

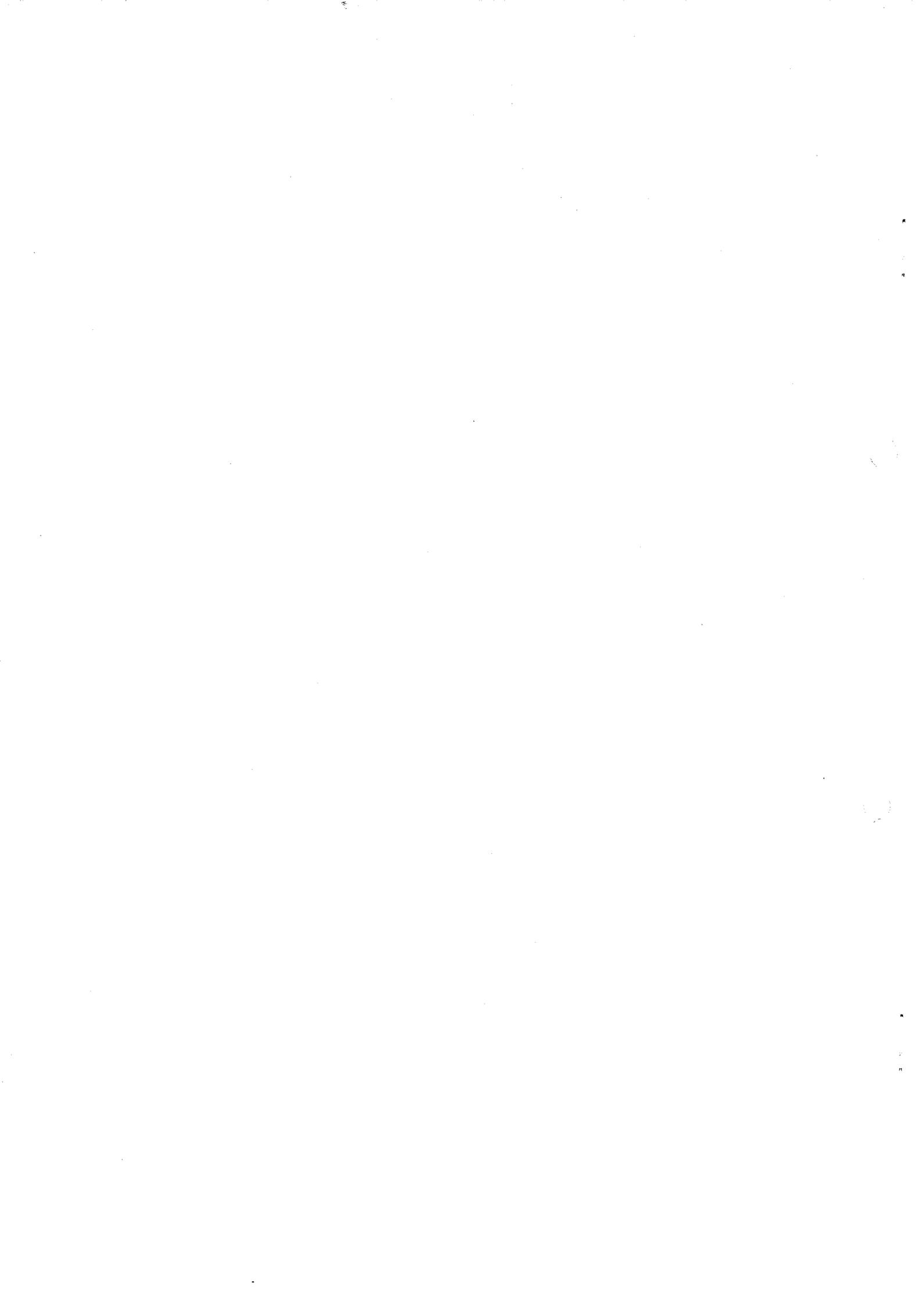
NATIVE ORCHID
SOCIETY
of
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

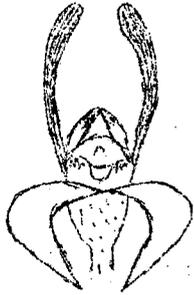


Reid

*Caladenia
menziesii*

MAR 1980





NATIVE ORCHID SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

JOURNAL

Volume 4, No. 2

March, 1980

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COMMITTEE: Mrs A.M. Howe
Mr K.W. Western
Mr R. Shooter
Mr G. Nieuwenhoven

EDITOR: Mr L.T. Nesbitt

NEXT MEETING

When: Tuesday, 25 March, 1980, at 8.00 p.m.

Where: St. Matthews Hall, Bridge Street, Kensington.

Why: The Annual General Meeting of the Society will commence at 8.00 p.m. It will be followed by the ordinary monthly meeting for March. This will be a members slide night. Would you please bring along 10 or so slides.

Don't forget those flowering plants for the display table as there are not many species out at this time of the year.

There will be the usual plant commentary, raffle, trading table and library.

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

Following a request from 10 members, a special general meeting will be held from 7.00 p.m. to 7.45 p.m. on Tuesday, 25 March, at St. Matthews Hall, Bridge Street, Kensington. The meeting has been called to discuss the rules and operation of the Trading Table. You will have already received notice of this meeting since the Journal could not be brought out in time to give the required 14 days notice.

FOR SALE

\$2.20 Orchids of Western Australia
\$2.00 NOSSA badges

Both items available from the
Treasurer at monthly meetings.

LAST MEETING

Alwin Clements took us on a slide tour to North Queensland. His graphic shots of the countryside, the vegetation and the orchids whetted our appetites to visit the area ourselves. The mention of leeches was a bit "offputting" though. We also learned of the environment which we must create in our orchid houses if we want to grow orchids from this area.

The new hall suits our purposes very well — the chairs are certainly more comfortable.

POPULAR VOTE

Epiphyte: Sarcochilus ceciliae,
grown by Peter Hornsby.
Terrestrial: Spiranthes sinensis,
grown by Bob Bates.

RAFFLE PRIZES

These were: Dendrobium pugioniforme, Spiranthes sinensis, and a bottle of Nitrophoska.

NOMINATIONS FOR COMMITTEE

The following nominations were received:

President	(1)	Dr Peter Hornsby
Vice President	(1)	Mr Jock Keen, Mr Jim Simmons
Secretary	(1)	Mr Roy Hargreaves
Treasurer	(1)	Mr Ron Robjohns
Committee	(2)	Mr Phillip Ekers, Dr C.O. Fuller, Mr Jock Keen, Mr George Nieuwenhoven, Mr Alby Phillips, Mr Reg Shooter.

Ballots will be conducted at the Annual General Meeting to decide the positions of Vice President and Committee.

S.G.A.P. SHOW

As the Walter Duncan Hall at Wayville is not available in October, the Society for Growing Australian Plants are holding their Native Plant display on Saturday 27th and Sunday 28th September at Wayville. NOSSA will again stage an orchid exhibit and plant stall.

NEW MEMBERS

Kings Park Board, West Perth, W.A.	Mr G. Peters, Plympton Park, S.A.
Mr R. Nelson, Monbulk, Victoria.	Mr and Mrs D. Gatley, Prospect, S.A.
Mr G. Terrell, Culburra Beach, NSW	Mr and Mrs W.K. Harris, Blackwood
Mr C.T. Dollin, Miranda, NSW	Mr and Mrs B.W. Baker, O'Sullivan's Bch

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

1979 saw the Society progress from strength to strength, with the membership reaching and passing the 200 mark during the course of the year. Earlier saw the retirement of the inaugural President of NOSSA, Les Nesbitt. The current success of the Society is largely due to the inspiration and leadership afforded by Les, ably assisted by his co-ordinator, the Secretary, Roy Hargreaves. It is only now, with the advent of an outsider, that it is possible to pay tribute to them, and the initial committee, for the ground-work which provided such a firm base upon which to build the Society.

The monthly meetings continued to be well attended, due largely to the quality of the speakers, though visually our meetings have been dominated by the extensive range of orchids on display. The displays alone provide a real inspiration to aspiring native orchid growers. The variety is a tribute to the many members who bring plants for us to see. Their efforts are fully appreciated and provide a challenge to those to whose lot it falls to give the plant commentaries.

Throughout the year many people have contributed to the overall state of the Society. Some are identifiable, such as the contributors who help to maintain the standard of excellence of the Society Journal. Others include those members who help to keep ticking over the regular features of the Society, including the library, field trips, the trading table, and so forth. Then there are the anonymous "backroom" workers such as the Journal production team and those helpers who spend hours manning the NOSSA displays at various shows. Pulling together, they all amount to a team whose ultimate effort is NOSSA itself.

The year has seen the initiation of several new features into the Society spectrum. They began with the first weekend field trip (to Yorke Peninsula) to be organised by NOSSA. We were also lucky in having the stage set for us by the really splendid weekend laid on by the Parrakie Group of the Society for Growing Australian Plants. SGAP once again invited us to participate in their Spring Show. This time we also sold plants there - contributing substantially to the Society's funds.

Another aspect was the commencement of the Tuber Bank, in the capable hands of Don and Bubs Wells - a natural, though more time consuming, extension of the Seed Bank they already run. They were also responsible for the establishment of the Society's first "sub-group", namely the MOP Group. This has fast become one of the most integrated sections of the Society and promises to provide a basis for the enhancement of the more social side of NOSSA - an area which unfortunately has received scant attention up to now.

On a more formal note, the Committee has been hard at work looking into the question of Society by-laws, mainly those concerned with the criteria for native orchid judges and judging, for shows and for various awards, such as the Culture Certificate. In these the lead has come from Les Nesbitt and from Ron Robjohns, who continues to keep a tight rein on the Society's finances.

News of the Society has stretched far and wide, bringing queries from the United States and Europe, as well as from nearer home, together with the first international visitors. Within Australia, our scouts have helped to maintain reciprocal interests with most of the other societies with affinities similar to our own.

Fuller reports of the orchids benched at the monthly meetings, and of those recorded during field trips, will appear in later issues of the Journal. At

NATIVE ORCHID SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Statement of Receipts and Payments for year ended 31st December, 1979

<u>Receipts</u>				
Subscriptions	1979	678.00	Projector	351.85
	1980	<u>81.00</u>	Slide magazine	14.00
		759.00	Pointer torch	11.00
Donations		19.00	Library - books	29.50
South Coast Orchid Club		150.00	slides	<u>15.60</u>
Plant Sales and Commission		602.52	Postage	202.93
Raffle Proceeds		188.50	Stationery	459.55
Badges		56.00	Typing Journal - Honorarium	110.00
Journal		20.40	Publications	42.35
Publications		24.80	Plants and Flasks	203.00
Interest		21.29	Show Prizes	119.00
			Rent of Hall (part)	50.00
			Insurance	89.90
			Raffle Permit	5.20
			Aust. Native Orchid Society	7.00
			Aust. Orchid Foundation	20.00
			Orchid Club of South Aust.	10.00
			Presentation - Blacks Flora I	16.90
			Pots	20.32
			Projector globes	26.00
			Locks	13.17
			Fluoro and flex.	<u>18.85</u>
				\$1836.12
			Excess of Receipts over	
			Payments	<u>5.39</u>
		<u>\$1841.51</u>		<u>\$1841.51</u>

Cash Statement

Cash at Bank 1.1.1979	695.40		
Excess Receipts 1979	<u>5.39</u>	(signed)	R.T. Robjohns A.A.S.A.
Cash at Bank 31.12.1979	\$700.79		<u>Honorary Treasurer</u>

I have examined the books and records of the Native Orchid Society of South Australia and certify that the above statement of Receipts and Payments is in accordance with the books and vouchers produced.

18th January, 1980

(signed) C.K. Yates
Honorary Auditor

President's Report (contd.)

the same time, tribute for the high standard of appearance of the Journal itself must go to Chris Butler, whose lot it is to decipher the many contributions we receive and then tease them into the orderly format we so readily take for granted.

We all know so well the depredations of our orchids, so it is a pleasure to be able to end on the opposite note, with the first tentative steps towards re-establishing orchids in the bush, through trial seed sowings in the Watiparinga Reserve at Blackwood.

Peter Hornsby
President

CULTURE NOTES (Continued from February Journal.)

G. Nieuwenhoven

Repotting is usually carried out in December and January, when the plants have gone completely dormant. When the soil has dried out completely, empty the lot into a sieve and strain out the tubers. The same soil may be used to re-pot your plants, although it should not be used for a different species as small tubers could be left in the sieved soil and you may end up with, for example, Pt. nutans in a pot of Pt. nana.

Many people use gravel, pebbles, etc. in the bottom of the pot to assist the drainage, however, over several years of experimenting I have come to the conclusion that it does not make much difference whether you use crocks or not. Gravel in the bottom of the pot does encourage slugs to hide there and was another factor for me to give up this practice. Place your soil in the pot and press down firmly. If you are going to top up your pots with chopped pine needles, fill the soil up to about $2\frac{1}{2}$ cm from the rim of the pot and then place the tubers on top, the largest one in the centre and the smaller ones towards the outside. Now fill the rest of the pot with soil and press down again and water it in, then top it all up with chopped pine or casuarina needles or even fine gravel.

Caladenias, Thelymitras and some other species I plant 3 cm below the surface, top it up with $2\frac{1}{2}$ cm of soil and then cover it all with $1\frac{1}{4}$ cm of bush leaf mould - this provides a bed for the seed to germinate in. Large or long tubers, of course, need to be planted deeper (perhaps it would be clearer if I said to plant the tops of the tubers $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 cm below the rim of the pot). Naturally, if any trace of disease has been present in the plants to be re-potted, the old soil should be discarded and the pot sterilised.

Hygiene should be practised at all times amongst your plants. Dead plants, leaves or weeds, should not be allowed to litter the floor of your shadehouse as these can harbour diseases and pests.

Watering

A good water supply inside the shadehouse, or at least near it, is essential although our native terrestrials grow quite well in their native habitat on the natural rainfall they receive. The moisture level in pots fluctuates markedly, particularly in early autumn and late spring. Hand watering needs to be carried out especially during these times to maintain steady growth and ensure the formation of large tubers for the next season. Some species, in particular the autumn flowering ones from the eastern states, probably benefit from receiving some extra water during the late summer and early autumn period - it helps to prevent tuber shrivel as these plants usually receive rainfall during these times in their natural habitat. Caladenias are one of the exceptions to this: too much summer watering will rot the tubers.

Rainfall in South Australia normally starts some time in March and becomes more regular in April/May. In between these times hand watering is resorted to in our shadehouse to keep the moisture level in the pots fairly even. The first plant usually comes up by the 21st March which is Diuris punctata var alba, followed in rapid succession by Pt. concinna, nutans, pedunculata, baptistii; some Thelymitras and Eriochilus cucullata. This last plant is one of our earliest to flower. By the way, the flower spike comes through first, quickly develops and flowers, and only then does the leaf appear.

My Caladenia start appearing early in April, i.e. C. patersonii, C. rigida, C. menziesii, C. alba and C. dilatata. Some of the last to appear are Corybas, Acianthus and some of the Prasophyllums. These do not appear until late May to early June.

(Continued in April Journal.)

FIELD TRIPS 1980

The provisional schedule of field trips for 1980 is as follows (there may be alterations nearer the time):

20 July	Sunday afternoon	Ansteys Hill
6 Sept	Saturday all day	Black Hill Flora Reserve
20-21 Sept	Weekend	NOSSA Orchid Festival (provisionally — Sat a.m. Warren Conservation Park p.m. Morialta Conservation Park Sun a.m. Belair Recreation Park)
11-13 Oct	Long weekend	Grampians and Little Desert
9 Nov	Sunday afternoon	Cudlee Creek Conservation Park

YORKE PENINSULA TRIP

Les Quinn of Minlaton has written regarding last September's trip:

"Re your trip to Yorke Peninsula, there are three corrections I would like to make. On the stop below Warooka, the pink *Lasiopetalum* in bloom should have been *L. discolor*, and the cream flowered *Thomasia* was also another *Lasiopetalum*, *L. schulzenii*, the *T. petalocalyx* has heliotrope flowers and South Australia has only this species; a few have been seen between Minlaton and Stansbury.

The native cherry in flower was *Exocarpus aphyllus*, there being three other species here. (I saw an *E. spateus* in the Stansbury Scrub just before Christmas loaded with a mass of red fruits. The shrub was eight feet tall, and it would have been possible to have shaken three gallons of ripe cherries from it.)

We had good rains here up until December 29th and all the roadside plants and scrubs are looking very healthy. It should be a good year next Spring if average rain falls. (We had 22.45 inches of rain last year, average is 17.52 inches.)"

SWAP CORNER

Brad Van Scriver
6632 Cerulean Avenue
GARDEN GROVE. CALIFORNIA, 92645, U.S.A.

has species from Central and South America to swap for Australian species. If anyone is interested and can meet quarantine and export requirements, Mr and Mrs Van Scriver would like to hear from you.

FIELD TRIP TO YUNDI - 16/12/79

Peter Hornsby

The main purpose of this trip was to see Thelymitra venosa in flower. Unfortunately this December happened to be a month of below average temperatures and above average rainfall. On arriving at Brian Warner's property we sampled both as we sat in our cars waiting for the rain to finish. In fact the predicted maximum temperature of 21°C was precisely half that of our previous visit to the property eleven months earlier.

When we eventually reached the swamp, we found plenty of examples of T. venosa, with many at the flowering stage, but they had more sense than to open on such a dull day. Even so we still saw sufficient to realise what a striking flower it is.

While we may have been unlucky with T. venosa, at least we had the consolation of seeing other not-so-shy species in full bloom, including the unusual inverted flowered Cryptostylis subulata. We also saw two Microtis - the multiple flowered M. parviflora and M. oblonga. We found the rare Prasophyllum hartii at the end of its flowering period, but P. australe in full bloom. Our last "swamp" orchid was a patch of white flowered Spiranthes sinensis just starting to flower. Thus, although the weather had remained dull, with rain never very far away, we saw plenty of orchids so our thanks must go once again to Brian and May Warner for permitting us to visit their orchid "treasure house".

On the way home we stopped at Peters Creek on the off-chance of finding Paracaleana minor in flower. We drew a complete blank at the spot earmarked earlier in the year, seeing little beyond the dried-out remains of Caleana major. Eventually we admitted defeat and returned to our cars, where we found a quite outstanding example of P. minor neatly straddled by Kevin Western's car. He was so smitten by this that he forthwith issued an open invitation to all present to call in and view his orchid collection on the way home. Those who availed themselves of his offer were very impressed by what they saw and enjoyed their visit — thanks for inviting us, Kevin.

Orchids seen in flower:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Cryptostylis subulata | Prasophyllum australe |
| Microtis oblonga | P. hartii |
| M. parviflora | Thelymitra venosa |
| Paracaleana minor | |

VISITS TO MEMBER'S COLLECTIONS

Peter Hornsby

The impromptu trip to see Kevin Western's collection prompted a number of enquiries about whether there could be more of such visits. It was a scheme we envisaged when the Society was first formed, but at the time an excess of modesty prevented all but Les Nesbitt from offering to show their orchids. Since then, many have had an opportunity for consolidating their collections and getting them organised, so if anyone is now prepared to show members around, could they let either the Secretary (Roy Hargreaves), the Editor (Les Nesbitt) or me know, together with appropriate dates that are suitable. Please do not be shy, and remember, sometimes much more can be learned from seeing and hearing about other peoples mistakes, rather than from a well-oiled system running like clockwork.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

After reading Mr Simmons letter to the Editor, NOSSA Journal, dated February 1980, I was disturbed and felt compelled to reply to certain statements published.

I would, as a supplier of plants at that August 1979 meeting, like these facts to be brought to the notice of NOSSA members to reflect on.

The NOSSA Journal dated April 1979 requested members to bring to the meetings plants, as the trading table needed more to sell. This request motivated me into using my own initiative.

Whilst travelling in the Eastern States, May 1979, I had the opportunity to purchase many varieties of Epiphytes at very competitive prices. I arranged to have a supply of plants for members to have the opportunity to buy from the Trading Table, fresh legal plants in the same manner as I did, also paying the NOSSA Club 25% for funds to benefit all members. These plants were legally obtained, sprayed for pests and certificated by local authorities in the correct manner, sufficient to pass inspection by Sth. Aust. inspectors. Calculation of price is broken down as follows - the owner of the plants marked the price on each plant, air freight added, plus 25% for the Club. For my part of the transaction I was no more than a mediator between the supplier and the Club, collecting no payment or profit for myself.

I emphasised legal plants as they were obtained through a permit from the Forestry Commission and a bounty paid to that Commission on each plant. The plants are collected from dead or fallen trees occurring in the process of forestry work.

In answer to constitutional objectives, there is no wanton destruction of Native Flora as suggested in the letter. We are not encouraging it by obtaining these plants, quite the opposite, these plants are rescued because if they are not collected they will be left to die either on the fallen trees or at the timber mills.

Finally I quote a portion of the final paragraph of the letter which reads "It is not intended that the trading table be run as a commercial venture to suit the personal profit motives of a few members." My profit was endeavoring to assist the NOSSA Club in a practical way when I found myself in a position to do so.

Don Wells

NEW RECORDINGS AND EXTENSION TO KNOWN
RANGE OF ORCHIDS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA DURING 1979

R. Bates

The first collection of Thelymitra retecta Rupp, the peat bog sun orchid, was made on December 30 in a bog near Mt Lofty Summit. Knowledge of its occurrence in South Australia has existed since 1973 but collections had not been made.

Pterostylis rufa var despectans, Nicholls now referred to a form of P. biseta Blackmore and Clemesha was collected for the first time in South Australia on Mt. Bryan in the mid-north.

Thelymitra mackibbinii F. Mueller was "re-discovered" when collected for the first time this century on a NOSSA field trip to Peters Creek in November.

Diuris pedunculata x D. palustris, a putative hybrid, was collected near

New Recordings and Extensions (contd)

Clare and at Devils Peak. This form could not be included under D. fastidiosa, which is also thought to represent a hybrid between D. pedunculata and D. palustris. The Devils Peak location also represents a northward extension of 50 km to the known range of D. pedunculata.

The following species were collected for the first time in the Northern Lofty region: Thelymitra x chasmogama, T. luteocilium and T. pauciflora at Clare cemetery. Prasophyllum nigricans at Burra Gorge and Mallet Station, P. fuscum var occidentale at Neals Flat, Eriochilus cucullatus at Clare, Lycoeranthus nigricans and Pterostylis cynocephala at Tarlee Scrub and Corybas despectans in the Barossa Valley.

Pterostylis pedunculata from Kangaroo Island and Caladenia gladiolata at Arden Vale, 80 km further north than previously known, complete the list of major extensions. NOSSA members could do much to improve our knowledge of South Australian orchids by collecting species not previously recorded for a particular region and forwarding these after pressing to the State Herbarium, Adelaide Botanic Gardens, North Terrace, Adelaide, 5000.

PLANT OF THE MONTH

George Nieuwenhoven

Eriochilus cucullatus

Eriochilus cucullatus is a fairly common and widespread species whose basal leaf is often encountered on our field trips. It does not flower every season when only a solitary oval leaf with a point at one end is produced (the right term is ovate acute). When it decides the season is right it puts up a flower spike in about March/April, quite slender and up to about 20 cm long.

It produces from one to three flowers, white and pink, 7-8 mm long with a fairly prominent stigma. The leaf on flowering plants appears after the flower stem is well up.

In cultivation it is not the easiest plant to grow and flower with regularity. Usually a percentage of plants flower each year. Large or mature tubers give a higher rate of success. The round tuber, almost the size of a marble, sends up the spike

through dry soil from March onwards when hand watering may commence, especially if no rain has fallen.

A soil/sand/peat mix is probably the most successful medium to use with pine or Casuarina needles for topping. Use a plastic pot. Seeds should be placed around the plants every year as it does not generally produce more than one tuber each season, although I sometimes get an extra one. The top of the pot should be kept damp to ensure germination of the seed. Seedlings should appear about springtime.

Since the mature plants are fairly small, 6 to 8 can be planted in a 125 mm pot. This provides a better display as nothing looks worse than a sparsely populated pot, provided, of course, you have enough plants in your collection.

Reference: Blacks Flora of South Australia, Part I.

Editor's note: Seedpods mature in June and seed can be sown immediately to produce seedlings by September. This is much faster than the Spring-flowering species which do not produce seedlings until the following year.

SPIRANTHES SINENSIS (with notes on cultivation) R. Bates

The evergreen terrestrial orchid Spiranthes sinensis (Pers.) Ames, the Austral ladies tresses, has a wide distribution from Siberia through the Himalayas, highland areas of Indonesia and New Guinea to Australia and New Zealand. As could be expected of such a widespread species there are numerous forms, yet flower morphology is constant enough to ensure that varieties have not been named.

In South Australia, where the species is restricted to a few swamps in the south-east and Mt. Lofty Ranges (to Lake Alexandrina), there are three distinct, true breeding clones. Spiranthes from the south-east flower in autumn but when cultivated in Adelaide this leafy, large-flowered form begins flowering in February. The "common" clone from the Mt. Lofty Ranges flowers in mid-summer. It is robust in cultivation, with pink and white blooms. In Adelaide it will flower in November/December.

A rarer clone from the peat bogs near Spring Mt. is a true white race. The flowers are smaller but the crisp crystalline-white blooms are delightful. This form tends towards autogamy. In cultivation it may flower from November to March. It is unlikely that this form developed in South Australia, more likely it was a separate introduction. (White-flowered plants may turn up in other clones but these, if selfed, produce a percentage of pink flowers.)

The smaller but brightly coloured Queensland form flowers in Adelaide in November. By growing several clones, and with the aid of a glass-house, it is possible to have Spiranthes in flower all the year round.

There is no need in cultivation to try and simulate their natural swampy environment as they respond very well to pot culture in a variety of soils. I use natural bush soil to which 50% peat moss is added. It may be safer to use plastic pots but my south-east form is doing well in a squat clay pot: which may seem unusual considering the long tuberous roots of this species. (In the squat pot they form an almost complete mat in the bottom.)

Spiranthes seem to benefit from the regular application of organic fertiliser and because aphids and thrips attack the buds, treatment with systemic insecticides is recommended.

In summer when I must leave mine for extended periods I sit the pot in a bowl of water. Weekly waterings are needed from October to March. Seedlings appear regularly in pots if seed is allowed to fall when ripe but some growers find that seedlings come up all over the place doing this.

Spiranthes also increase vegetatively and plants can be divided after flowering by washing all soil away from the roots and carefully breaking the plants apart at the top.

Spiranthes sinensis is a terrestrial that epiphyte growers can handle. A pot could be placed next to Dendrobium kingianum and given the same treatment.

DON'T FORGET our new meeting place which is
St. Matthews Hall, Bridge Street, KENSINGTON.