of us and we are looking for a lot of support from NOSSA Members. If you are willing to work on a committee, even on a short term or part time basis, or if you would like to head a sub-committee group, or help in any other capacity, please advise either me or another Committee Member. We want to make the Conference and Show a fun event and we want all Conference and Show committee members to have a lot of fun in putting it together and making it successful.

More will be written about the Third Australasian Native Orchid Conference and Show in the March and subsequent Journals. It is a big honour to be selected as host for 1996 and we should all be very proud.

ATTENTION ARTISTS: One of the very first things we have to do in preparation of the Conference is to design a logo which will be used on all stationary, brochures, PR material etc and of course the official Conference Badge. We are thinking at this time of using *Caladenia rigida*. All designs will be gratefully received. If you think you have a good idea but do not have artistic skills, we can arrange an artist to assist you. We won't set a closing date for submissions at this time but there is of course some urgency in finalising a design.

ATTENTION PHOTOGRAPHERS: We hope to host a National Photographic Competition in 1996 to coincide with the Show. It is envisaged that submitted photographs will placed on a National Tour.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 22ND MARCH: POSITIONS VACANT

Our Annual General Meeting will be held on 22 March 1994. All Offices (President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer), and two Committee Positions will be declared open. Nomination forms will be available at the February General meeting. If you are interested in taking on a position or if you know someone who would make a good candidate and who might be willing to accept a position, please fill in a nomination form, available from Ron Robjohns and Roy Hargreaves - a chance to become really involved in the direction NOSSA is to take during the next term and a lot of fun as well.

TUBER BANK REPORT

BY PHILLIP MATTHEWS

This year's tuberbank has been completed with all tubers being posted by 7-2-94. The majority of tubers were posted 31-1-94 owing to the late arrival of some tubers and the mid- week Australia Day holiday. A total of 33 orders were made up containing 283 lots of tubers. The tuberbank was once again successful this season, with a total of \$229.95 being paid into NOSSA funds.

Most orders were filled with first choices, but relied upon substitutes to make up the orders. I trust that all Members were satisfied with their orders and I wish them good luck for the coming growing season. The small surplus of tubers from this season have been potted for next year's tuberbank.

I would like to sincerely thank the seven generous members who donated tubers to the tuberbank this year and I would also like to thank those members who supplied packages for tuber distribution, as these are an essential part of the tuberbank.

I appreciate the support given to me by members in the past and I look forward to your support for the coming year's tuberbank through the donation of slide-boxes and tubers during the year. If December and early January is an inconvenient time of the year for you to donate tubers, please consider donating spare pots of tubers to the tuberbank as these will be grown on for the tuberbank. Tubers, pots of tubers and slide boxes can be brought along to any meeting and given to either Roy Hargreaves or myself

Phillip Matthews Tuberbank Coordinator
1 Jet Road Highbury 5089
Phone (08) 2632423

(I would like to thank Phillip and his wife for a tedious and busy job well done once again. The tuberbank is a very important aspect of NOSSA and it couldn't be in better hands. Just for the record, I understand from talking to Roy, that Ray Nash donated some tubers of *Pterostylis curta* which originated from tubers collected from Long Gully S.A. in 1947. Ray has managed to keep this particular orchid alive in cultivation for 48 years and I suspect this is a record!! - Ed.)

CORK AVAILABLE AT FEBRUARY GENERAL MEETING

We were able to obtain a small quantity of cork from a tree which required a bit of a trimming just before Christmas. John Peace and Bill Dear will cut it up and have it available for sale at the February meeting

COMPETITION PLANTS

Bruce Mules is preparing a list of some of the New Hybrids he has available and will mail it to John Peace. We will select our first Competition Epiphyte of the year from the list at the February Meeting and pots of the selected plant will be available for the March meeting.

VISIT TO YUNDI AND MYPONGA SWAMPS

by Gerry Carne

On Saturday, 5 February, Thelma O'Neil, Roger Biddell and I made a trip to the Yundi (Mount Compass) and Myponga swamps to photograph *Spiranthes sinensis* and, if we were lucky, *Pterostylis aphylla*. It was a magic day with a temperature of 27°C and a blue, nearly cloudless sky. We stopped at the Yundi Swamp (Warner's Property) first and were delighted to see the swamp looking so good; the best I have seen it since and including my first visit in 1987. The water was almost clear although it had the slight, organic oily, surface scum which all swamps have. On my last visit with Roger, the swamp looked like it was in trouble. Cattle had been grazing in it and the oily scum was thick and diesel-like in appearance; a diesel generator previously located on the edge of the swamp seemed to be the contributor. The swamp has now been fenced off, thus restricting cattle, although we did disturb a kangaroo.

The owner of the adjacent property had, as you will recall from earlier Journals, excavated a large pit which he planned to use to raise trout. We didn't enter the property but from our not too distant view, the water contained in the pit looked muddy and not suitable for trout. Although a very large volume of peat was removed during the excavation work, and sold to local nurseries, the drainage of the catchment area doesn't appear to have been affected. Maybe the improved condition of the part of the swamp we were on is the result of the up-

stream excavation but I really doubt this. We did notice that work is still continuing on the 'Trout Lake'. Yundi was and I think still is one of the most important orchid habitats in South Australia. It also is the home for many other rare and endangered plants and birds and the insect and spider life is diverse, abundant and fascinating.

We couldn't find any *Pterostylis aphylla* but it has been few years since this orchid has been seen in Yundi. It looks like the plant may now be extinct in South Australia. *Pterostylis aphylla* is similar to *Pterostylis parviflora*. The flowers are very short lived, the plant requiring only 6-8 weeks from emergence to release of seeds. We did find a large number of *Spiranthes sinensis*. The form of *Spiranthes sinensis* which is most common at Yundi has widely opening pink flowers with white labellums. The flowers are faintly scented and are visited by a variety of insects, especially bees. The anthers of this pink form mature before the stigma (ie the flowers are protandrous), which ensures outcrossing. We were delighted to see many plants being pollinated by hylictus bees, about 8 mm across and with a bulbous red body, but we found these insects to be very camera shy. The bee would enter each flower in turn along the spiral, take pollinia on both of its front legs and quickly fly off. A much smaller fly, no larger than about two millimetres in size, was also seen to enter the flowers on a deliberate and frequent basis but this insect did not appear to be a pollinator.

A few plants of *Spiranthes sinensis* with pure white flowers were also seen and although they require pollinators, did not attract any, at least in our presence. The flower structure of the white form from the South East is quite different to that of the Fleurieu Peninsula forms. The floral segments form a collapsed tube and the flower has a poorly formed rostellum, allowing pollinia to press directly onto the stigma. It is thus self pollinating (see Bates, R.J. and J.Z. Weber 1990: Orchids of South Australia).

Spiranthes sinensis also occurs in the eastern states, in New Zealand and throughout New Guinea, Malaysia, Asia, and Siberia, extending to 2500 metres altitude in the Himalayas. It is a rare plant from swampy places, growing amongst reeds and often completely submerged during the winter and spring months. The orchid seems to tolerate light grazing but will die out once grazing becomes heavy. *Spiranthes sinensis* does well in cultivation if watered throughout the summer months and kept relatively dry in winter (R. J. Bates 1990).

It was pleasing to see an abundance of seed pods of *Thelymitra venosa* in the swamp.

We next drove to a swamp located near Myponga, a swamp in which the white form but not the pink form of *Spiranthes sinensis* is found. We found the swamp to be heavily overgrown with tea tree and coral fern and were able to locate just one plant of *Spiranthes sinensis*. There was a lot of clear running water downstream from the swamp. This is a case of natural destruction of an important orchid habitat. Neither man nor livestock appear to have had a direct influence on the present character of the swamp. It is simply a matter of the orchids being choked out by aggressive, native plants. Perhaps a fire, or better still a mowing of the swamp, would restore the orchid population.

All in all it was a terrific day. I love the swamps in the summer time and I look forward to my near yearly visits.

PROPOSED FIELD TRIP TO THE SOUTHEAST

Members and family who are interested in taking part in a field excursion to the Naracoorte - Mount Gambier area in September should contact or see Gerry Carne as soon as possible, (no later than the February general meeting). There is nothing definite set up yet - we are only looking for an indication of interest. We have to organise Members from the South East to lead us and we have to think very promptly about accommodation. The Flinders Ranges or perhaps Mt Remarkable may provide alternative venues, but some of our Members in the South East would like, I think, to show off their native orchids to us. These three to five day trips are a lot of fun as there is always a lot of time to socialise and see the sights. No commitments are required at this time - only an indication of interest.