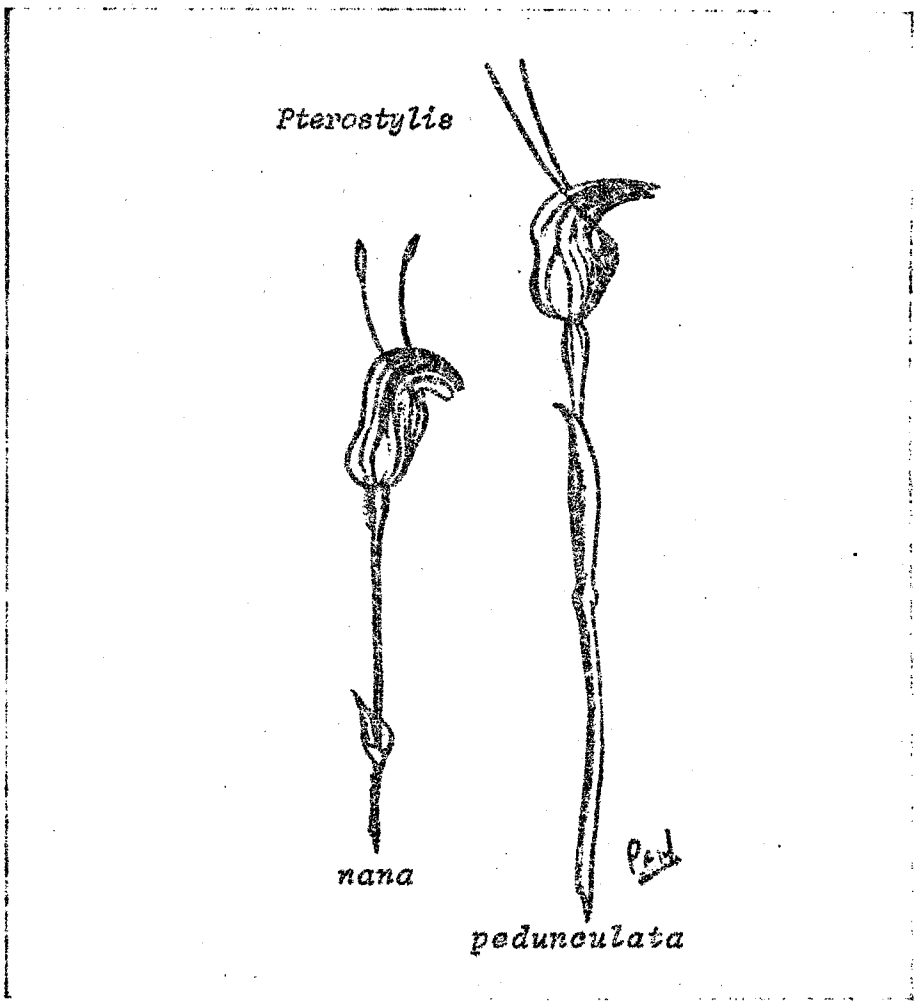
NATIVE ORCHID SOCIETY

of

SOUTH AUSTRALIA



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J O U R N A L

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NEXT MEETING

When: Tuesday 27 June, 1978, at 8.00 p.m.

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

Why: Les Nesbitt will speak and show slides on the genus Pterostylis, better known as Greenhoods. This group of terrestrials is the easiest to grow and is recommended for beginners. Several species should be seen in flower on the display bench this month.

Plant display and commentary, popular vote, raffle, library and trading table.

LAST MEETING

Attendance 59

Jim Simmons' "sound on slides" programme included every facet of weather control it is possible to provide in a glasshouse. Equipment to measure and control air movement, ventilation, humidity and temperature was shown. Some of us may not want to go to this extent but never-the-less we all strive for the same effects by manually opening vents and damping down, etc. An array of equipment certainly makes the job easier and enables a grower to (1) handle more orchids, and (2) leave the glasshouse unattended for a few days at a time, even in summer. Components can be added bit by bit as finances permit.

A bale of cork tubes has been purchased and orders were taken at the meeting. Raffle prizes were Dendrobium beckleri, and Pterostylis scabra var robusta. Members studied all the entries in the emblem competition and voted for the best three.

FIELD TRIPS

Our next field trip will be to Cherry Gardens on Sunday, 30 July.

Full details next month.

SHOW DATES

(Please note corrections from last month.)

We have accepted an invitation to stage a small exhibit at the Northern and Eastern Districts Orchid Society Show in September this year. Venue is St. Philips Parish Hall, Galway Avenue, Broadview. Setting up Wednesday, 6 September, and taking out after 9.00 p.m. Saturday, 9 September. Non-competitive.

South Coast Orchid Club of S.A., Marion Shopping Centre. Competitive, good prizes. Setting up Saturday, 30 September, take out Saturday, 7 October, after shops close. Prize list will be published later.

S.G.A.P. (Society for Growing Australian Plants). Wayville Showgrounds. Setting up Saturday, 14 October a.m., take out Sunday, 15 October after 5 p.m. Display only.

TERRESTRIAL CULTIVATION WORKSHOPS

Les Nesbitt

The proposed Tuesday night session was cancelled due to lack of response. The first Saturday afternoon session was well attended and a second session for this group (Group A) will be held on Saturday, 22 July, 2-4 p.m.

Since a number of people missed out on this first session it will be repeated on Saturday, 1 July, from 2-4 p.m. This group will be Group B. I do not have any names for Group B as yet so if you want to come let me know. All workshops will be held in my garage at 18 Cambridge Street, Vale Park. Bring four 5" pots and labels, a memo book and pen.

NEW MEMBERS

Mr W.R. Barrett, Glandore.
Mr R. Nash, Blackwood.
Mr S.W. Wakelin, Hawthorndene.

POPULAR VOTE

Epiphyte: Reg Shooter brought along a very nice plant of *Dendrobium bigibbum* which caught everyone's eye. Grown in a compost of scoria and charcoal in a heated glasshouse. The plant had three spikes bearing a total of 10 flowers and 18 buds.

Terrestrial: This went to a 7" pot of *Pterostylis scabra* var *robusta* grown by Gillian Amor and Helen Walker. It contained five plants in flower and seven in bud. There were also 24 rosettes in the pot.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

To those whose sub's are still outstanding we regret that this will be the last issue of our journal we can send you.

PLANTS ON DISPLAY

Flowering: Pterostylis scabra var robusta, Pt. vittata, Pt. fischii, Pt. alata, Pt. ophiglossa, Pt. nana, Pt. longifolia, Prasophyllum rufum, Acianthus exsertus, Malaxis latifolia, Cadetia taylori, Dendrobium Hilda Poxon, Den. bigibbum, Den. tetragonum 'giganteum', Den. schneiderae, Bulbophyllum ?.

Non-flowering: Pterostylis curta, Caladenia dilatata, Glossodia major, G. minor, Eriochilus cucullatus, Microtis unifolia.

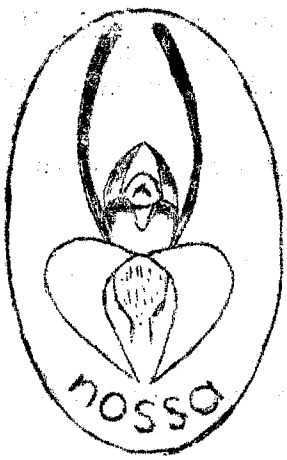
A NEW SPECIES OF PRASOPHYLLUM FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Prasophyllum goldsackii. J.Z. Weber and R. Bates. Sp.nov.

Volume 1, Part 3 of the Journal of the Adelaide Botanic Gardens records a new species of orchid - Prasophyllum goldsackii - apparently endemic to South Australia.

The new species, which has similarities with P. fitzgeraldii R.S. Rogers and Maiden - is described as abundant on Yorke Peninsula in hard terra rossa limestone country. It has also been recorded on Eyre Peninsula and has presumably been overlooked by collectors in the past because the flowers seldom open and appear withered even in early bud.

It is noted that P. goldsackii honours the name of Harold Goldsack who has made a significant contribution to the knowledge, appreciation and conservation of South Australian orchids. Harold had a long association with Dr. R.S. Rogers during the late 20s and 30s. However, he is probably best known to fellow NOSSA members for his paper "Orchids of the National Parks and Reserves". This was originally written as part of an account of the National Parks and Reserves situated near Adelaide.



NOSSA EMBLEM

Congratulations to Chris Butler for designing our emblem depicting Caladenia menziesii. Committee have endorsed the result of the members vote which was in favour of this distinctive and attractive design in colours of red and white on a green background.

"PHOTOGRAPHY" STUDY GROUP

Eight members of our society met, under the leadership of Mr Alwin Clements, at the home of the Secretary. The subject discussed was some of the problems associated with macro-photography. Next meeting is on Wednesday, 12 July at 8.00 at the same venue.

TERRESTRIAL FEATURE POT — Les Nesbitt

Each meeting I bring along a 9" clay pot containing a number of different local ground orchids. I have promised an explanation and it begins this month. This experiment started way back in November 1973 in an attempt to educate myself and others about the growing habits of different species. For convenience, one flowering size tuber of seven species was planted in the same pot, viz:

Caladenia dilatata
Diuris longifolia
Diuris maculata
Eriochilus cucullatus
Glossodia major
Pterostylis vittata
Thelymitra aristata (grandiflora)

These species were chosen to give a wide range of flowering times. I purposely excluded the colony types of Pterostylis, Acianthus and Corybas as I did not intend to repot for several years and these would have crowded the pot too much. This pot was left undisturbed for four growing seasons and significant events were recorded. By last spring Diuris longifolia had begun to take over, so in December 1977 the whole pot was knocked out and restarted. Some new soil was added to the old and a little blood and bone fertilizer added. One tuber of each of the following was replanted:

Caladenia dilatata
Eriochilus cucullatus
Diuris maculata
Glossodia major
Pterostylis vittata
Thelymitra aristata ?
Thelymitra ?

In early June all except the two Thelymitra (Sun Orchids) had reappeared. The single tuber of Pterostylis vittata (Banded Greenhood) had produced two rosettes suggesting that perhaps the main shoot was damaged and two secondary shoots were produced. These plants did not flower this year and neither did Eriochilus cucullatus (Parsons Bands) which appeared late and has made only a small leaf suggesting severe shrivelling of the tuber in the drought last summer. The other three species are growing strongly but is too early to see signs of flower buds yet.

For the history of the first batch of plants read the next exciting episode.

SEED BANK

Mary Earle reports that she can supply the following species in the form of seeds:

Caladenia dilatata.
Diuris maculata, D. longifolia.
Microtis unifolia.
Pterostylis nana, P. nutans, P. vereenae, P. vittata.
Thelymitra pauciflora, T. rubra.

FIELD TRIP TO MOUNT GAWLER AREA - 11 June 1978

It was a wet and windy day when we met at the President's (Les Nesbitt) "country" property — or nursery as he thinks of it, at Kersbrook. After seeing around the nursery we adjourned to the manor house for hot coffee and cakes — making it the best organised trip we've had so far! (For the record, it's worth remembering that Les and his wife Kaye run one of the few native terrestrial orchid nurseries in the whole continent, and his 1978 list is now available.*)

Suitably warmed within, we set off towards One Tree Hill, where we stopped for the first of our roadside halts, just beyond Mount Crawford Forest, at an altitude of 500 metres. There we found Acianthus exsertus and some Pterostylis scabra var robusta in flower, and basal leaves plus a few seed pods that are all that remain to be seen of Eriochilus cucullatus.

The future looked particularly promising judging by the profusion of Pterostylis nana basal rosettes, as well as some nearly in flower. The other Pterostylis rosettes to be seen were probably pedunculata. In addition to these we saw many Caladenia leaves (one over 10 cm long), Acianthus reniformis (the late form) basal leaves, various Thelymitra and Glossodia major.

Eventually the drifting rain caused us to adjourn to the second stop, a few kilometres farther on, but down to an altitude of just under 400 metres. Here we added to the list with newly-emerged Corybas, together with Pterostylis vittata and longifolia in flower; their small size reflecting the long dry spell from which we have recently emerged. The Acianthus exsertus were more robust here, and the P. nana further advanced though none was in flower. We again found basal leaves of various Caladenia and Thelymitra species, plus A. reniformis.

From there we moved on to our third venue, slightly lower than the previous one, but at a spot where the rock is very close to the surface, emerging in many places to form little outcrops. We found the biggest examples of P. longifolia and P. vittata close in under the north-west side of such rocks. Tucked close in under the southern side of a couple of mallees, we found the "onion" stalks of Microtis, and in the open sandy patches some rufa-type Prasophyllums, with their dead flowers still evident on the swelling seed pods. At this point the sun came out again — a fitting conclusion to a pleasant trip. Our thanks to Bob Bates for suggesting the venue.

Plants in flower:

Acianthus exsertus
Pterostylis longifolia
P. vittata
P. scabra var robusta

Plants in bud:

Pterostylis nana

Plants past flowering (i.e. in seed)

Eriochilus cucullatus
Prasophyllum (nigricans?)

Non-flowering

A. reniformis
Glossodia major
Corybas sp.
Caladenia sp.
Thelymitra sp. (various)
Microtis

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A VISITOR'S IMPRESSION OF ORCHIDS IN DARWIN

Thoral A. Tormet

An orchid club meeting held in the garden on a May evening! No, it was not in Adelaide, but in Darwin. The temperature had hovered around 34°C (with high humidity) each day of our May holiday there. Nights too were warm, so that a garden was a delightful venue for the meeting we attended — only the third of the Nightcliff Orchid Society. Interest in orchids is growing in Darwin, hence the second club. Mrs Nancy O'Hara, president of the new club, was hostess for this meeting. Plants in bloom were "benched" under a large, well-lit tree but there was no judging. Main topics for the evening were Phalaenopsis and Vandas, and the more experienced growers shared their expertise with the beginners. Membership stood at 42 after their second meeting.

Mrs. O'Hara was pleased to report that the ladies had supplied the orchids and done the floral arrangements for a wedding the previous weekend. At the conclusion of the meeting, members eagerly shopped from the bulk selection of Phalaenopsis and Vandas sent bare-root from a Queensland nursery. Junior members were responsible for sales money, a percentage of which went to club funds. As visitors, we were most impressed with the friendliness and enthusiasm so evident in this very young club.

Our holiday was just not long enough to do and see all the things we would have liked. However, we were made very welcome by those growers we visited and saw some interesting and varied collections. Shadehouses are usually of 72 to 80% sarlon and open-fronted. There are, of course, no glasshouses. Vandas are grown in the open in full sun. They are usually planted in long, narrow, shallow beds filled with rubble and very coarse charcoal. A "fence" of sand-palm stakes, 4'-5' high provides support and the result is a brilliantly colourful bank of flowers. Other genera of the the Vandaceous group grown by enthusiasts includes Aerides, Arachnis and Vandopsis, also Doritis and Rhynochostylis. Warm growing Oncidiums thrive. Several baskets of the Jewel Orchid, Anoetochilus yatesae, were flourishing in a shaded spot and reed-stemmed Epidendrums or Crucifix Orchids need light shade from the sun's heat. Particularly noteworthy were Queensland's Dendrobium bigibbum and the very attractive native from the "Top End", Dendrobium dicuphum in several variations. Dendrobiums are grown on sand-palm mounts. The most commonly used potting medium is charcoal (not too small) which is readily available.

Mrs O'Hara houses her Phalaenopsis under 80% sarlon in the shade of trees. She has proved that Cattleyas can be grown very successfully under Darwin conditions and has them in bloom most months of the year. She is now trying to grow Paphiopedilums. So far they look good!

Mrs Rosemary Bromwich, president of the Darwin Orchid Society, has a most attractively situated and colourful panorama of orchids which includes a large frangipani tree to which she affixed all the orchid bits and pieces she could salvage after Cyclone Tracy. Now those bits cover the trunk and branches and include a huge Cattleya bowringiana. (I believe that the Darwin Orchid Society staged a display at a city bank during the Back-to-Darwin celebrations, but unfortunately this had ended before our arrival.)

Well-known Sydney grower and author, Mr Ralph Handcock, now 84 years of age, is still growing orchids very successfully since moving to Darwin four years ago (just before the cyclone). His collection is housed under opaque figreglass roofing. Incidentally, he makes all his own pots from cement, to his own standard sizes. He is busily planning his next book and also intends to extend his orchid housing. Mr Hintze has built a magnificent tropical garden, including naturalized orchids, on a block which was

A Visitor's Impression of Orchids in Darwin (contd.)

bull-dozed two years ago. Of the growers we met, he is probably the one most interested in Australian native orchids.

Special mention must also be made of the orchids (including the Womersley collection) at Darwin's Botanical Gardens. Newly re-established after the cyclone, they are obviously tended with loving care.

Darwin growers experience problems that we in the south do not. They are isolated from orchid nurseries and other growers. Their growing conditions more closely resemble those of Singapore and Bangkok than the rest of Australia. Their collections suffered in Cyclone Tracy, and many plants they managed to salvage are now unnamed — or known as "Tracy orchids". Their standards are high but in their isolation they wonder how they compare. Also they might be regarded as pioneers. Apart from knowing that they cannot grow Cymbidiums and that they can grow members of the Vanda alliance, success or failure with other genera only comes with trial and error. However, through all their problems shines a great enthusuasm which seems to be contageous and which we found to be most stimulating.

Finally, I hope those hospitable Darwin orchid growers will not mind me naming them and their collections, I do so only in gratitude for their kindness.

Mrs Tormet has agreed to show us slides of her Darwin trip at our July meeting.

OUR COVER

Two of our local greenhoods are featured this month. Both are very easy to grow and multiply rapidly in cultivation, especially the maroonhood Pterostylis pedunculata. This species will fill a pot to bursting point in a few years but seems to grow and flower happily even under these extremely crowded conditions. The first flowers open in July and flowering reaches a peak in late August on the Adelaide Plains. Both species have small flowers on slender stems but Pt. pedunculata is much taller. Pt. nana, the dwarf greenhood, has the wider range and is also found in the drier areas of the State. It begins to flower in May and blooms can still be seen in spring. In the Mt. Lofty Ranges both species often grow together in extensive colonies. I wonder if they both make use of the same micorrhiza because Pt. nana grows from seed very easily in pots of Pt. pedunculata. This results in pots of mixed species which I find most annoying.