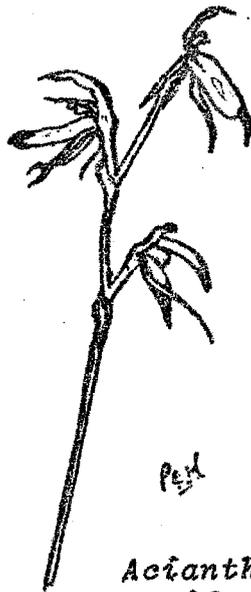


NATIVE ORCHID  
SOCIETY  
of  
SOUTH AUSTRALIA



Pest

*Acianthus  
reniformis*

JULY 1977



NATIVE ORCHID SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

NEWS LETTER

Vol. 1. No. 4.

Price 40c

July, 1977

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AIMS AND OBJECTS

- a. To promote the culture, propagation and scientific knowledge of the native orchids of Australasia.
- b. To assist in the preservation of the native orchids of Australasia in their native habitat and to discourage the wanton destruction of the same.
- c. To print and publish literature that the Society may consider desirable for the promotion and furtherance of any of its objects.
- d. To engage in any activity relevant to these objects.
- e. To extend the membership of the Society by creating a public interest in its activities.

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NEXT MEETING:

WHEN: Tuesday, 26th July, 1977 at 8.00 p.m. sharp.

WHERE: Goodwood Boys High School, Hardy Street, Goodwood.

WHY: Members slide night. Please bring 5 - 10 slides on any subject related to native orchids. Plant display and commentary, Library, Trading Table, Popular Vote, Raffle.

The postponed members' slide night is on again. This is your chance to bring along a few slides. If everyone makes the effort, we will have an interesting night.

Jim Simmons will demonstrate how to grow orchids on cork and make pots from gutterguard.

LAST MEETING: Attendance 49.

There was a last minute change to the program when we heard that Mr. Mark Clements from the Canberra Botanic Gardens was in Adelaide and would be attending the meeting. Mark described his work on Australian orchids at the Garden and showed a series of very interesting slides, including some very rare species which most of us had never seen before. Mark's comments on terrestrial seed raising were followed with great interest, especially when he said that seedlings had been raised from seed obtained from an old dried herbarium specimen. We were very fortunate to have a speaker of his calibre.

Roy Hargreaves had another bash at his Pterostylis curta plants which are still alive although not growing as well as they might.

Bob Bates displayed that part of his very comprehensive collection of coloured prints covering the genus Caladenia. Many of these species are rarely seen and are not in cultivation here. Bob has promised to display prints of other genera at future meetings.

RAFFLE

Ron Robjohns won a 7" pot of Pterostylis nana containing as a bonus a number of seedlings. Ron also held the next ticket drawn but kindly asked for a redraw and the pot of Dendrobium kingianum went to Tony Jansen.

POPULAR VOTE

Terrestrial - Pterostylis baptistii grown by Les Nesbitt. A 300mm potful containing 10 plants in flower and 22 in bud. The plants were up to 380mm tall and the large green, white and brown blooms were 60mm high. This clone originally came from Queensland. The pot is grown in a 50% shadecloth shadehouse close to a galvanised iron fence which provides extra shade in the afternoon. These tubers have been selected for large size over a four year period.

Epiphyte - Dendrobium ELLEN (Den. kingianum white with mauve lip x Den. tetragonum var. giganteum) Grower not recorded. Still a small seedling in a 5" pot, this hybrid had several large creamy white flowers with mauve lips. The flowers were about 40mm across and were very large in relation to the size of the plant. They did not droop but faced up at the observer.

PLANTS ON DISPLAY

Plants tabled 28/6/77 were :

Epiphytes - flowering - Dendrobium HILDA POXON, Dendrobium ELLEN (2), Den. suffusum.

not flowering - Dendrobium gracilicaule 'Lowianum' x Den. agrostophyllum, Den. tetragonum x Den. gracilimum, Den. Ellen, Den. linguiforme x Den. striolatum, Den. falcorostrum

x Den. gracilicaule 'Lowianum',  
Den. adae, Den. teretifolium in bud,  
Den. kingianum, Den. tetragonum var.  
giganteum in bud.

Terrestrials - flowering Pterostylis scabra var. robusta,  
Pt. baptistii, Pt. nutans, Pt. ophioglossa var. collina, Pt. longifolia,  
Pt. depauperata, Pt. vittata, Pt. concinna, Pt. nana, Acianthus exsertus  
(normal reddish form and also pale green form), Corybas dilatatus.

not flowering - Diuris seedling.

#### NEW MEMBERS:

Membership continues to climb rapidly and has now reached 85. We welcome the following group to the Society -

Mr. F. Bell, South Brighton - Mr. T. Bodrocai, Eaton, W.A.  
Mrs. G. Brooke, Waitara, N.Z. - Mrs. E.R. Elliott, Dorset,  
U.K. - Mr. W.J. Foale, Glenelg North - Mr. H.E. Foote,  
Forrestfield, W.A. - Mr. R.G. Haese, Dernancourt -  
Mrs. F. Koppe, Sevenhill - Miss A. Mackie, Adelaide -  
Mrs. L. Williamson, Strathalbyn.

#### LIBRARY NOTES:

During the past month we have acquired some valuable contributions to our library and these include:-

'Australian Indigenous Orchids' - by A.W. Dockrill  
(This book was kindly donated by Peter Hornsby).

'Orchids of Australia' - by W.H. Nicholls.

(This book was purchased on behalf of the Club by Les Nesbitt at a bargain price).

'The Orchadian' Vol. 3.

(As finances permit the club will purchase the complete Volumes of 'The Orchadian' which is the quarterly journal of 'The Australasian Native Orchid Society' - A.N.O.S.)  
Volume 3 was kindly donated by Mr. Fred Hall.

'An Introduction to the Study of South Australian Orchids' by Dr. R.S. Rogers. (This book which was published in 1911 is a priceless acquisition and was most generously donated by Bob Bates.)

'The Orchids of New South Wales' - by H.M.R. Rupp with supplement by D.S. McGillivray. (This is the facsimile edition published by the N.S.W. Gov. Printer in 1969. The book was donated by the estate of Mrs. Jean Booth of Sydney.)

On the subject of books on Australian Native Orchids, an orchid friend in Melbourne advises that an edition of R.D. Fitzgerald's 'Australian Orchids' which was published in 1882 and 1893 in two volumes is to be republished as a limited edition. The publishers are accepting forward orders for the two volumes at \$400 a set!!

For those who have sought in vain - a few copies of Nicholls - 'Orchids of Australia' are available from -

DORIS EDDEY,  
30 KARDINIA ROAD, Phone 252892  
GLEN IRIS,  
VICTORIA - 3146

These are the leather bound edition of which only 150 copies were printed and the price is \$150 per copy.

REPORT ON THE FIELD TRIP TO BELAIR NATIONAL PARK, 3/7/77

As the zero hour of eleven o'clock approached, a number of people were observed ferreting through the undergrowth at the appointed rendezvous. Somebody remarked that they would make an ideal party for finding lost golf balls - perhaps that is where they got their training.

The weather exceeded all expectations, and we eventually set off at the agreed time. The plan was to follow a pre-arranged route at least for the start of the excursion, commencing at a point some hundred metres or so from the entrance to the Park. With some difficulty, this point was reached, and we were rewarded by finding a veritable carpet of *Pterostylis scabra* variety *robusta*, a patch of several square metres being covered with them. Les Nesbitt remarked how only about one percent were native plants in flower, so his own efforts at cultivating them are not so bad after all. Opposite them we also found a patch of tiny *Corybas dilatatus* just starting to grow.

By this time, the ferrets were well and truly at work, and two other orchids were soon discovered. The first of these was *Pterostylis nana* with some plants very close to flowering - though none of those found on the trip were fully open - a good reflection on just how dry it has been this winter. (In this context, our rains were very late starting, though by now the Ranges have had ample to secure the early stages of plant growth.) The other plant to be found was the one to prove most abundant on this trip, namely *Acianthus exsertus*. We were rewarded with finding some truly magnificent specimens ranging in colour from a rich burgundy to a very pale almost translucent green, growing up to fifteen centimetres high. In addition to these, we also found basal leaves of several *Thelymitras* and *Diuris* species. Here the growers came into their own, in attempting to predict what they were going to be. The predictions for *Diuris* were given with reasonable confidence as *longifolia*, and an occasional *maculata*, while the others were *Thelymitra aristata* and *T. rubra*. The other miniatures to be found included plenty of *Pterostylis pedunculata*, together with *Glossodia major* and two *Caladenias*, *dilatata* and *menziesii*.

The second half of the trip was to an area with a different soil and microclimate. Previously we had been on a predominantly clay soil, with the slope facing south-east. Now we had moved into a zone of latertic podsols on a nearly horizontal surface. This time we were rewarded with some of the larger *Pterostylis*. We found small groups of stately *P. longifolia* with several that had already started to flower, and some *vittata*, including one really superb specimen in full bloom. In the same area we found *Prasophyllum nigricans* most of which were developing seed pods and only one or two at the virtual end of their flowering. In addition, a few *Eriochilus cuculatus* were found, with their seed pods already turning brown. We also found a semi-circle of

*Corybas dilatatus* in flower around the base of one of the Eucalypts (possibly *odorata*), the only such occasion when we found any in flower.

From this patch, we stretched our legs for a bit in a circular walk back to the Pines oval. During this walk, we found numerous repetitions of the orchids we had already seen, together with one miniature *Pterostylis* (?) that aroused some interest. Roy Hargreaves has photographed it, so we have a permanent record. It looked rather like a *longifolia* that someone had pulled back down into the ground, removing the stem, but leaving a little heap of leaves. Time will tell what it is.

We are indebted to Mrs. Joan Hocking for faithfully recording the list of plants we saw, and this is reproduced below. In conclusion, I think it would be fair to say we had a thoroughly rewarding and enjoyable trip, and I hope this will be the first of many more.

Plants in flower

*Acianthus exsertus*  
*Corybas dilatatus*  
*Prasophyllum nigricans*  
*Pterostylis longifolia*  
*P. scabra* var. *robusta*  
*P. vittata*

Plants in seed

*Eriochilus cucullatus*  
*Prasophyllum nigricans*

Miniatures

*Caladenia dilatata*  
*C. menziesii*  
*Diuris longifolia*  
*D. maculate*  
*Pterostylis barbata*  
*P. nana*  
*P. pedunculata*  
*Thelymitra aristata*  
*T. rubra*

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FIELD TRIPS

1. Date : Sunday, 31st July, 1977  
Time : 11.00 a.m. (bring packed lunch)  
Meeting Place : Valley Road ford, 1.1 km (0.7 miles) from the Valley Road turnoff on the Corkscrew Road, near Montacute.
2. Next trip is planned for Kyeema Conservation Park - Saturday, 27th August, 1977. Mark the date in your diary. Further details later.

THIS MONTH'S COVER - *Acianthus reniformis*.

Since May, we have had the chance of seeing the diminutive flowered *Acianthus exsertus*, often growing in extensive patches. This is now coming to the end of its season and we can now look forward to *Acianthus reniformis*, with the larger kidney-shaped flowers (from which it gets its name). Although still a gregarious plant, it does not grow in large colonies like *A. exsertus*. It is found in all states in Australia.

*Acianthus reniformis*, the Gnat orchid, is a common species in the Mount Lofty Ranges. Two distinct forms occur. The early flowering form is out now. It blooms from June to August, is very robust and makes a large light green coloured leaf. Up to 7 brown flowers are borne on a stem 80m.m. high. The main floral feature is the wide flat labellum which has a gland secreting a sticky fluid which runs down a channel along the centre of the lip.

The late flowering form is a smaller plant in my experience and more difficult in cultivation. It flowers from August to October and bears 2 - 4 blooms similar to the early form except for differences in the end of the lip. The late form has greyish green leaves.

A. reniformis leaves are circular or heart shaped and are green underneath. They can be confused with corybas leaves by the casual observer.

The gnat orchid does well in cultivation and multiplies rapidly since it is a colony type. Only the larger plants flower. It prefers a shady situation and a soil rich in leaf mould. Plants appear April - June and die down in October - December.

OUR RAREST ORCHIDS

No. 3

*Caladenia cucullata*

Only recently recognised as occurring in South Australia, this beautiful species is found in sandy country along the border from Frances to Bordertown.

From a distance, the flowers appear as a swarm of white butterflies under the banksias with each stem carrying as many as a dozen predominantly white blooms, about 4cm across. The underside of each sepal is covered with olive glands, contrasting with the pure white above.

The name 'cucullata' refers to the hooded dorsal sepal which curves strongly forward over the labellum. A large colony is an unforgettable sight, but unfortunately one must travel to Western Victoria to see large populations of this orchid.

*Caladenia cucullata* would be a magnificent addition to any terrestrial orchid collection but may prove difficult to establish. Once established its great number of seed pods should ensure success in growing it from seed.



R. BATES

METHODS FOR EXTINCTION

by R. C. Nash

Here I present three fool proof methods of exterminating the Native terrestrial orchids from our country side. Unfortunately, these methods are in full swing year round by various people.

The first and most successful way to eliminate these plants is to totally bulldoze the wild bushland, burn all the fallen vegetation, followed by deep ploughing. A good growth of introduced grasses completes the job. Here we assure that these so called protected plants cannot survive.

A second method that is slower than the above but denudes the land of these plants as effectually, is to visit the bushland when these plants are in bloom. Now gather as many flower spikes as is possible by picking, plucking or just yanking,

this is sure to give the most positive results. By this complete removal of all flowers then you can be assured that no seed will be developed to replace the plants that die out. Also the damaged stems and disrupted plants can quite easily become infected with damaging results to the plants. If the plants are not killed by disease then they will be weakened, many may never recover. After a few years of this type of treatment, no wonder that the orchids disappear forever.

The third method is used by individuals who declare their love for these little orchids. So dear is their love that they cannot bear to leave a single plant in the wild if it can be avoided, all must be collected and an attempt made to cultivate them. The results ultimately become as negative as the first two methods described, for no plants can be found in the bushland and all the 'cultivated' plants have also died.

If you truly care for these plants, please give them some regard in the bush by seeing that they eventually do receive the protection they need and do not get. If and only if land must be cleared then try to rescue any orchids growing on the threatened land for cultivation or replanting elsewhere.

R.C. NASH

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#### NATURAL HYBRIDS

A.N.O.S. is drawing up a list of naturally occurring Australian orchid hybrids and has requested our help with the terrestrials. Information required includes suspected parent species, distribution, frequency, and authority (i.e. person who certified as hybrid). Keep your eyes open on field trips, you may find something new, or extremely rare.

#### MAN-MADE HYBRIDS

In recent years Dendrobium tetragonum var. giganteum has emerged as a successful parent of Australian native hybrids. These hybrids have large star shaped flowers in white, yellow or pink shades depending on the other parent used. The flowers tend to sit up and look at you in contrast to most dendrobium species which have drooping flowers. Perhaps the most desirable feature is flowering time. We saw three hybrids in flower at our June meeting, which is remarkable when you consider that the parent species normally flower in September-October in Adelaide. The hybrids I have seen are still only seedlings and have not yet reached full size. They will make very showy specimen plants in a few years time.

#### DENDROBIUM HILDA POXON (Dendrobium speciosum x Den tetragonum)

The name of this hybrid has just been registered by the R.H.S. in England and will be carried by all hybrids between these two parents regardless of the varieties or clones used. Write it on a label of any hybrids which you have. Flowers are cream to yellow and are produced from both new and old canes, a very desirable trait. The majority are spotted but some are plain. These plants may grow 500 to 1000 mm high at maturity. The square sided pseudo-bulbs of Den. tetragonum have reappeared in this hybrid.

#### DENDROBIUM ELLEN (Den. kingianum x Den. tetragonum)

This is a more compact plant taking the form of the Den. kingianum. Flowers are pink, or white with mauve lips.

OBSERVATIONS IN THE FIELD Mr. W.J. Clayson, Tantanoola

The Mt. Burr Range in the Lower South East of South Australia, is the home of approximately 40 species of Native Terrestrial orchids. From 1910 to the early 1940's small areas of natural bushland were cleared and Softwood Plantations established, mainly to supply timber mills for the production of building material. In the 1940's two paper mills were built in the area, these with other associated industries demanded an increase in supply of pulpwood, so broad scale clearing of natural bushland, and planting of softwood plantations increased, until today only small areas of bushland remain.

Working in this area since the mid 40's, I was able to see many square miles of bushland cleared, and the effect it was to have on the Native Terrestrial Orchids, along with all the other native species in this area. One often wonders, what price progress.

Conservation of the Native Orchid species that would lend themselves to cultivation, did seem to be part of the answer, but where to start? So cultivation started at home on a small scale, field research started admittedly on a small scale too, in this I hoped to be able to understand their requirements in their natural habitat, and in some ways relate this to their cultivation at home.

Research in the field was limited to spare time available, answers to some questions still remain incomplete, a lead sometimes followed for years, finally reverts back to 'square one'. Points of research in importance in relation to orchids in their natural habitat, and which can help in their cultivation at home I believe are:-

1. Moisture content of the soil over at least 12 months
2. Maximum, minimum, range of soil temperature throughout 12 months.
3. Reappearance each year, flowering frequency.
4. Are orchids able to re-establish themselves in softwood plantations?
5. Causes of orchids either becoming extinct, or declining in numbers each year (other than by man or mechanical means).
6. Miscellaneous, including control burning.

To be continued.

Footnote.

Mr. Clayson is the Forest Foreman, Tantanoola Forest Reserve, and his home is at the reserve in the lower foothills on the western side of the Range.

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