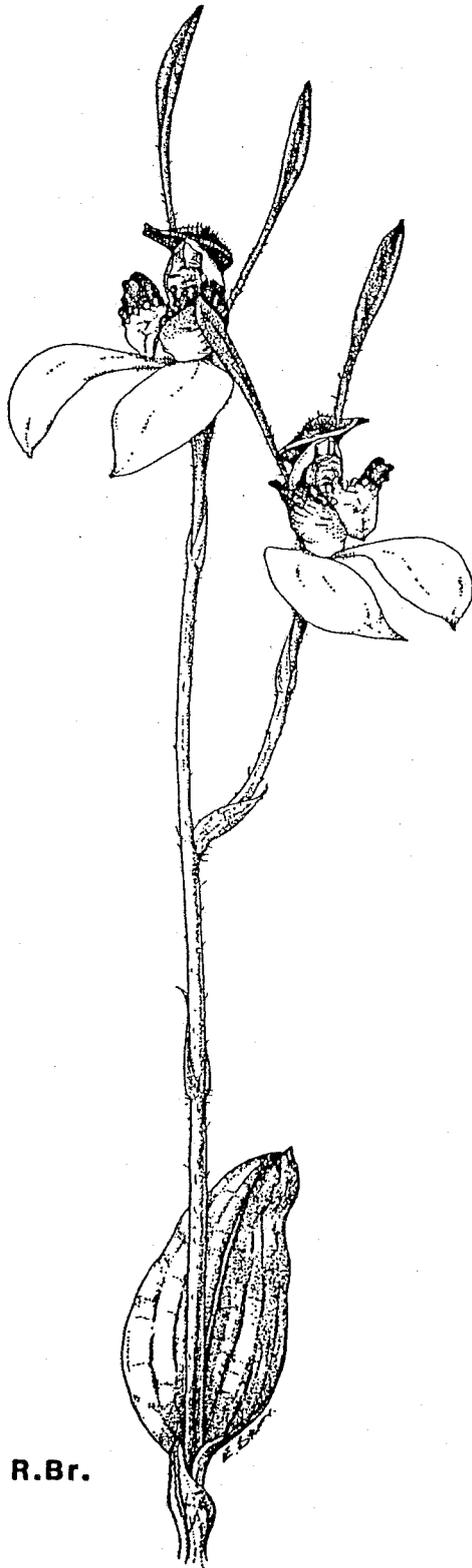


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of
SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC.

JOURNAL



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NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 27 May at 8.00pm
St. Matthews Hall, Bridge Street, Kensington

The May meeting will be a discussion on Australian Epiphyte hybrids led by Kevin Western and Gordon Brooks. This will be complemented by slides from our excellent collection.

NEW MEMBERS

Mr & Mrs C.C. & R. Clifford, Magill

Exclusive Offer to Society Members - "50 Years: The Australian Orchid"

This limited edition, 208 page, hard back publication containing feature articles by Australia's leading orchid experts, with hundreds of high quality colour and black and white illustrations, celebrating 50 years of "The Australian Orchid Review" is to be released in September 1986, price \$49.95 plus postage.

Society members can obtain their copy for just \$31 including postage. To take advantage of this offer, the book must be ordered and paid for in full at the May general meeting. Members interested in this offer see Reg Shooter, at the May meeting.

REPORT OF THE APRIL MEETING

The speaker at last months meeting was Bob Bates, who spoke on Western Australian terrestrial orchids. W.A. is regarded by most enthusiasts as the Mecca of terrestrial orchids, drawing people from all states to study them in their natural habitat and judging by the slides, not many would be disappointed by what they see. Bob's last visit took place in Spring 1984 and lasted three months. He mentioned how hospitable and friendly the Western Australian Native Orchid study and conservation group members were, during his stay.

Bob started off by showing us a map with all the roads travelled while there (he could not have missed out too many), ranging from the border to Mt. Magnet and Mt. Augustus in the northwest. This mountain lies north of Alice Springs in latitude. On the southern slope of this mountain, Bob turned up P. nana. Two species were found near the S.A. border, and in all he extended the known range of orchids by 600km.

Every morning Bob would be up by 7.00am and search and collect until dark, then press his new finds and write them up between 9.00-11.00pm, then sleep under the stars until the next morning and without having breakfast, start a new day. Still he found each day to bring new and exciting finds. In the end he tallied 200 different orchids and 30 hybrids with several new undescribed species, including two at Murchison Gorge. Aided by his magnificent slides, most of us came away determined one day to observe our W.A. orchids in person. Thank you Bob.

POPULAR VOTE

TERRESTRIAL: Pterostylis baptistii, L & K Nesbitt

EPIPHYTE: Dendrobium bigibbum, L & K Nesbitt

PLANTS ON DISPLAY

TERRESTRIALS

Pterostylis baptistii
P. truncata
P. coccinea
P. ophioglossa
P. obtusa
Eriochilus cuculatus
E. dilatatus
Prasophyllum archerii
Malaxis latifolia

EPIPHYTES

Dendrobium Hilda Poxon - 6 plants
D. bigibbum subsp. bigibbum var. bigibbum
D. bigibbum subsp. bigibbum var. superbum
subvar. compactum
Dendrobium Kim Heinze
D. smilliae
D. Chiero
D. Ellen
Bulbophyllum aurantiacum
B. exiguum

PLANT COMMENTARY

(Terrestrials by G. Nieuwenhoven, Epiphytes by R. Shooter)

Reg commented on D. Hilda Poxon's ability to flower from Christmas through to October, with flower colour from clear yellow to heavily spotted. They are compact growers and do not like to be divided. The Dendrobium bigibbum subv. compactum on display, was a lovely pale lilac, but very large flowered form, line bred by a N.S.W. breeder. Dendrobium smilliae was on display for the first time with a white flowered form. Another notable species was Bulbophyllum exiguum grown cool on natural cork with numerous spikes containing up to three blooms each; roots were prolific and healthy.

Reg suggested that Dendrobium plants should be kept drier during the winter months. Fertiliser will only be wasted while plants are not growing. Small green caterpillars can be a nuisance now and should be picked off the plants, rather than spray them.

A culture segment was given by Les Nesbitt. He pointed out that after recent rains, weeds will be coming up in pots as fast as orchids and need to be removed while small (i.e. the weeds), to avoid disturbing orchids. Seed should be sown now, making sure a topping is in place for them to germinate. Leaf rot in Pterostylis may strike during cool damp weather and although it may not kill your plants completely, it will certainly set them back considerably. Affected plants should be isolated immediately, cleaned up by removing damaged leaves etc., and placed in a dry area. Hand watering will have to be resorted to then, keeping the top of the pots dry. Rain splashes will spread the disease to other pots. Good hygiene includes keeping the ground under the benches free of weeds.

Finally, pollinate those flowers so you can grow some seedlings next season and donate some to the seed bank.

G. Nieuwenhoven

POPULAR VOTE WINNERS - APRIL

Dendrobium bigibbum

I have had this tall form of D. bigibbum for about 4 years. Each year it makes one new growth 600mm tall. It is growing in a 100mm (4") plastic pot containing a pine bark mixture and has not been repotted since I got it bare root. It is in my heated glasshouse (minimum 15°C). The plant had 5 spikes carrying 10 flowers and 24 buds so had not reached its peak. Spikes continue to grow from the old cones year after year, although they gradually lose vigour and carry less flowers as the bulbs age and drop their leaves.

Before the heated glasshouse, I tried to grow D. bigibbum in an open-sided, glass-roofed flowering house. The plants just survived and when the buds did not drop off, the flowers were poor. In heated conditions this species has thrived, even small pieces making strong growths and flowering. I keep the plants fairly dry after flowering until the new growths are 50-80mm long in Oct-Nov. In summer, I water daily and fertilise fortnightly.

Pterostylis baptistii

The 175mm (7") potfull shown at the April meeting, was not repotted last summer, and had become a little overcrowded. It is the North Queensland form of P. baptistii. This pot was grown in the heated glasshouse (min 15°C) next to the cattleyas and gets the same fertiliser treatment, aquasol and epon salts and iron chelates sprayed on the leaves every two weeks in late summer. The plants have been in the glasshouse for 2 years and have an early dormancy starting in October and ending in December. The first plant tried to flower in February, but did not develop properly in the heat. (Temperatures climb to 43°C on hot days). With the cooler weather in late March and April, the remaining buds started to develop rapidly. Plants of the same clone growing in the shadehouse are just forming their leaves and should flower in June-July. The glasshouse culture certainly extends the flowering season. P. baptistii is very easy to grow, multiplies rapidly, flowers reliably and has large flowers. For show purposes it is a bit annoying because a potfull flowers over a long period, not all at once like most species. It does not need heated conditions but seems to grow better if protected from the worst of our winter rain.

L. Nesbitt

SEED BANK

It has been of some concern to some of us that we are in need of a species terrestrial orchid seed bank, the aim being long term storage of seed. Orchid seed can remain viable for many years if stored under correct conditions. While we are not trying to duplicate the A.O.F. seed bank, a native terrestrial species collection would be an important contribution to the cause of conservation and research into our orchids. For instance, here in South Australia, we have a small colony of Pterostylis aphylla on private property. It could easily be destroyed by natural or man-made causes. If we have seed stored of this species it could mean the re-establishment of these plants in a safe area. It could also serve as a source of supply to persons interested in cultivation and thereby taking the pressure off our wild populations.

Seed placed in the seed bank would have to be verified, to be a certain species and gathered from plants from known locations; these plants may include those in

private collections. If localities are unknown, seed will still be acceptable and stored until a supply from a known location becomes available.

Some seed will be made available to persons involved in research into their germination and propagation. The two persons involved in the running of this project are George Nieuwenhoven and Kevin Western, please contact one of them if you can help with the supply of seed and a good time is now by pollinating suitable plants.

G. Nieuwenhoven

* * * *

We are planning a shadehouse/glasshouse visit among members, approximately in July, watch for further announcements.

LIBRARY

We have a good selection of books available to members to borrow, most may be taken home for one month and can be extended if needed. As from now your current membership card will need to be produced to borrow a book.

FIELD TRIP REPORT

Warren Conservation Park - 22 June 1985

Seventeen members attended the excursion which was blessed with fine sunny conditions (something rather rare for the area in winter). The trip differed from most previous ones, in that only one location was visited and we were asked not to look for orchids until we had hiked up the ridge some distance from the Park entrance. Two narrow ridges were explored; both littered with large outcrops of sandstone and quartz and lightly covered with Eucalyptus baxteri and E. fasciculosa, with small stands of native pine Callitris rhomboidea. There were masses of Flame heath Astroloma conostephioides in full flower (both red and cream colour forms), and a most interesting occurrence of Callistemon teretifolius which according to the latest checklist of South Australian plants, is endemic to the Flinders and Gawler Ranges.

Orchids were abundant; the most common being Acianthus exsertus which as usual covered the rocky ridges with many more leaves than actual flowers. None of us had ever seen such masses of Pterostylis vittata as occurred in this part of the park; some were up to 30cm tall with 5-6 flowers, but most were stunted, many clinging precariously to existence in crevices in the rock. One plant was located in a small circular plug hole 4cm across and 3cm deep. They are certainly tough plants! The very similar Pterostylis longifolia also grew here, but none had fully expanded their flowers. Several times we found plants of P. vittata and P. longifolia growing intermingled or even in mixed clumps, but never a hybrid. There is probably some interval barrier to hybridisation between these species. Of interest was a pot of the green flowered Western Australian P. vittata taken along for comparison. If one could imagine what a hybrid between South Australian P. vittata and P. longifolia would look like, I'm sure it would be very similar to these Western Australian plants.

Both Pterostylis robusta and P. alata grew on the first ridge, the P. alata with their delicate striped flowers on tall slender stems had tiny non-flowering rosettes and were in full flower, the P. robusta on their short stems had large non-flowering rosettes and were mainly in bud. One P. robusta in full flower had a tall stem indicating that perhaps some crossing had occurred in the past. Later I compared one of the Pterostylis alata with a P. alata from Tasmania. They were so different as to suggest they were actually different species.

Other greenhoods seen in bud included P. plumosa, P. nana, P. pedunculata and a new addition to the orchid list for the park, a large colony of P. curta. Another recent addition to the orchid list for the park was the hare orchid Leporella fimbriata. These were still in full flower so it appeared that none of their ant pollinators had been active in the area.

Prasophyllum rufum was abundant in the area, most with old seed pods and long dead flowers, so we were surprised to find a good specimen with only the first flower open and the rest in bud.

It was unusual to see large colonies of Pterostylis biseta on many of the rocks as it is a species not usually associated with high rainfall districts.

The views from the "Crows Nest" lookouts, on the second ridge, were a real highlight of the excursion and here we found plants of what are said to be Pterostylis boommanii. If they are, it would be the only colony left in the Adelaide Hills of this species.

The area should be a blaze of purple in the Spring, as Glossodia leaves were in abundance

Warren Conservation Park - 3 August 1985

On 3 August 1985, several members accompanied by Dr Kingsley Dixon of Kings Park, Perth, returned to the area. Before going to Warren Conservation Park, we visited a small patch of sandy Callitris woodland at Williamstown where three Corybas species were flowering together. The most unusual of these was C. despectans a very rare species in the Mt. Lofty Ranges. The form here was slightly different to the common coastal form. At the same site, we located colonies of C. diemenicus (syn. C. dilatatus) and an un-named species previously referred to C. diemenicus. A distinct progression of flowering was noted C. diemenicus was well advanced, C. aff. diemenicus in fresh flower and C. despectans just beginning to open.

At Warren Conservation Park, it was interesting to see how flowering was progressing. In June, we had not noted a single Corybas leaf, but now only 6 weeks later, there were carpets of both the common species in flower and some really unusual plant association of Callitris, Leptospermum lanigerum and Callistemon teretifolius.

In June, there had not been the slightest sign of buds on the Pterostylis nutans, but now we were able to find plants in flower. Although Pterostylis robusta were still in full bloom, the P. alata had all but finished. Pterostylis vittata showed itself to have very longlived flowers, several plants which had been in full bloom 6 weeks earlier, still had all flowers in perfect condition - and what a range of colours this species has, we located flowers of pale apricot, deep moroon and one plant had almost black flowers. Kingsley agreed with us that they were closer to the Western Australian var. subdifformis than to var. vittata, but he noted that they lacked the thickened inturned margins to the lateral sepals that var. subdifformis possesses.

All in all, both field trips proved most enjoyable and even a little adventurous, as we stumbled into deep gullies and perched on precarious lookouts.

LIST OF ORCHIDS SEEN

In flower:

Acianthus exsertus June, August
Leporella fimbriata June
Pterostylis vittata June, August
P. alata June, August
P. robusta June, August
P. longifolia August
Prasophyllum rufum June
Corybas diemenicus August
Corybas aff. diemenicus August
Corybas despectans (Williamstown) August
Pterostylis nutans August
P. nana August
P. vittata August

In seed:

Orthoceras strictum
Eriochilus cucullatus
Thelymitra sp.
P. rufum

Leaves or buds:

Glossodia major
 Various Thelymitra, Diuris, Lyperanthus
Microtis unifolia
Acianthus reniformis
 Various Caladenia (i.e. C. menziesii, C. dilatata, C. patersonii)
Pterostylis biseta, P. boormanii, P. plumosa, P. curta, P. pedunculata

R. Bates

Caladenia carnea var. gigantea R. Rogers x C. deformis R.Br:

A NEW PUTATIVE HYBRID FROM THE FLINDERS RANGES

The Alligator Gorge - Mambray Creek National Park, is perhaps the richest area in the Flinders Ranges as far as orchid diversity is concerned. Over fifty different orchids have now been recorded. Some of the most interesting orchids in the park are found around Sugar Gum Lookout, where there is a wide diversity of habitat, including powdery soil under mallee, mossy rock ledges, native pine forest and damp creek banks.

In September 1985, the author located a single, large, purple flowered Caladenia on the edge of a graded fire access track, in disturbed native pine forest. It was growing with the bright pink C. carnea var. gigantea and the brilliant blue C. deformis. The single flower was on a 20cm tall stem, the 3cm diameter bloom glistening purple, with the basic appearance of C. carnea, but differing in several respects, namely:

1. There were no red bans or strips on either the labellum or the column.
2. The margins of the labellum were irregular throughout.
3. The calli (in 4 rows) were oddly shaped and tricoloured in red, yellow and blue.
4. The pollinia were very pale and incompletely formed.

Almost certainly, the plant was a hybrid between C. deformis and C. carnea var. gigantea. It was photographed and a collection deposited at the State Herbarium. The table below indicates the varying influence of the parent orchids on different features of the putative hybrid.

HYBRID FEATURE	INFLUENCE FROM PUTATIVE PARENTS	
	<u>C. deformis</u>	<u>C. carnea</u> var. <u>gigantea</u>
Tuber	xxxx	
Leaf	xx	xx
Flower shape	x	xxx
Flower colour	xx	xx
Labellum morphology	x	xxx
Calli	x	xxx
Column	xx	xx

Further indications that the plant was a hybrid, include:

1. The malformed pollinarium
2. The disturbed habitat
3. The single specimen located
4. The occurrence of many other orchid hybrids in the park; (namely: Caladenia dilatata x C. gladiolata; C. gladiolata x C. patersonii; C. gladiolata x C. fitzgeraldii*; C. fitzgeraldii x C. patersonii*; C. fitzgeraldii x C. aff. patersonii*; C. patersonii x C. toxochila; Diuris x fastidiosa; Thelymitra x chasmogama and ?T. aristata x T. nuda).

Those hybrids asterisked, have not previously been recorded under the names given here, but had been collected several times previously.

Both C. deformis and C. carnea are known to be pollinated chiefly by native bees. In the Adelaide Hills, C. carnea has been observed being pollinated by a very tiny bee and C. deformis by several species of larger bees. The flowers of C. carnea var. gigantea are as large if not larger than C. deformis growing in the same area and are quite likely to attract the same bees.

Reference:

BATES, R., 1985: Checklist of Australian Terrestrial Orchid Hybrids (Native Orchid Society of South Australia).

R. Bates

Invasion of R.S. Rogers Orchid House by Little Green "Aliens"

One of the first species placed in the R.S. Rogers House, (Terrestrial Orchid House), at the Adelaide Botanic Gardens, was Pterostylis nana. Both the small Mallee form and the larger Adelaide Hills form were included. In September 1983, both forms flowered well and were pollinated by tiny flies. Unfortunately, the seed pods were allowed to mature and release their seed, not only in the pots of P. nana, but in several adjacent pots. Seedlings were noted in 1984 in several pots. This year in August, the seedlings flowered. Most turned out to be the Mallee form. In one pot of Pterostylis vittata, over 20 of these little green invaders with their brown tipped antennae flowered, just 12 months after seedlings first appeared. They certainly showed how the Mallee orchids are able to make the most of their opportunities.

R. Bates

Of Currawongs & Helmet Orchids

While walking through the pine plantations near Mt. Crawford recently, I was surprised to see that colony after colony of Helmet Orchids (Corybas diemenicus) which thrive in the decaying pine needles, had been stripped of its flowers. I suspected rabbits or perhaps possums had been at work, but this idea was soon proved incorrect, as hearing the ringing call of a Currawong (Strepera melanoptera) just ahead, I crept forward and was able to observe it pecking off the red, cherry-like orchid flowers one at a time, just as Currawongs sometimes do to real cherries.

R. Bates

CRYPTOSTYLIS OVATA R. BROWN

"THE SLIPPER ORCHID"

I was most intrigued when my NOSSA Journal of February 1985 arrived, to see the cover have an excellent drawing of Cryptostylis ovata.

This species was one of Robert Brown's thirteen terrestrials species recorded at King Georges Sound in December 1801, during Matthew Flinders exploratory and mapping visit that was eventually to circumnavigate New Holland as Australia was then known.

The species ovata is the sole representative of the genus recorded in W.A., where it is widely distributed and super abundant over a range at least of 450km between Capetown and Perth. The species is non-selective in habitat and seems equally at home in the heavy timber forest of the southwest and the more open timbered areas inland up to 450kms from the coast. It flourishes in most soil types with the exception of peat and sand plain swamps and shows amazing versatility in flowering in the coastal heaths down to the waters edge.

Although C. ovata is quite selective in growing in the higher rainfall and cooler areas, the non-selective habitat appears to have contributed to a highly successful colonisation. From this we might conclude that the species would have most efficient reproductive mechanisms.

With this in mind, in 1980 I decided to research the biology and reproduction of the species. I am a seed collector for the AOF seed bank.

The plan was to visit a number of locations in the wild over the full flowering cycle, approximately 2 1/2 months at Albany mid-November to the end of January and to observe plants in culture in my orchid house over the same period. The 2 plants in culture were removed from where a road re-alignment was going to destroy them and many others. They were potted in a plastic bucket type pot, in natural soil (sand) covered by finely chopped Casuarina leaves and a little blood & bone added. Both plants were in bud at time of potting and produced 12 and 14 flowers individually and flowered for approximately 2 1/2 months, there has also been vegetative reproduction of 3 to 4 tubers each year.

During warm calm days, the door of the orchid house was left open for an hour or two around midday, all other flowering orchids were removed. The result of this was a multitude of associated insects attracted by the four to eight flowers. The expected wasp visitors both male and female, came in numbers from 2-12 at a time, but surprisingly there was a host of house, hover, bush, and blow flies, also assorted bees including honey bees. There was much competition between male wasps attempting to copulate with individual flowers and disinterested in

the female wasps. The other insects alighted on and appeared to be extracting some form of nourishment. None of these latter insects were observed removing pollinia. The male wasps in a very few instances, were able to do this, however, an average of just over two flowers per plant have developed fruiting ovaries each year.

My observations in the wild, suggest that the pollination of flowers is slightly higher than in the continued situation in my orchid house. From the above, it would seem that pollinating vectors are most inefficient and are more positive survival strategy in vegetative reproduction.

An interesting observation on survival was from the location of the original two plants, where a metre or so of sand and shell-fill dredged from Outer Harbour to re-align the road, failed to destroy all of the C. ovata. Within two years the survivors had leaves above ground and some are currently in flower.

R.L. Heberle

WHAT IS BEING GROWN IN ADELAIDE?

SURVEY RESULTS

Temperate terrestrials: The survey showed that 80% of temperate Australian terrestrial species are being grown in Adelaide (in contrast to <10% of tropical terrestrials). For purposes of this survey, doubtful species, i.e. Caladenia lavandulacea and C. longii have been excluded.

This result was surprisingly high and it is considered that this percentage is not likely to increase in the future, as growers were becoming more selective and beginning to discard the less attractive species. Before going further, I would like to thank all those people who handed in lists of what they were growing, gave verbal information or allowed me to view their collections to see for myself. The survey indicated that there are about 2000 people in Adelaide who are growing Australasian orchids, but that less than 1/4 of these had any terrestrials. It also showed that whereas the epiphytes growers had basically the same species in every collection, the terrestrial growers often had totally different species.

I will now go through each genus.

Acianthus: All temperate species were being grown, but the sub-tropical A. amplexicoulis and A. ledwandii were not. Although only one grower had A. tenuissimus, some twenty growers had A. exsertus and A. reniformis, often in a variety of colours and interstate forms including A. reniformis var. huegelii.

Adenochilus: One grower was thought to have A. nortonii or at least had it at the beginning of 1985.

Arthrochilus: Both the temperate species were in cultivation, but had never flowered in Adelaide.

Burnettia: The single species B. cuneata had never been cultivated in Adelaide to our knowledge.

Caladenia: A large range of Caladenia, both named species and un-named, were being grown. Unlike Diuris and Pterostylis where only one species was kept per pot, some growers had as many as six Caladenia species in a single 10cm pot. It is probably best if I go through the genus alphabetically, noting what species are not being grown. (Once again ignoring doubtful species).

C. aurantiaca an eastern species had never been tried, C. aristata was thought to have been tried, but it has never flowered in Adelaide. C. dimorpha has never been grown here nor had C. drummondii from Western Australia. C. graminifolia had been tried, but did not survive. C. pumila (now extinct), C. tessellata and C. testaceae were the only other species not to have been grown in Adelaide. It was not clear whether C. caudata or C. echidnachila were being grown. Certainly one of them had been exhibited at the August meeting, but it was unclear which. C. congesta, C. gracilis and C. cucullata had all been grown from seed and flowered, but it was unsure which were still represented in collections - obviously they are very difficult species. Some 30 species of Caladenia were being grown by one grower only, i.e. C. arebra, C. praecox, C. sacharotta, but others such as C. menziesii were in numerous collections. Even recently named species were being grown, i.e. C. amplexans, C. infundibularis and C. wanosca as well as many Caladenia hybrids. Certainly some growers were doing well with the genus.

Caleana major the duck orchid, was being grown, but no-one admitted to having kept it more than 3 years!

Calochilus: This genus has proved difficult in Adelaide. Several had been tried, but only C. robertsonii and C. campestris were known for some to still be in cultivation.

Chiloglottis: All species were being grown some such as C. trapeziformis very successfully, but others such as C. cornuta were managed by only one grower. Even C. x pescottiana was doing well for some growers and was seen in full flower at the Spring Show.

Corybas: Most Corybas were doing well, but C. fordhamii, C. pruinosis and C. undulatus had never been tried. C. diemenicus was the most popular and successful species. C. despectans was proving difficult, but five growers had small pots.

Cryptostylis: All species except the leafless C. hunteriana were being grown and it was believed that even C. hunteriana had once been flowered in Adelaide. C. subulata was the most successful and C. erecta was proving most difficult.

Dipodium: Although the tropical C. ensifolium had done well in Adelaide, no-one admitted to having either of the two leafless southern species in pots. However, D. punctatum has been successfully transplanted into bush gardens in the Crafers area.

Diuris: This genus was proving most popular and easy to grow and although some species such as D. purdiei and D. tricolor were being grown by only one person, others such as D. brevifolia were in most collections.

Species not being grown were D. aequalis, D. bracteata, D. goonooensis, D. maculosissima and D. secundiflora and no-one was really sure if any of these were genuine species. Some rare species such as D. citrina, D. verosa and D. sheaffiana were doing well in Adelaide and there were almost as many hybrids as species in most collections.

R. Bates
(To be continued)