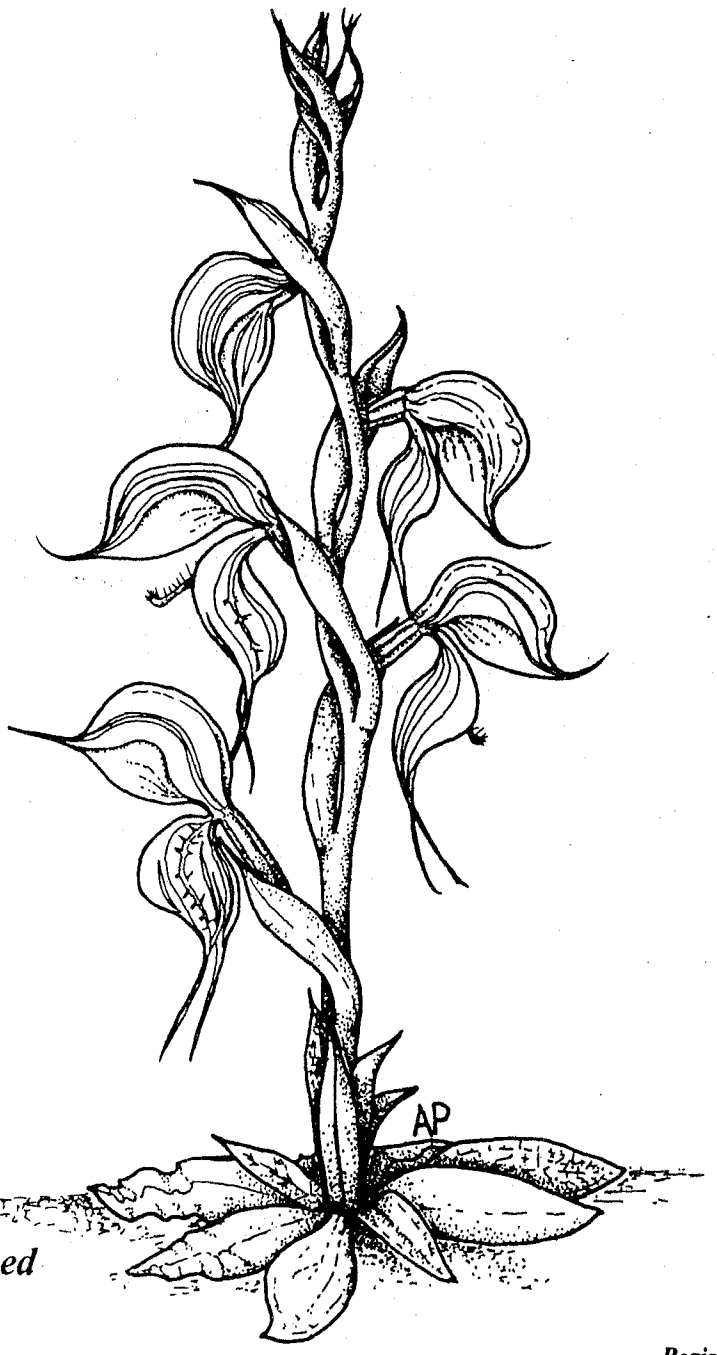
NATIVE ORCHID SOCIETY

of

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

JOURNAL



Pterostylis unnamed

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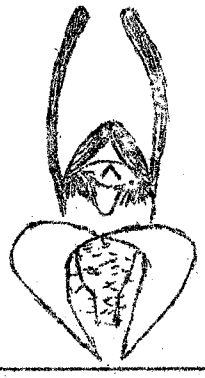

NATIVE ORCHID SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

J O U R N A L

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CONTENTS:

NEXT MEETING

When: Tuesday, November 27 at 8.00 p.m.

Where: St Matthews Hall, Bridge Street, Kensington.

Subject: This is the last meeting for 1984 and traditionally it is a social evening. We will however be showing about twenty slides from Western Australia, kindly loaned by Ron Heberle. All members are asked to please bring a plate of supper.

LAST MEETING

Last month's cultural meeting went off with a bang. People were clustered around the different demonstrators picking up hints for future use. Some found it impossible to see both the epiphytic and terrestrial demonstrations as they were too engrossed to tear themselves away from either table. It seems we need to have these kind of meetings more often judging by the interest shown.

Our thanks to those who took part in the demonstrations:

Epiphytes: Margaret Fuller, Wayne Harris, Reg Shooter.

Terrestrials: Les Nesbitt, George Nieuwenhoven.

WANTED - NEW EDITOR

I have completed almost four years at the helm of this Journal and, though every moment has been enjoyed thoroughly, it is now time for a change of editor. Someone with fresh ideas and a little enthusiasm. It is not a difficult job - in fact if I could do it so can anyone. It only takes a few hours a month and gets you really involved with all members. It also automatically puts you on the commitee if you have a yen to do so.

I would like to extend my appreciation to all those who have supplied me with articles all this time: it really is your effort that makes this Journal what it is. I am sure you will continue to support the new Editor once appointed - I know I will.

Thank you all.

George Nieuwenhoven

PLANTS ON DISPLAY — October meeting

Some of the outstanding plants on display were Diuris sulphurea (a number of plants in a 10" pot), Sarcochilus hartmannii (2 large plants covered in crystaline white flowers, magnificent specimens), a first display of Eria fitzalanii (2 racemes of delicate creamy yellow flowers), and a specimen plant of Dendrobium delicatum var. Apple Blossom.

My apologies to Margaret Fuller for omitting last month's popular vote, terrestrial section. She displayed a magnificent pot full of Caladenia dilatata.

Epiphytes:

Cymbidium canaliculatum (2)
Bulbophyllum
Dendrobium beckleri (2)
D. delicatum
D. discolor
D. kingianum
D. linguiforme
D. ruppianum (2)
D. tenuissimum
D. teretifolium
Eria fitzalanii
Plectorrhiza tridentata
Sarcochilus falcatus (2)
S. hartmannii

Terrestrials:

Caladenia catenata (2)
C. huegelii
C. leptochila
Caladenia - W.A. species
Cryptostylis ovata
Diuris pedunculata x sulphurea
D. punctata
D. sulphurea (2 pots)
Microtis parviflora
M. unifolia
Pterostylis baptistii "Janney"
P. biseta
P. boormanni
P. x ingens x baptistii "Janney"
P. x ingens (raffle prize)
P. rufa
P. pusilla

POLLINATION OF ORCHIDS No. 20

Problems and Perils of Pursuing Pollinators

Any keen orchid photographer would be aware of such common perils as tiger snakes (which just happen to be active on those warm sunny days so ideal for taking pictures); stinging nettles and prickly plants such as blackberries; savage insects such as bloodthirsty mosquitoes and marchflies, leeches and so on. A familiar danger to many of us is falling into creeks — inevitably the photographer ends up flat on his back in the water while holding the precious camera aloft. Most of us would have experienced that uncomfortable feeling of not knowing where we were at times: orchids suddenly seem to lose their appeal when one becomes lost in the bush.

Inevitably I find that I will spend several hours carrying a camera around and finding nothing to photograph. At the next stop I leave the camera in the car only to come across an especially rare orchid or flowers just swarming with pollinators begging to have their picture taken. Fate is unkind in other ways too. If one heads off on a long walk in warm sunny conditions and wearing shorts and tee-shirt, cloud and freezing conditions are sure to eventuate before long and likewise when a start is made in cold wet conditions necessitating rubber boots, three sweaters and a raincoat it is not long before the sun is beating down and the homeward journey is made carrying all that apparel tied around the waist.

Recently I went on what I hoped would be a pleasant walk in the Belair Recreation Park. I wanted to try and observe pollen vectors on the numerous Corybas or Pterostylis nana and perhaps get photographs as conditions were warm and sunny. It wasn't long before I located a large colony of P. nana and it seemed I was in luck. A number of tiny fungus gnats were flitting about; several of them bearing bright yellow pollinia like miniature headlights. My first mistake was to lie down for a better look — right on a bull-ant's nest — with painful results. My second mistake was to try and photograph the fungus gnats on the flowers. Pterostylis nana is a very small orchid and the fungus gnats which pollinate them are really minute, so small that they are very difficult to keep in view as they whirl about in their typical zig-zagging, loop-the-loop flight patterns. Whenever one landed on an orchid flower, I'd move the camera in and look through the lens only to find the insect had moved on. They moved so quickly they actually appeared to be running over the flowers. Once I managed to get a gnat in focus and quickly pressed the shutter release — to no avail as the slide came back with nothing more than a rather blurred flower — minus insect.

After cracking my head on a low branch trying to keep a gnat in view, I decided to wait until one entered a flower and photograph it emerging. Ten minutes later an insect obligingly entered a flower, albeit not a very photogenic specimen, nevertheless I settled myself and waited for the fungus gnat to come out; staring all the while through the viewfinder of the camera. I waited, and waited, and waited. It began to rain. I put my coat over the camera and continued my damp vigil. Eventually I became suspicious and opened up the flower. The gnat had pulled a "Houdini" on me. It had gone! I gave up then and there. The next few gnats I saw were thrust unceremoniously into a spirit jar. I decided I would borrow a slide from a friend I knew had somehow successfully photographed a pollinator on a Pterostylis nana. Of course it could have been worse. I could have taken several wonderful shots only to find that the film had not wound on - but then that's another story.

PTEROSTYLIS GRANDIFLORA x CONCINNA

Pterostylis grandiflora x concinna was first displayed at our June 1984 meeting by Les Nesbitt. The cross was originally made by Steven Clemsha from New South Wales. The plants were raised from this seed by Dr J. Warcup as supplied by Ray Nash.

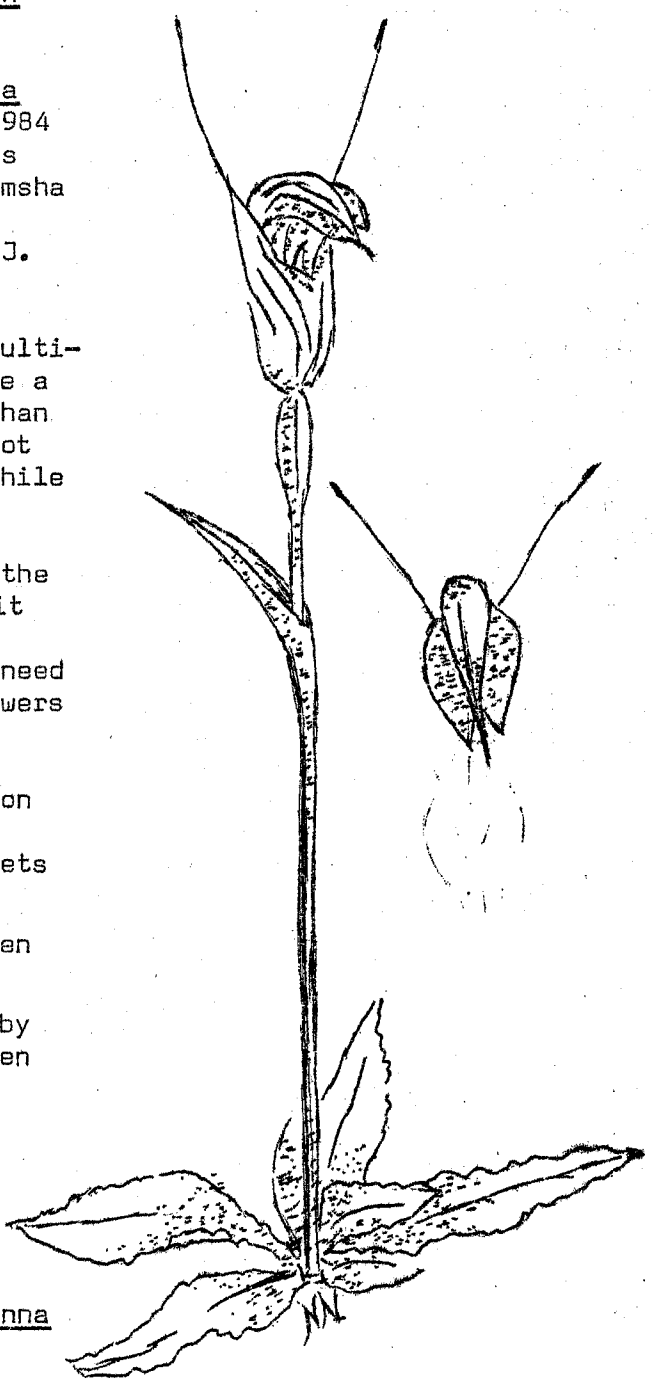
Plants seem to multiply well in cultivation. The flowers are more like a small version of P. grandiflora than P. concinna. P. grandiflora is not easy to grow in South Australia while P. concinna thrives here.

The hybrid appears to have taken the best of both parents although it appears not to be quite as free-flowering as P. concinna. Tubers need to be of optimum size to produce flowers it seems.

Summing up: an attractive addition to out list of hybrids which will probably be in demand when word gets around.

George Nieuwenhoven

Artwork by
Nancy Nieuwenhoven



Pterostylis grandiflora
x concinna

NEW MEMBERS

We would like to extend a warm welcome to these new members:

Mrs S.P. McKenzie
Miss J. Sanderson
Mr and Mrs W.T. Fuller
Upper Sturt Primary School

Pterostylis grandiflora x P. concinna (contd.)

Pterostylis grandiflora

Pterostylis concinna

AUSTRALIA'S UNNAMED ORCHIDS

R. Bates

About ten years ago I asked a noted Australian "orchidologist" how many orchids he thought would be added to the South Australian list. He estimated the number to be about ten and broke it down thus:

- 2 border hoppers, i.e. Victorian species which just sneak into our south east.
- 2 very small species which are overlooked because of their size.
- 2 common widespread species which were at that time lumped under others.
- 2 species from semi-arid areas where the orchid flora had never been studied.
- 2 species so rare that they had not yet been collected.

Since then at least ten species have already been added to the list of South Australian orchids.

- In category one "the border hoppers" we have Caladenia cucullata, Chiloglottis cornuta and C. trapeziformis.
- In category two were added Prasophyllum despectans and Corybas fordhamii.
- In group three we had Corybas despectans, Caladenia pusilla and Prasophyllum goldsackii.
- In group four there were two Pterostylis of the "rufa" group added, and
- in the fifth category Thelymitra refecta.

Do we now have a full list of South Australian orchids? Certainly not! When people ask me how many orchids are yet to be added to the South Australian list I tell them "at least ten" and place them in the same five categories as before. No doubt in a few years time when another ten species have been added I will give the same answer! Yes, there must be some eastern state species which are yet to be discovered in our south-east; there are probably also some very small or cryptic species (underground orchids, shy flowerers, etc.) not yet collected. There are certainly several taxa at present waiting to be split off from a "lumping" situation. Practically every new Pterostylis of the "rufa" group are collected from semi-arid areas and who knows what rare relict species are waiting to be discovered in places such as Eyre Peninsula and Kangaroo Island (although there is a good chance that some may become extinct before they are ever located).

A recent estimate puts the number of species likely to be added to the Australian list at a conservative one hundred! Of course there are many names that may be crossed off the list too. In the recently published revision of the genus Microtis six "species" were reduced to synonyms but only one new species was named (although it is likely that other taxa of Microtis will yet be added). If you think that it is unlikely that you will turn up a new orchid species on your next "orchid holiday" in the bush perhaps you had better reconsider. In Western Australia for example plants which are

Australia's Unnamed Orchids (contd.)

now placed under Caladenia filamentosa are thought to represent as many as six different species of subspecies.

It is expected that with the current upsurge of interest in orchid taxonomy that some 50% of the undescribed species will be named in the next decade in time for the orchid volume of the Australian Flora. It is really quite an exciting time for the Australian orchid taxonomist.

CULTURAL AWARDS

Congratulations to Barry Bailey and Don Wells on achieving Cultural Awards No. 11 and 12. Both plants were perfect representatives of how plants should be cultivated.

Cultural Certificate No. 11

After the Annual Spring Show of 1984, Committee conferred award No. 11, a Cultural Certificate on Dendrobium "Rosemary Jupp" grown by Mick Ryan Orchids. This plant was also nominated for the Ira Butler Trophy. It received Champion Native Orchid and Champion Native Epiphytic Orchid of our Spring Show.

The plant was presented as a perfectly grown unblemished plant mounted on a piece of tree fern. Leaves were a deep green and unblemished and the plant carried several hundred flowers all perfectly open. Colour of the flowers, which measured up to 35mm in diameter, was a light lilac with darker stripes. An overall improvement on the parents (Dendrobium striolatum x D. teretifolium) was quite evident.

Barry Bailey grows this plant under 50% shadecloth at Enfield.

Cultural Certificate No. 12

After the 1984 Spring Show, Committee conferred Award No. 12, a Cultural Certificate, on Caladenia patersonii var suaveolens grown by Mr D. Wells.

Eleven flowering plants were present in a 28cm terracotta pot and one plant bore two flowers. There were many seedlings around the base of the larger plants. The flowers had a maximum spread of 130mm and were a pale creamy green with dark red-brown tips to petals and sepals. Labellum was a similar colour to the other segments. The average height of the plant was 380mm.

Don Wells grows this species in a mix of hills sand under 50% shadecloth at Windsor Gardens.

Members are reminded that they may nominate their own plants for a Cultural Award if they feel it may deserving of it. Please see Les Nesbitt, our Registrar of Judges, or any committee member regarding such nominations. The Committee's decision in the affirmative or negative is final.

REPORT ON FIELD TRIP TO THE
BELAIR RECREATION PARK — September 15, 1984

Some twenty members and two guests from New Zealand met outside the Woods and Forests Nursery in the Belair Recreation Park at 2.00 p.m. Saturday, 15 September. The day was warm and pleasant for the field trip as we headed for a small patch of scrub on the eastern side of Government Farm Oval to view the Diuris hybrids.

First sighted were the two parents, Diuris pedunculata and D. maculata, just off the side of the track. We moved on to view the first of the hybrids which displayed one of the many variations of this particular species and saw three variations along the way to see the remnants of P. longifolia.

Many orchids were seen during this section of the field trip including P. pedunculata, Thelymitra antennifera in flower, buds and leaves of Caladenia sp. (probably C. leptochila and C. dilatata), Glossodia major, Microtis, and leaves and seed pods of Acianthus exsertus and Corybas.

After a short drive from Government Farm Oval to a bridge on Saddle Hill Road we observed Pterostylis curta, P. pedunculata, P. cucullata and the hybrid between P. curta and P. pedunculata where the significance of this colony was explained.

We then moved on to the third part of the trip — a fire track near the Western entrance of the Park. Along the track we noticed that the weather was taking on a threatening appearance but decided to continue by first viewing a single P. longifolia. Walking further along the track we found P. vittata (almost finished), Acianthus caudatus (red form) and many Diuris maculata — one magnificent example in particular would have won a prize if it had been in a pot and put on display for judging.

A little further along and off to one side of the track a small colony of about 6-9 Pterostylis plumosa was found but unfortunately the flowers were not fully open and therefore the most striking feature of this orchid was not able to be seen. At this point we had a brief interruption which amounted to very large raindrops. This lasted for a short time but made things a little cool causing some of us to return from the last little bit of the field trip.

On arrival at the base of the power pylon we moved to the western side to look at buds of Caladenia dilatata that had re-emerged after being attacked by a bulldozer. While on our way to the next point of interest we passed P. pedunculata and P. nana all in the space of about 30 paces where we viewed a second colony of Acianthus caudatus of larger stature than the previous colony but with the added interest of a single green form A. caudatus growing among the more common red form.

With the threat of another soaking from the rain the remaining members beat a hasty retreat to their cars ending the trip that day.

Donald W. Harper
(bulldozer hater)

TRADING TABLE

Please note: Due to the fact that our next meeting is a social evening the Trading Table will operate only before the meeting starts.

NOSSA SPRING SHOW 1984 — LIST OF AWARDS

Class	Description		Orchid	Grower
1	Den. kingianum	1st 2nd	Den. kingianum Den. kingianum	Mick Ryan Orchids H. and T. Tormet
2	Den. speciosum	1st 2nd	Den. speciosum Den. speciosum	P.T. Barnes M. Fuller
3	Den. species other than class 1 or 2	1st 2nd	Den. gracilicause Den. tetragonum	J. Jacobs K. Western
4	Epiphytic species other than Den.	1st 2nd	Sarcochilus falcatus S. falcatus	N. Oliver H. Goldsack
5	Den. hybrid having D. kingianum parent	1st 2nd	D. x delicatum D. x delicatum	N. Oliver H. Goldsack
6	Den. hybrid other than class 5	1st 2nd	Den. Rosemary Jupp Den. Verninha	Mick Ryan Orchids B. Mules
7	Epiphytic hybrid other than Den.	1st 2nd	— —	
8	Caladenia species	1st 2nd	C. patersonii C. rigida	D. Wells G. Nieuwenhoven
9	Diuris species	1st 2nd	D. longifolia D. laxiflora	J. Attenborough R. Bates
10	Glossodia species	1st 2nd	G. major G. major	D. Wells W.K. Harris
11	Prasophyllum species	1st 2nd	P. fimbria P. fitzgeraldii	R. Bates G. Nieuwenhoven
12	Pterostylis species	1st 2nd	P. hildae P. cucullata	W. Walloscheck H. Goldsack
13	Terrestrial species other than classes 8-12	1st 2nd	Chiloglottis trapeziformis Thelymitra longifolia	W. Walloscheck M. Fuller
14	Terrestrial hybrid	1st 2nd	Thelymitra chasmogama Pterostylis "Cutie"	G. Nieuwenhoven W. Harris

Champion TERRESTRIAL species	Caladenia patersonii	D. Wells
Champion TERRESTRIAL hybrid	Thelymitra chasmogama	G. Nieuwenhoven
Champion EPIPHYTIC species	Den. gracilicaule	J. Jacobs
Champion EPIPHYTIC hybrid	Den. Rosemary Jupp	Mick Ryan Orchids
Champion Native Orchid of the Show	Den. Rosemary Jupp	Mick Ryan Orchids

BOTANIC GARDENS R.S. ROGERS SHADEHOUSE PROJECT

A considerable number of species are still required for placement in the shadehouse. Not only South Australian species but specimens from Australia wide (plants from known locations are preferred). They need not necessarily be rare species — a number of common ones are still needed.

This is an opportunity for every member to participate and advance the cause for science. Please keep it in mind when repotting in the next few weeks.

Contact Bob Bates on 251 3450 or G.J. Nieuwenhoven on 264 5825 or at any meeting.

Interstate members may send them to the President, 15 Robin Terrace, Hope Valley, S.A. 5090. Please mark parcel NOSSA Shadehouse Project.

METHODS AND MADNESS OF AN ORCHIDOLOGIST

More Notes

Before I continue with another genus let us consider some observations I have made in the last 12 months on the colony of Pterostylis foliata in the Kuitpo Forest. Late in 1983 I visited and examined the colony to find that almost all the dried larger plants had been dug out. Now I am not accusing any person of doing this for each hole was of a funnel shape, about 4 cm across and a little deeper. An animal I thought and on arriving home s searched through my books on animals. The Short-nosed Bandicoot looked like the guilty creature for its size and habits fitted those holes.

In July of 1984 I again examined the colony to see how many plants had survived, but that animal had been at them again and had dug up almost half. Again the holes were small but I doubt if it had obtained much for most of its victims were broken into pieces and those bits about the tubers still had tubers in most cases. I covered all those pieces which looked as though they may make new growth over with soil.

Now this again gives cause for thought. For a long time P. foliata was considered to be rather rare, in fact extinct, until after the first Black Sunday fires when it appeared in numbers near Blewitt Springs. Most of these plants were removed by collectors at that time. However much later this area contained fine and large populations of this plant.

Was it because the fire destroyed all the bandicoots in that area that these plants were able to regenerate so strongly? I should like to point out that most of the land about the scrubs in the Blewitt Springs area are surrounded by agricultural lands. Did the Bandicoots keep the populations of this plant in check in either areas and with the increase in clearing and settlement in the past twenty years, have these animals now been severely controlled so that the orchids have had a chance to repopulate?

Just something for you to think about and even research.

July 1984