

Journal
of the
Native Orchid Society
of
South Australia Inc



Caladenia eminens

NATIVE ORCHID SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Post office box 565 Unley 5061

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 from the Management Committee 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.

PRESIDENT:

Mr Bill Dear
Telephone: 82962111

SECRETARY:

Cathy Houston
Telephone: 8356 7356

VICE-PRESIDENT (and New members Coordinator)

Mr David Pettifor Tel. 014095457

COMMITTEE

Mr David Hirst
Mr Roy Hargreaves

Mrs Thelma Bridle
Mr Malcolm Guy

EDITORS:

Bob & Kerry Bates
38 Portmarnock Street
Tel: 8251 2443

Fairview Park 5126
E-mail *bobbates63@hotmail.com*

TREASURER

Iris Freeman

LIFE MEMBERS

Mr R. Hargreaves
Mr D. Wells
Mr G. Carne

Mr R. Bates

Mr L. Nesbitt
Mr R. Robjohns
Mr R Shooter

Registrar of Judges:
Trips & Conservation:
Tuber Bank Coordinator:

George Nieuwenhoven
Ms Thelma Bridle Tel. 83844174
Malcolm Guy Tel. 82767350

Trading Table: Judy Penney

PATRON: Mr T.R.N. Lothian

The Native Orchid Society of South Australia Inc. while taking all due care, take no responsibility for the loss, destruction or damage to any plants whether at shows, meetings or exhibits. Views or opinions expressed by authors of articles within this Journal do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the Management. We condones the reprint of any articles if acknowledgement is given.

Journal cost \$2 per issue. Subscription \$14 family or single.

NATIVE ORCHID SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC JULY 1999 Vol. 23 No. 6 JOURNAL

JULY MEETING

Tuesday July 27 at 8.00 pm: Saint Matthews Hall Bridge Street, Kensington.

Australian Orchid Specialist Mark Clements will speak on 'Dendrobium orchid nomenclature'.

Doors open. at 7.15 to allow trading table to setup and library to proceed.

PAGE	CONTENTS	AUTHOR
51	Diary Dates	
52	On the Bench.	
53	Last Month's Speaker. Coining field trips	Eds & Thelma
54	Warren & Hale Excursion	Thelma Bridle'
55	Librarian's Report	Geoff Edwards
56-7	Aussie Terrestrial Orchid Culture	G Nieuwenhoven
58	Conservation issues	Sandy Phillips
59	Aussie Dendrobiums	Mark Phillips
60	Spring Show! We need your help!	

DIARY DATES

July 24	Pterostylis Smaragdina special	Scott Creek
August 15	Winter Orchids	Jenkins Scrub
August 28	Quorn Trip	Flinders Ranges
Sept 3-5	Yorke Peninsula Springtime Spectacular	Curramulka
Sept 18-19	NOSSA Spring Show	St Peters
Oct 17	Annual Echunga Picnic	Echunga
Nov 7	Three Duck Orchids	Ashbourne
January 2000	Three Dipodium species	Naracoorte
April 3-4 2000	SE Genoplesiums, Pterostylis parviflora	Mt Monster
Oct 5-8	Native Orchid Conference	Melbourne

Next Committee Meeting: Wed August 4 at 7:30 at the home of Malcolm Guy. 15 Naomi Tce Pasadena. Ph 82767350

FOR DETAILS OF COMING EXCURSIONS SEE PAGE 58

NEXT FIELD TRIP: CHANGE OF PLANS

The planned *Pterostylis melagramma* special excursion in August has been changed to '*Pterostylis smaragdina* special at Scott Creek' Saturday July 24. Meet at 10am at the Cherry Gardens Cemetery. The species is flowering earlier than thought and has just been correctly determined by David Jones himself.

ON THE BENCH

Epiphytes

Bulbophyllum bowkettiae, *B. macphersonii*, *B. schillerianum*, *Dendrobium* Allyn Star, *D. Annes Rainbow Surprise*, *D. Aussie Angel*, *D. Aussie Child*, *D. bigibbum*, *D. Brolga Star*, *D. Big Fleck x Kuringai*, *D. Elegant Autumn*, *D. Ellen*, *D. Hilda Poxon*, *D. Graham Banks*, *D. Jesmond Dazzler*, *D. Kim Heinz*, *D. Peewee x Dot Sheen x Aussie Victory*, *D. Rays Dream*.

The epiphytes looked spectacular with an amazing array of winter hybrids. Our commentator pointed out the diversity to be seen in a single hybrid like *D. Hilda Poxon*, which has been remade many times with better parents.

Terrestrials

Acianthus sinclairii, *Chiloglottis palachila*, *Pterostylis alata*, *P. concinna* (yellow), *P. dolichochila*, *P. reflexa*, *P. robusta*, *P. russellii*, *P. sanguinea*, *P. vittata*, *P. Sentinel*, *P. Trunkfish*,

The terrestrials were suffering a mid winter slump and in addition some major growers were not present. Our commentator pointed out that some pots had one sided growth. This is usually caused by uneven watering in Autumn. The surface of the pot is seldom exactly level and water runs to the lower side where it sinks down to the tubers causing them to germinate and grow well, the other side may look damp on top but the tubers below remain dry and dormant. Watering with a hand held hose is even worse as water collects in the direction of spray and the side nearest the person watering may be bone dry! It is best to use a slow overhead sprinkler.

PLANT COMMENTARIES Les Burgess & Reg Shooter

JUDGING

Terrestrial species :

1st *Pterostylis sanguinea* grown by G. Nieuwenhoven

2nd *Pterostylis reflexa* grown by M. Tiggeman

3rd *Pterostylis russellii* grown by M. Tiggeman

Terrestrial hybrids :

None benched

Epiphytic species :

1st *Bulbophyllum macphersonii* grown by G. Nieuwenhoven

2nd *Bulbophyllum bowkettiae* grown by G. Nieuwenhoven

Epiphytic hybrids

1st *Dendrobium Ellen* grown by J & B Gay

2nd *D. Hilda Poxon* grown by J & B Gay

Plant of the Night *Dendrobium Ellen*

POPULAR VOTE

Best Terrestrial *P. sanguinea*

Best Epiphytes *Dendrobium Colonial Campio*

LAST MONTHS SPEAKER:

Geoff Edwards teased us with some of the exciting aspects of his holiday in Townsville during last years APOC conference! Our own Reg Shooter was one of the speakers; dealing with the wonderful *Lycaste*!

Our July speaker Mark Clements was another of the top speakers, providing a nice touch of controversy on the nomenclature of *Dendrobium bigibbum* - *phalenopsis*. From there we travelled with Geoff and his wife up to Cairns via Ingham and Wallaman Falls, the tallest single drop in Australia. Geoff and co were lucky enough to be shown around by none other than Bill Lavarack one of Qld's top orchidologists.

AUGUST FIELD TRIPS

Sun 1st Aug. Yorke Peninsula, visiting Agery, Moonta and Ardrossan.
Meet : Information board at Port Wakefield, 9am.

Sun 8th Aug. Hartley and Monarto for early *Caladenia* sp.
Meet : On the bridge above the freeway at the Callington/Strathalbyn turn-off, 10am.

Sun 15th Aug. Jenkin's Scrub, Mount Crawford Forest. Winter flowering orchids
Meet : Mount Crawford Forest Information Centre, Warren Road, 10am.

Quorn Weekend (28/29 Aug).

Dutchman's Stern Conservation Park orchid survey.

Accommodation booked at the old homestead in Dutchman's Stern Conservation Park for Fri and Sat nights. Cost \$10 per night per person. Maximum of 15 people. Bedding required. Kitchen and bathroom facilities provided. Please arrive Friday afternoon/evening. From Quorn 7km N. on Arden Vale Road, towards Warren Gorge. Park turn-off on left.

Yorke Peninsular Weekend (4/5 Sept.)

Muloowurtie Reserve, Pt. Julia, Pt. Vincent, Stansbury, Yorketown and Warooka area.

Meet : Muloowurtie Reserve at 10am on Sat. Ulanlan south of Ardrossan, turn R. onto the Minlaton Rd..

Muloowurtie Reserve is 4km. on L. Suggested o/n at either Pt. Vincent or Stansbury. Sun meet : Yorketown 9am.

Please let Thelma Bridle know if you intend to come on either of the weekend trips (8384 4174). Thank you.

My apologies for the cancellation of the Taillem Bend field trip, due to my sickness and the inappropriateness of bridal creeper weeding at this time. It has been decided that trips will not be cancelled in the future, just re-arranged if necessary, but with the same meeting time and venue. Thelma Bridle

Welcome to new member

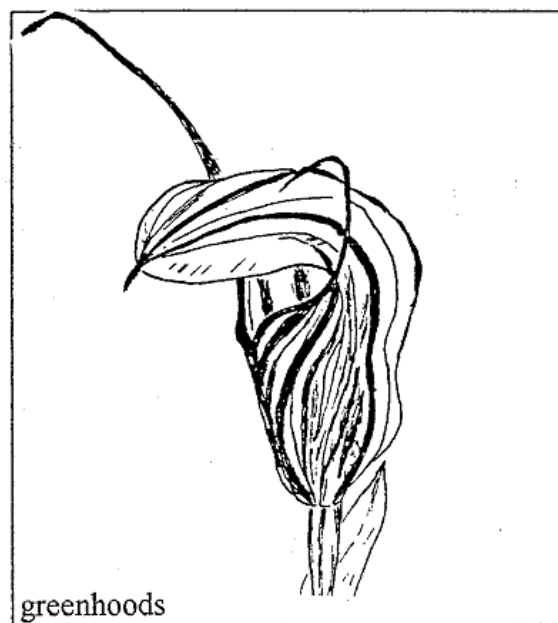
Trevor Garrod of Adelaide

Both Warren and Hale Conservation Parks have steep, rocky ridges with messmate stringybark, long-leaved box and pink gum. There are excellent views to be had of the surrounding areas on a fine sunny day, such as Sunday 27th June. 13 NOSSA members and a visitor from Springton wandered up the steep hillside in Warren C.P. looking amongst the leaf litter for signs of orchids.

We found plenty of leaves and a number of fungi species. The *Caladenia* sp. leaves ranged from smooth, broad leaves such as *Leptoceras menziesii*, through small hairy leaves to large, thick and densely hairy, probably *Caladenia tentaculata*. Colonies of *Corybas dilatatus* had flower buds formed, but the *Acianthus caudatus* on this shady southern slope had few buds.

The north-facing hillside had a few short *Pterostylis sanguinea* in flower and on the lower slopes many *Acianthus pusillus* flowers. The bare rocky outcrop on the next ridge had some larger *P. sanguinea* and *P. alata*. There was some discussion as to whether some flowers were *P. robusta*, mainly due to their short stature, but these may be a hybrid as their forms were quite variable. A few *Genoplesium rufum* seedpods were found, several *Thelymitra* sp. leaves, some *T. pauciflora*, others perhaps *T. nuda*. A colony of *Pterostylis biseta* rosettes was discovered in an open mossy area.

After a relaxing lunch, bird-watching and enjoying the sunshine we drove through Williamstown to Hale Conservation Park. This area was filled with flowering flame heath (*Astroloma conostephioides*) and we had to peer under the bushes looking for orchid leaves. The corners of the 2 parks almost meet, so it was not surprising to find many of the same species of orchid.



Some of the *Caladenia* sp. leaves may have been *C. carnea* which we had not found at Warren. We walked uphill to the ridge top track, which is lined with the uncommon oyster bay pine (*Callitris rhomboidea*). *Baeckea crassifolia* was also common. Along the track were many *Genoplesium* aff. *rufum* seedpods, *Acianthus pusillus* and *Pterostylis sanguinea* both flowering. There were also several different forms of *Pterostylis nana*. One colony of 30 plants was growing on a rock sheltered by a native pine. None of the *P. aff. nana* were in flower, but the rosettes had different appearances. One dark and reddish *P. alata* flower was found on the slope and some of the *Thelymitra* sp. leaves could be identified as those of *T. antennifera*.

The view across native bushland, pine forest and open country to the reservoirs was spectacular and at one of the lookouts a colony of *Pyrorchis nigricans* was sheltering behind a large rocky outcrop. On arrival back at the carpark a scarlet robin was waiting to entertain us and several other species rounded off the day with another bird-watching session. Thanks Gerry for leading this walk - it was a great day.

ORCHIDS RECORDED - W (Warren Con. Park), H (Hale Con. Park)

<i>Acianthus pusillus</i>	W,H,	flowers	<i>P. alata</i> hybrids?	W	flowers
<i>A. caudatus</i>	W	leaves	<i>P. biseta</i>	W	rosettes
<i>Caladenia</i> sp. ie <i>behrii</i>	W,H	leaves	<i>P. nana</i>	W,H	buds
<i>Corybas dilatatus</i>	W	buds	<i>P. pedunculata</i>	W,H	rosettes
<i>Cyrtostylis reniformis</i>	W	leaves	<i>P. sanguinea</i>	W,H	flowers
<i>Genoplesium rufum</i>	W,H	seedpods	<i>Pyrorchis nigricans</i>	H	leaves
<i>Glossodia major</i>	W,H	leaves	<i>Thelymitra antennifera</i>	H	leaves
<i>Leptoceras menziesii</i>	W,H	leaves	<i>T. pauciflora</i>	W,H	leaves
<i>Microtis</i> sp.	W,H	leaves	<i>T. sp.</i>	W,H	leaves
<i>Pterostylis alata</i>				W,H	flowers

From the Library Geoff Edwards

Although there have been no articles from me for a few months I have very few new books to report on. Even the two for this month are ones that many members will have in their own collection.

A Checklist of Australian Native Orchid Hybrids - 7th Edition 1998 edited by Michael Harrison and Murray Corrigan, is a very easy to read, well laid out and easy to follow book which is divided into six specific sections. It is of soft cover, comprises 332 pages and has no photographs. It is an excellent reference book and is a must for those interested in our Australian Native hybrids. Its recent publishing date (Sept 1998) ensures it is up to date.

The book is published by The Council of the Australasian Native Orchid Society, who with the editors have celebrated many notable years with native orchids. The introduction to this reference book identifies the fact that over 120 new hybrid names have been registered since the release of the sixth edition in September 1996. There is interesting discussion on the status of *Dendrobium bigibbum* and its use in hybridising. For those who do not have their own copy, this is a book well worth taking on loan for one month.

The March 1999 Orchadian provides another wide cross section of interesting articles accompanied by many delightful photographs. Alan Nielsen's interestingly named article covering the genus *Dockrillia* provides a view of this new name (this topic is also covered in the above mentioned book) *D. kingianum*, *D. speciosum*, *Sarcophilus* and Ira Butler Awards are other topics.

One reason that there have been no articles of late is that Pauline and I have been enjoying a holiday in Thailand. One of the many highlights was our visit to the Queen Sirikit Botanic Gardens, approximately 50 kms north east of Chiang Mai, on the edge of a national park and within the mountains; the QBG has an area of about 1,000 hectares. It has three major streams which flow down to join a main stream that provides year round water. The topography consists of plains alternating with mountains. The highest point is approximately 1,200 metres. The main objective of the gardens is to serve as a Collection of Living specimens, a Conservation and Propagation Centre, an Academic and Research Institution, a Centre for Herbarium Specimens, a Plant Information Centre, A Field Study Centre and a Youth Training Centre.

We took a number of well defined walks, visited a waterfall, explored the rock gardens and toured the partially built Arboretum. A lot of time was spent in the Native Orchid Nursery which was an extremely large, well laid out area that had in it every species orchid native to Thailand. How I would have loved to get a hold of some (just a nice little piece would have done) of the Cym species or the *Oberonia*, or the *Goodyera*, *Spathoglottis*, or *Bulbophyllum*, etc. Being out of season, there was only a scattering of flowers amongst all of these, with *Paph. callosum* and *Paph. parishii* showing some lovely blooms (I think our photos of these have come out very well). Some plants of *Dendrobium* and *Rhyncostylis* were in flower. Centre piece was a huge plant of *Grammatophyllum speciosum* (I think that was the interpretation from Thai), identified as the largest stem orchid in the world.

Included amongst these were a large range of *Hoya* species, all huge in size (again a few pieces of these would have been nice!). If you are in Chiang Mai these gardens are well worth a visit. Set aside a full day to do the round trip justice as there is plenty to see there and back, however you will need to ask about the gardens as they are not on the normal tourist itinerary. (We have lots of slides, which include orchids and bromeliads if interested.)

Good Reading ! !

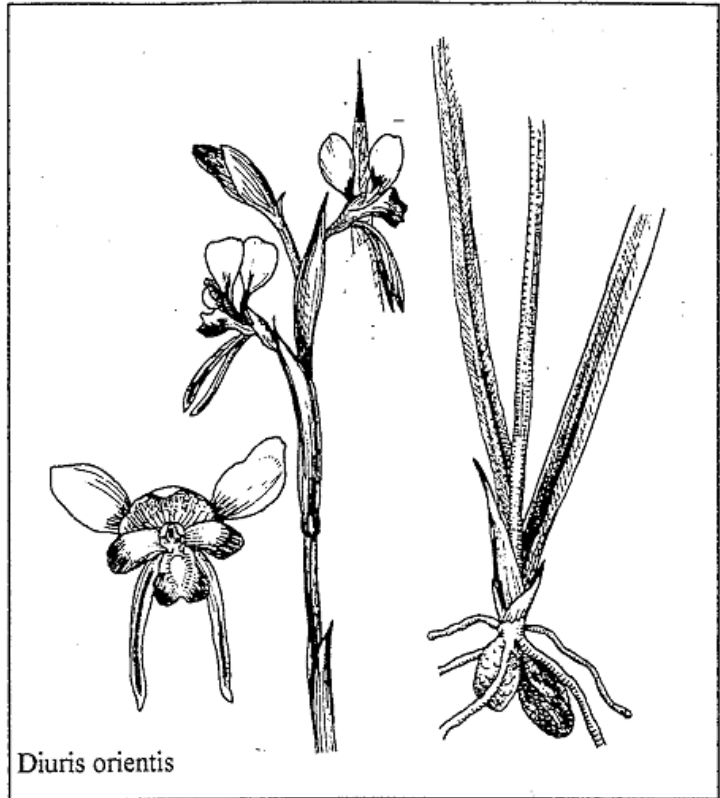
Potting media, different directions: update on a previous article.

For many years now I have been growing terrestrial orchids with varying amounts of success, and some failures. From the failures comes hindsight, to learn much, particularly what not to grow in a pot, as some species after very few years will die, no matter how good we think some orchids should grow in some fancy mix we have devised.

Some failures in the past have been in the genus *Pterostylis*; like *plumosa*, the *P. longifolia* complex, *P. vittata* from WA and *P. sanguinea*

Good *Caladenia* culture has eluded many people and *Calochilus* are "impossible" to grow in a pot. They are some of our most desirable orchids and successful culture of some of the above species and genera would be very exciting.

Some of the above orchids I have grown successfully now for several years in different ways. First the *Pterostylis*..... having grown South African *Disa* in sphagnum moss for years



Diuris orientis

I figured other plants may grow in it just as well. It is readily obtained from garden centres, easy to work with, acidic by nature (just like some of the soils orchids grow in) and water levels are easily controlled from wet to slightly moist. So out of curiosity I tried *Pterostylis plumosa*, *P. sanguinea*, *P. vittata*, *P. longifolia* species in the *P. nana* complex, *P. hians* and *P. decurva*.

All of them have grown surprisingly well; produce good sized clean tubers at the end of the season and of the non multiplying types *P. sanguinea* has germinated and produced seedlings. Multiplying species like *P. nana* and *P. decurva* reproduce readily in sphagnum moss.

About four or five years ago I was given a small flask with a *Calochilus campestris* by Andrew Paget, it was deflasked and also put in sphagnum moss, again I figured it was worth a try. The plant produced a small but healthy tuber at the end of the season and was replanted in the same material, it has steadily grown stronger each season and has flowered once (two years ago). This season a strong plant is growing again and looks big enough to flower once more.

Diuris punctata is still thriving in sphagnum moss and flowers every year, the leaves however are very limp and I can't explain why. *Thelymitra grandiflora* is another unlikely species to grow in sphagnum but several years ago I deflasked some seedlings into it just to get them started, of

course they are still there. They flowered last year for the first time and this year have grown very strongly. Plants potted in sphagnum moss are repotted in fresh moss at the end of every growing season, only good quality long stranded moss is used. Fertiliser is only very occasionally applied as a foliar spray. While a number of other species will no doubt grow just as well in sphagnum, a few failures have occurred.

P. grandiflora has not thrived and will be put back in a soil based mix, provided there are any plants left of course at the end of the season. My earlier report suggesting the rufa group *Pterostylis* will grow well in it has to be knocked on the head I am sorry to say. In the long run they go backwards so they have been put back into sandy soil of the type where they naturally occur.

Watering should be carefully controlled as this genus hates wet feet. *P. taurus* does not thrive, but produces enough tubers to just hold its own. *Pt. falcata* after a successful beginning also has decided it prefers a soil based mix after all. *Pt. depauperata* from the Atherton tableland in northern Queensland slowly increases and flowers in sphagnum moss, it lives in my unheated glasshouse, this species would not grow well for me in soil.

Caladenia flava and *Elythranthera brunonis*; I have struggled with for years and-tried-different mixes with little success. It should be mentioned here that I have been growing tuberous *Drosera* for approx 20 years now, some species include *Drosera whittakeri*, *praefolia*, *planchonii* and the *erythrorhiza* complex *D. stolonifera* etc, in short a large number of species.

Members of the Australian Carnivorous plant Society tend to use a mix of washed or propagating sand and peat, anything from 20%- 50% peat and the rest sand. The *Drosera* species grow and multiply well in this. We also visited WA 2 -3 years ago and could not help but notice how the local *Drosera* and orchids grow side by side often in poor usually sandy soil mostly more sand than soil.

It sometimes takes me a long time to see the obvious, but a light went up in the end; if my *Drosera* grow so well in sand and peat, why not some of the orchids. I duly tried *Elythranthera brunonis* two years ago and *Caladenia flava* last summer (the only one I have left) and the result is encouraging, healthy leaves are growing strongly. Last year's *Elythranthera brunonis* flowered and things look good for 1999.

One other thing always struck me, sandy soil drains very well and is seldom waterlogged (another of my bright observations). I am trying to adjust my watering regime accordingly, I water less, particularly in winter and my plants grow under a poly-carbonate roof. It is too easy to keep pots too wet.

When re-potting in soil based mixes during summer always replace a portion of your old mix with fresh compost, if plants did not thrive or disease was present replace all of it and sterilise the pot.

In closing I would not suggest I have solved the problem of how to grow difficult species, but rather that I have had modest success under my growing conditions in Adelaide.

If sand and peat works on *Drosera* and *Elythranthera brunonis* and perhaps *Caladenia flava* there could be scope for things like *Caleana major* and other "impossible" to grow species in the future. Why not experiment a bit yourself, you never know what may work under your conditions. And above all let us know through the editor about your success or failure!

NOTES ON THE PTEROSTYLIS LONGIFOLIA COMPLEX IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA: WORKED OUT IN COLLABORATION WITH DAVID JONES

Point 1 : True *Pterostylis longifolia* does not occur in South Australia!

Point 2: The common tall greenhood in the Adelaide Hills is *Pterostylis smaragdina* DL Jones.

Point 3: David recognises at least 5 species of this complex in South Australia.... these include *Pterostylis melagramma* which does not occur north of Mount Gambier and *Pterostylis chlorogramma* known only from Naracoorte southward ie Honans Scrub.

Point 4: The three species are all illustrated in Orchids Victoria

Point 5: Another two common species which remain un-named are the little pallid, self pollinated, coastal-dune species, the dark shiny mallee species so common on limestone in the upper SE. There may be others ie the late flowered riparian plants on Kangaroo Island.



David is keen for NOSSA members to send him material this year of any species not mentioned above!!

CONGRATULATIONS:

To Bruce Mules on receiving an Ira Butler certificate for his plant of *Dendrobium* Jesmond Dazzler exhibited last year!

Likewise ...well done Les Nesbitt who received no less than 4 Bill Murdoch certificates for *Caladenia* 'filamentosa' (which was actually a pot of *C. denticulata* from WA), *Diuris* 'lanceolata' (which was actually a pot of *Diuris behrii* from Millbrook), *Diuris punctata* 'old Vic' and *Pterostylis concinna*, all exhibited at last year's shows.

CONSERVATION

THE BATTLE FOR BELAIR NATIONAL PARK

This battle is hotting up! NOSSA strongly opposes any part of the Park being excised for development and we have sent letters to all concerned. At a time when the conservation value of grassy woodlands is gaining greater recognition, with volunteers making major contributions in the rehabilitation of these areas, the South Australian community would be justified in expecting that significant remnants of grassy woodland in a National Park would be afforded the highest degree of protection!

The conservation integrity of Belair National Park is being threatened by a proposed new development for Belair Caravan Park and Country Club. Along with the construction of a 300 person Conference Centre and 50 four-star lodges on the existing golf lease, it also includes the rezoning of six hectares of the National Park to allow for construction of 30 three-star eco cabins, 30 powered caravan sites, a 45 site camp ground and 15 bush camping sites.

Well done NOSSA Conservation group! Several members were recently involved in the saving of 5 acres of grassy woodland near Williamstown from being subdivided. Many orchids were involved! The group also spent many hours at Halbury removing bridal creeper on July 10.



AUSTRALIAN DENDROBIUMS

DENDROBIUM SPECIOSUM

This species is one of Australia's most spectacular and best known orchids and one of the few seen by Captain Cook in 1770. It was first described by Smith in *Exotic Botany* 1:10 (1804) from material collected at Port Jackson by J. White.

This species is predominantly a southern lithophyte distinguished by its thick conical stems, usually curved. It lacks the aerial roots found in the northern allied species like *D. tarberi* or *D. rex*, and has racemes of numerous, large, thick-textured flowers that are yellowish or cream, rarely white!

Like all species in the complex *D. speciosum* forms large clumps over 1m x 1m with large leathery leaves. The flower racemes are arching, often 60cm long with numerous fragrant creamy flowers to 5cm across.

In the broad sense this is Australia's most widespread epiphyte but in the recent narrow sense it occurs along the east coast from northern New South Wales to North-eastern Victoria largely coastal *D. speciosum* is one of the most easily grown Australian epiphytes and readily grows in a rockery although in Adelaide it is usually seen in large tubs which must be transported in wheelbarrows.

Regular growers report that there are good and bad flowering years and that good flowering years are rarely consecutive. It is necessary to begin fertilising as soon as flowering finishes and stopped in mid-Summer. Flowering is improved when plants are watered heavily over summer, subjected to hot bright sunshine in early Autumn, then allowed to dry out.

Flower spikes come from the hardened off growth and spikes are usually obvious in early winter flowering occurs in Spring at show time ... so *D. speciosum* is a great plant for show exhibitors.



In some areas *Dendrobium* beetles are a real pest but not in Adelaide.

SHOW TIME

Now is the time to start organising your plants for NOSSA'S Spring Show! You should know what is likely to flower well by now and pamper those plants, but don't shift them.... shifting causes twisting and irregular growth. A sheet will go around at the next meeting for exhibitors to express interest! This sheet will also ask for volunteers to help out at the show.

Did you get any tubers of *Pterostylis arenicola* from Black Hill in 1997. We know that some growers have lost their plants but there were over 60 given out. Please bring your plants to the next meeting so we can hear how you have managed to succeed where others have failed.

MALLEE FOWL EATING ORCHID TUBERS

adapted by the editors from a short paper by Wimpey Reichelt and Tom May

Wimpey has been watching mallee-fowl near Nhill in Victoria for many years and one wild pair (dubbed Charles & Di) have become so used to his presence that he can follow them filming their feeding. On at least one occasion (Nov 1994) the birds were observed scratching up *Pterostylis 'nana'* and eating the tubers.

Barker and Vestjens, *The Food of Australian Birds* (1989) record only one example of native birds eating orchids and these were pied currawongs. Curiously enough this was first reported in J Nat Orch Soc SA in 1987 when currawongs had been seen eating *Corybas* flowers at Mt Crawford. Since then your editor has seen this same bird species eating *Pterostylis 'nana'* and *P. pedunculata* tubers at several locations, mostly in exotic forests from Kuitpo to Kapunda but only in the cooler months.

Strangely enough the plants which had been scratched up and the tubers removed were in most cases able to regrow their roots and produce new tubers by the end of the season! We would be pleased to hear from readers who have seen native birds eating any part of wild orchids!

RARE ORCHID BOOKS AND ARTICLES

In our May issue we looked at South Australia's rarest orchid book.

A nature magazine popular in the 1940's was WILDLIFE. This early coloured publication frequently featured native orchids as the editor Crosbie Morrison was keen on orchids and wrote many articles himself.

Regular contributors included WH Nicholls, J Ros Garnett and Vincent Serventy. The March 1945 issue for example featured a colour photo of *Dipodium roseum*. Coming issues of our journal will feature pictures from old Wildlife issues.