

Native Orchid Society of South Australia Inc

Journal



NATIVE ORCHID SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

POST OFFICE BOX 565 UNLEY SOUTH AUSTRALIA 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.

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CONTENTS THIS JOURNAL

Title	Author	Page
Diary Dates		62
July Meeting		63
For Your Information - NOSSA News		64
Conference, Plant Sales and NOSSA Spring Show		65
How it is done	Reg Shooter	65
A NOSSA President's close links to the Wollemi Pine.	Bob Bates	66
Orchids to look for in South Australia	Bob Bates	66
Growing Orchids - for pleasure or pain?	David Hirst	67
National Threatened Species Day 2003		71

NEXT MEETING 26 AUGUST 2003

Tuesday, 26 August, St Matthew's Hall, Bridge Street, Kensington. Meeting starts at 8:00 p.m. Doors to the hall will be open from 7:15 p.m. to allow Members access to the Library. Bring your plants for the display table. Our speaker will be Peter McCauley to give an insight into the Victorian orchids.

DIARY DATES

29 Aug. Mt. Billy. Weeding
6 Sept. Leighton Rd, Clare. Weeding
10 Sept Halbury. Monitoring
13/14th Sept. Coorong Weekend
16-21 Sept. 16th Australian Orchid Council Conference Adelaide.
7 December Annual BBQ

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

Wed, 3rd Sept at the home of Malcolm Guy. Meeting commences at 7:30 p.m.

JULY MEETING PLANTS BENCHED

Terrestrial species: Acianthus pusillus; Chiloglottis truncata; Cyanicula deformis; Cyrtostylis reniformis; Pterostylis melagramma; Pterostylis nana (2 plants); Pterostylis nutans (white); Pterostylis reflexa; Pterostylis robusta (2 plants);

Pterostylis russellii; Pterostylis williamsonii.

Terrestrial Hybrids: Pterostylis Goblin; Pterostylis Ingene.

Epiphyte species: Dendrobium tetragonum; Sarcochilus ceciliae.

Epiphyte hybrids: Dendrobium Aussie Angel x Lorikeet; Dendrobium Peewee x Ellen.

Judging results

Epiphyte species

1st *Dendrobium tetragonum* grown by Bodo Jensen 2nd *Sarcochilus ceciliae* grown by David Pettifor No 3rd Place

Epiphyte Hybrid

1st *Dendrobium* Peewee x Ellen grown by Les Burgess 2nd *Dendrobium* Aussie Angel x Lorikeet grown by Malcolm Guy No 3rd Place

Terrestrial Species

1st *Pterostylis williamsonii* grown by David Pettifor 2nd *Pterostylis nana* grown by Malcolm Guy 3rd *Pterostylis reflexa* grown by David Pettifor

Terrestrial Hybrids

1st *Pterostylis* Goblin grown by Malcolm Guy 2nd *Pterostylis* Nodding Grace grown by David Pettifor No 3rd place

Orchid of the Night

Dendrobium Peewee x Ellen grown by Les Burgess

Popular Vote

Epiphyte Hybrid

Joint 1st *Dendrobium* Peewee x Ellen grown by Les Burgess
Joint 1st *Dendrobium* Aussie Angel x Lorikeet grown by Malcolm Guy
Epiphyte Species *Dendrobium tetragonum* grown by Bodo Jensen
Terrestrial Species *Pterostylis robusta* grown by David Pettifor
Terrestrial Hybrid

Pterostylis Goblin grown by Malcolm Guy

Peter McCauley gave the commentary on Terrestrials & Noel Oliver on the Epiphytes.

JULY SPEAKER

At the July meeting Kevin Western demonstrated the art of deflasking terrestrial orchids aided by a slideshow with slides taken by Peter McCauley. The demonstration continued long after the close of the meeting with many members staying on to further discuss the technique with Kevin.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION NOSSA NEWS

DIARY DATES FOR FIELD TRIPS/CONSERVATION

Fri Aug 29th Weeding populations of *Diplodium (Pterostylis) bryophila* at Mt.Billy Conservation Park. Meet at the southern most gate at 10a.m. Note - this was previously scheduled for 22nd August.

Sat 6th Sept Meet at Sevenhill turnoff 9:45a.m. for weeding of top lavender at Leighton Rd, out of Clare. Bring appropriate tools for woody weeds.

Wed Sept 10th Meet at Sec. 706 (N.O.S.S.A.) site in Halbury. Activity for the day is locating and plotting colonies of *Oligocaetochilus* (*Pterostylis*) 'Halbury; so please bring "flags", G.P.S's and your keenness. Any queries to Cathy Houston (83567356).

September field trips

Sat 6th September Private block visit (Mt Compass area)
Sun 7th Private block visit (Cherry Gardens area)
Weekend 13/14th Coorong weekend
Sat 20th Conference field trip
Sun 21st Mount Crawford area field trip. Meet: 10am at Kersbrook service station.
Sat 27th Private block visits(Meadows area)

Sun 28th Private block visits (Uraidla, Birdwood area)

Members interested in attending private block visits will need to ring Thelma (8384 4174) a couple of days beforehand for confirmation and a meeting place.

ORCHID WEEKENDS

October 3-6th - South East long weekend November 1-4th - ANOS Vic trip to Tasmania

Please contact Thelma Bridle 8384 4174 if you are interested in any of the above trips. Bookings for accommodation needs to be made soon if you have not done so.

NEW MEMBERS

The Committee and members of NOSSA warmly welcome David (Andy) Young as a new member.

No Judges meeting in September. The next NOSSA Judges meeting, is Saturday 4^{th} October.

Correction- Again! Doug Bickerton

Just reading your journal and I'm sorry to do this but I've got to correct your correction (p54). You won't find *E. odorata* growing around Blackwood, you'll find it in drier areas like Barossa Valley - Sandy Creek CP for example. The tree that looks similar to *E. odorata* around Blackwood is in fact *E. microcarpa*. *E. microcarpa* (Grey Box) and *E. odorata* (Peppermint Box) are both Boxes, whereas *E. obliqua* is a stringybark, a different group of *Eucalyptus* altogether.

16th Australian Orchid Conference Sept. 16th -21st is open the public Thursday to Sunday from 10am to 5pm. There is an admission charge of \$6.

NOSSA SPRING PLANT SALE Sept. 20th & 21st

The NOSSA Spring Plant Sale will be held in conjunction with the APS Plant Sales at the Wayville Showgrounds. Please note the show is being held separately. Entry fee applies.

Last years plant sales was a tremendous success with Saturdays sales exceeding expectations so much so that there was a desperate search that evening for more plants to be brought in on the Sunday. Therefore if you have plants to sell this is an excellent opportunity.

NOSSA SPRING SHOW Sept. 23 rd

Due to the 16th Australian Orchid Conference being held in Adelaide in September there has been a change to NOSSA's spring show.

NOSSA intends putting a display in the conference show at the Royal Show-grounds. This will be judged under AOC conference rules. Plants nominated by NOSSA members entered in the show will be judged and are eligible for prize money as per the conference schedule. This is a golden opportunity for NOSSA to show Australian native orchids to the conference delegates, many of them from interstate and overseas.

Please give some thought to patronising this display. Details can be obtained from the President Bodo Jensen.

At the September meeting of the Society you will have the opportunity to compete in the NOSSA show proper. At this show all the trophies will be competed for plus nominations for the Ira Butler & Bill Murdoch awards.

The plants will be benched in the room adjacent to the main hall. All plants will be on benches, there will be no floor displays. We decided to hold the show in this room as this enables the judging to take place without noise upsetting our special guest speaker Gary Yong Gee from Queensland.

To enable the judging to be finished as soon as possible, for this meeting only the hall will be open at 6.30pm and members are asked to have their plants benched by 7pm. Judging will commence at 7.15pm. The meeting will commence at the usual time of 8pm. Trophy winning plants will be displayed to the members at the conclusion of judging.

No nomination forms are required for this show just bring your plants along and place them on the benches. Judges will be in attendance to give assistance where needed.

HOW IT IS DONE Reg Shooter

There were very few orchids benched at the July meeting, just four epiphytes and a dozen or so terrestrials.

It seems to me that the strange mixture of weather patterns over the past several months could be responsible for this. We experienced quite a long period of unseasonable warm weather in early June when the orchids started to think spring had come producing flower spikes, some even going all the way into bloom. Then a sharp cold period when everything came to a standstill from early July.

I have had, as I am sure you have, orchids flowering months out of season, some earlier than usual and some later. Attendance at shows will illustrate this. It is not only Australian natives that have been affected but also exotics. However it is not all bad news, things have settled down and spikes are growing nicely which augers well for the spring shows and the conference show. Dendrobium speciosum in particular appear to be producing very well in most collections. This is a species that appears to flower on alternate years. If you recall last year there were very few to be seen at any of the shows around the State. Even our spring show only had one small specimen carrying one short raceme of flowers. I have discussed this phenomenon with many people over the years and it is not fully understood why it happens. It not only occurs in collections but in wild stock. It does not appear to be due to weather conditions as it happens under different combinations of conditions. It is not confined to a particular variety of *speciosum* as does happen with some other species. For instance I have two different clones of *Dendrobium jonesii* one flowers regularly every year the other one every alternate year.

Even the terrestrials are all over the place this year with spasmodic and irregular flowering. Perhaps one of the terrestrial growers can tell us about their experiences this year. Having said that there were a couple of very good pots benched in July. One in particular I liked was a hybrid *Pterostylis* Goblin grown by Malcolm Guy. This is an interesting hybrid made and registered by Les Nesbitt. It is an involved hybrid between Dusky Duke and Cutie which means there are four species in its makeup *Ptst. pedunculata, curta, baptistii* and *cucullata*, all imparting their particular influences and vigor into the progeny.

Thanks to Malcolm and all members who brought their plants in to brighten up our day on a cold and miserable evening.

A NOSSA President's close links to the Wollemi Pine

Bob Bates

Having recently read the full story of the living fossil pine *Wollemia nobilis* found by Ranger Noble in 1994 in the Wollemi wilderness near Sydney, I could not help but notice that two of the key players are well known orchidologists and that one of them is a past President of our society!

Wayne Harris, a past President of NOSSA, was a professional geologist cum paleo-botanist working as a young man in the fossil fuel industry in Victoria before he returned to SA. One area he researched in was fossil pollen found in ancient carboniferous sediments and one of several interesting species he turned up was from a pine growing at the time of the dinosaurs. From the fossil pollen Wayne coined the name *Dilwynites*. This tree was known also from numerous macrofossils. Of course it was thought to be long extinct but the discovery of the Wollemi pine showed otherwise. Today Wayne's *Dilwynites* is the genus *Wollemia*.

Those people working on the living Wollemi pine needed a scientist to analyse its DNA and you guessed it, they chose another orchid man.... Dr Rod Peakall of Canberra, who began his botanical interests studying the pollination of native orchids near Perth.

Thus it was we had two scientists both orchid enthusiasts involved with one of the greatest plant discoveries of our time.

I was lucky enough to have worked with both these men.

Reference: "The Wollemi Pine:..."by James Woodford.

Orchids to Look for in South. Australia

R Bates

Number 1 in a series about orchids not so far found in our State but likely to have occurred here in the past.... and possibly still present.

Thynninorchis huntianus:

This tiny leafless orchid with the flower shaped like a female thynnid wasp (hence the new generic name in 2002) was previously placed in *Arthrochilus* (a tropical and subtropical genus of leafy orchids with similar flowers). It is widespread (but never common) in sandy or gravelly soils in the cooler parts of Victoria, NSW and Tasmania.

There are populations in the Grampians area of Western Victoria and it has been reported from the Glenelg River NP adjacent the SA border. In these latter areas it usually occurs with duck orchids *Caleana* and *Paracaleana* in leached coarse sand in stringybark woodland. There were once hundreds of square km of such habitat in our lower South-East and even today similar habitat occurs to the north and south east of Mt Gambier.

I have seen the species in two forms in western Victoria, the short woodland form and an attenuated, ultra thin sand-swamp form from near the Carlisle River. Either form may have occurred in South Australia and could well be listed with our known extinct species or just maybe one of our enthusiastic NOSSA members may find it here!

I spent a number of years living in the South-East of South Australia on a partly cleared property of 1400 acres (566 hectares) owned by my father. I was fascinated by the diverse flora and fauna and could not learn enough about it. I developed a greater interest in terrestrial orchids after becoming a member of the Kingston Camera Club whose members used copious rolls of film on orchids. My interest was spurred on by Harold Carthew during inter-club visits with his knowledge of orchids and enthusiasm. At that stage I had no need or desire to grow orchids in pots as they were all around me in the scrub.

During my time in the South-East I undertook tractor driving between sheep shearing and crutching seasons which were my main sources of income. Part of that tractor driving work was on a Caterpillar bulldozer ploughing the chained and burnt scrub ready for new pasture. So I can possibly claim to have killed more orchids than anyone else in the Society. My shearing work also eventually brought me in contact with a member of the Naracoorte/Lucindale Field Naturalists which I joined and where I met Kath Alcock. Naturally then my interest in orchids grew stronger.

Eventually circumstances forced Rosemary and I to leave the farm and the South-East but I still remember the imposing *Thelymitra grandiflora* that grew and flowered for two or three years by our transportable home (Note: in Bates & Weber *T. grandiflora* (as *aristata*) is not recorded for that area). It was one plant I wished I could have taken with me. By now it has probably long gone through development and changes wrought by the new owner and hungry livestock. The only orchid I had potted up during my time in the SE was a *Diplodium robustum* that I gave to my grandmother. This I eventually took over after her death many years later, sadly neglected, still in the original soil and with only three tubers.

Rosemary and I then spent several years in a caravan travelling and working around Australia. We spent two to three months in the South-West of Western Australia during the spring and peak wildflower season. By coincidence while at the Stirling Ranges camping area there was a slide evening in the Rangers Headquarters lasting 1 ¾ hours with ORCHIDS as the main subject.

As our two boys were then at or near school age with the eldest on correspondence we decided to settle down in Adelaide. I had heard about the native Orchid Society's annual show and plant sales but it was not until a few years later that I actually attended one (in 1986) where I bought several pots of *Pterostylis pedunculata* and *P. curta*. I also picked up notes on their cultivation in pots but being, as my wife says, "dysfunctional", I ignored these and planted them along the side of the house under the shade of a *Melaleuca* tree where there was 15 cm or more of yellow sand put there by the previous owner for I don't know what reason. Within a short time the snails cleaned them up but next year up they came again and down went the snail pellets. At the next NOSSA show I bought a white *Caladenia latifolia*, *Diuris*, *Leptoceras menziesii* and picked up an enrolment form which later I filled out. All the orchids grew well in the sandy garden plot with *L. menziesii* even flowering!

By then (1989) I had become a member of NOSSA despite being warned off beforehand by the husband of woman at my work who had been a member and

had attended a few meetings. He considered NOSSA members were snobbish or something to that tune. Now that I was attending meetings I was being told that the only way to grow orchids was in pots so began to chew over the idea of putting up a shade house and transferring my orchids to pots. Eventually (1991) I dug up all my flourishing orchids as after-all the species were becoming intermingled. I still have some pots containing a mix of *Pterostylis pedunculata* and *P. curta*.

The shade house went up under a large gum tree in the back corner and I used 80% shade cloth as 50% was unavailable. The southern side is sheltered by an orange tree leaving only the western side open to the little wind we get as we are down in the River Torrens valley. I know now that that combination is not the best and as I can't or won't cut down the trees, I now have to move the shade house. In the middle of it and before the orchids were installed, went a small pond for the burrowing frogs we have in the backyard and a ½ metre deep mound of sand for some native shade loving *Hydrocotyle laxiflora* which is still growing strongly, and a small colony of burrowing spiders. All another mistake as it severely limited room when my pots increased in number.

From then on some species flourished while others died out. I never saw *Lyperanthus suaveolens* (brown beaks) again once they were potted. *Diplodium robustum* went ahead in pots for several years but then went backwards quickly until all had gone. Unfortunately even the hardy (or so I thought) *P. pedunculata* have been steadily going back over the last few years yet I have had some appear in two places in the garden where they are growing well. One clump is obviously an escapee appearing just outside the shade house adjacent to old discarded potting soil. There are now over 30 plants spreading out in clay soil, but with thick leaf mulch, under the orange tree. The other clump is a mystery as it is on the other side of the garden well away from the shade house. Both are growing in dense shade but in relatively drier conditions to that of the shade house. Since then another has come up in the shade house but is most likely from discarded potting mix. Now the only species I have growing vigorously is *P. curta* yet it has been treated in no way different to the other orchids except perhaps with less care as I have so many pots of them.

Another possibility for the poor performance of my orchids is that I spend little time looking after them. Working a 9 to 5 job means that during winter and part of spring when the orchids are above ground I am not home until it is going dark. Also as most weekends are taken up with other commitments I am lucky if I see them for any length of time at all each weekend to check if anything is flowering. I have learnt that slugs, snails and woolly-bear caterpillars (*Spilosoma glatignyi*) know as much about orchids as I do and are adept at selecting the most revered specimen for a nibble. I have discovered that pots along the walls of the shade house receive less water than those towards the centre and pots relegated to the additional shelter of corner posts have never done well.

Until two years ago I had an old wooden trestle table that belonged to my grandfather but that eventually collapsed under the weight of my pots spilling their contents over the shade house floor. This was one time when I had to spend some time with my orchids trying to guess which label went with what tubers. Potting up is when I saw more of my orchids and the more they regressed the more often I potted up until it became an annual event; that was until the year

before last. The last potting up had seen much more compost added to the sand as I found that left for a number of years undisturbed the soil lost its structure and often became water repellent as the humus in it broke down and leached out. A small amount of blood & bone is always added during repotting. During 2001 additions and renovations to the house were paramount. The hinges of the shade house door were in danger of rusting up, and by spring weeds proliferated. Many pots were empty. I was devastated. I could only hope that many were eaten off by pests and that they would all be up again the following year. However last year only the indestructible *P. curta* came up, looking very healthy as if nothing was amiss, while the others were definitely in trouble. Many though still growing have lost their vigour, and do not appear to be producing extra tubers.

Another season has passed and the new shade-house I intended to build is still little more than pencilled plans. I hope to eliminate a number of problems that were inherent in the old shade-house with the most important being to allow increased airflow by using a more open fabric or even bird-netting. This will also greatly reduce the amount of dripping from the roof that splashes the soil out of the pots and tends to keep those affected pots wetter than they should be. Erecting the shade-house away from the corner of the yard and out from under the gum tree will additionally permit an increase in airflow. Secondly a sloping roof is planned to allow more sunlight to penetrate during winter and spring when the sun is lower in the sky. This also may help eliminate the problem of debris collecting on the shade cloth roof from the trees above. Finally new metal stands will be positioned centrally with walk-ways around the walls (as well as between the stands) to keeps pots away from any sheltering framework.

I do have a few neglected and indestructible epiphytes but, as they never do anything particularly exciting, my interest in them is not strong. I look forward to retirement when I can (although many people say I won't) have more time to spend with my terrestrials and hopefully by then I will also have learnt how to grow them successfully!

National Threatened Species Day 2003

National Threatened Species Day is held 7th September each year and marks the day the last Tasmanian Tiger died in the Hobart Zoo. The day is used to highlight the plight of Australia's threatened species and to encourage the community to become involved in local recovery actions. National Threatened Species Day activities are typically a mix of media and on-ground events.

The theme for National Threatened Species Day, in South Australia, is the "Fleurieu Peninsula Swamps - a nationally threatened habitat". Recently this plant community was declared a Critically Endangered Threatened Ecological Community under the Commonwealth Government's Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. This unique habitat supports over 84 known plant species of conservation significance, as well as a number of threatened animal species. The Mount Lofty Ranges Southern Emu-wren is mostly confined to these swamps.

Only 500 hectares of intact or semi-intact swamp vegetation remains on the Fleurieu Peninsula, mostly in small isolated pockets. The largest remaining

Fleurieu Peninsula swamp has been protected with the proclamation of the Glen Shera Conservation Park, near Mount Compass. Swamps are vulnerable to vegetation clearance, inappropriate management, isolation and fragmentation, extensive burning and weed invasion, altered catchments, draining, and heavy grazing.

A calendar of activities and events for September 2003, which focus on freshwater habitats and species like the Fleurieu Peninsula swamps, habitat restoration and other activities will be available from the TSN (SA) in late August.

Fact sheets that provide information on the Fleurieu Peninsula swamps, and what you can do to help conserve this important habitat, as well as National Threatened Species Day Kits will also be available from the TSN (SA).

For more information about National Threatened Species Day 2003 activities or to order a copy of the calendar, fact sheets or kit please contact Karina Mercer, TSN (SA) at the Conservation Centre on (08) 8223 5155 or email: tsnsa@wwf.org.au.

With all confusion over the recent name changes to orchids I thought the following article sent to me many years back would be of interest -Ed.

EURO-ENGLISH Author: Jim Eckford

The European Language Commission has just announced an agreement whereby English will be the official language of the European Union rather than German, which was the other possibility. As part of the negotiations, Her Majesty's Government conceded that English spelling had some room for improvement and has accepted a 5-year phase-in plan that would be known as "Euro-English".

In the first year, 's' will replace the soft 'c'. Sertainly, this will make the sivil servants jump for joy. The hard 'c' will be dropped in favor of the 'k'. This should klear up konfusion and keyboards kan have one less letter.

There will be growing publik enthusiasm in the sekond year when the troublesome 'ph' will be replased with the 'f'. This will make words like 'fotograf' 20% shorter!

In the 3rd year, publik akseptanse of the new spelling kan be expected to reach the stage where more komplicated changes are possible. Governments will enkorage the removal of double letters which have always ben a deterent to akurate speling. Also, al wil agre that the mes of the silent 'e' in the languag is disgrasful and it should go away.

By the 4th year, people wil be reseptiv to steps such as replasing 'th' with 'z' and 'w' wiz 'v'. During ze fifz year ze unesesary 'o' kan be dropd from vords kntaining 'ou' and similar changes vud of kurs be aplid to ozer kombinations of leters. After ze fifz yer vevil hav a rali sensibl ritn sty! Zer vil be no mor trubl or difikultis and evriun vil find it ezi tu undrstand ech ozer.

Zen Z Drem Vil Finali Kum Tru!!

NATIVE. ORCHID

SALE

CENTENNIAL HALL, WAY V.1 LL E SHOWGROUNDS

In conjunction with AUSTRALIAN PLANT SOCIETY SPRING SHOW & SALE Entry fee applies

SATURDAY 20^{TH} SEPTEMBER, 10 - 5 SUNDAY 21^{ST} SEPTEMBER, 10-4

NATIVE ORCHID SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA P.O. BOX 565, UNLEY. 5061