



Journal
of the
Native Orchid Society
of
South Australia Inc



Plumaticilos plumosum

NATIVE ORCHID SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA
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NEXT MEETING 28 MARCH 2006

Tuesday, 28 March, St Matthew's Hall, Bridge Street, Kensington. Meeting starts at 8:00 p.m. Doors to the hall will be open from 7:15 p.m. to allow Members access to the Library and trading table.

The evening begins with the AGM.

The speaker for the meeting is Heather Fishlock on the Chelsea Flower Show.

DIARY DATES

Friday 26th May	Annual Dinner at the Buckingham Arms
Sat. & Sun. 16-17th Sept	Spring Show
Sunday 3rd December	Xmas BBQ

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

Wed, 5th April at the home of **Bodo Jensen**. Meeting commences at 7:30 p.m.

FEBRUARY MEETING

Plants Benched

Epiphyte species

Dockrillia cucumerina

Epiphyte hybrid

Sarcochilus Melba

Dendrobium Kenny Green

Dendrobium Violet Yamagi

Terrestrial species

Genoplesium rufum

There were no terrestrial hybrids

Judging results

Epiphyte species

1st *Dockrillia cucumerina* grown by Noel Oliver

No 2nd or 3rd

Epiphyte hybrid

1st *Dendrobium* Violet Yamaji grown by Russell Job & Edda Viskic

2nd *Dendrobium* Kenny Green grown by Russell Job & Edda Viskic

3rd *Sarcochilus* Melba grown by Noel Oliver

Terrestrial species

Genoplesium rufum grown by Les Nesbitt

Plant of the night

Dendrobium Violet Yamaji grown by Russell & Edda Viskic

Popular vote results

Terrestrial species

Genoplesium rufum grown by Les Nesbitt

Epiphyte species

Dockrillia cucumerina grown by Noel Oliver

Epiphyte hybrids

Dendrobium Violet Yamaji grown by Russell Job & Edda Viskic

Commentary provided by Noel Oliver

February Speaker

Les Nesbitt gave a presentation outlining his grant funded work on growing *Caladenia tentaculata*. Les had tried growing these fungus dependent plants many years ago but because of the high failure rate settled to growing greenhoods instead. Recently Les has ventured once again into growing *C. tentaculata* with outstanding results. Very few of us were aware of the effort that Les had put into this project nor the scope of it. It is hoped an article by Les on the subject will be published in a future issue of the journal.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION - NOSSA NEWS

The NOSSA Orchid of the Year

At each meeting throughout the year, starting with the November meeting & finishing with the October meeting of the following year the best orchid of the month is chosen by the judges & will be assessed by each of the judging panel. A point score out of 100 will be given by each judge, & placed in an envelope for that month, before the conclusion of the meeting.

At the end of the year i.e. the October meeting, the envelopes will be opened & each months points totalled & averaged out. Thus giving an orchid with the highest point score being the eventual winner of the perpetual trophy.

As an example say the best orchid in August is *Dendrobium* Anne's Rainbow Surprise, there were 6 judges eligible to vote, points given were;

72

76

75

71

73

73

440 total

440 total divided by the number of judges 6=72.857 average for that month. The same procedure is adopted for each month; with varying totals & the number of judges could vary each month.

By the time the 10 months are worked out this way to 3 decimal points only a very slight chance that there would not be an overall winner.

FIELD TRIP PLANNING MEETING

SUNDAY APRIL 2nd 4:30pm

Bring a casserole/salad to share for tea
at the Presidents

38 Portmarnock St, Fairview Park

AND

STUDY GROUP (*Oligochaetochilus*)

Coordinator: Susan Secomb

ANNUAL DINNER

The Annual Dinner of the Society will be held on Friday 26th May at the Buckingham Arms Hotel, 7p.m. This is always a very enjoyable night so come along and join in the evening. The menu will be the same as usual, i.e. smorgasbord. The cost is \$21 per head (\$19 for seniors). A deposit of \$5 per head will be required at least one week before the event, so early notice is here given so that members can make arrangements to get their money to the Treasurer.

How it is Done

Reg Shooter

At this time of the year there are not a lot of Australian Native orchids in flower neither terrestrials nor epiphytes. This was evident at the February meeting when only a total of five plants were benched. One of these was *Sarcochilus* Melba & that was flowering 'out of date'. *Sarcochilus* usually flower late spring to early summer. *Sarco.* Melba produces the largest flowers in that genus. It is a primary hybrid between *Sarco. hartmannii* & *Sarco. falcatus* registered in 1966 so its been around for some time neither of the species have especially large flowers but by using selected clones some really large flowers have been produced. One that springs to mind is a clone called *Sarco.* Melba '50cent' with flowers as big as a 50cent piece. The plant that Noel Oliver exhibited at the meeting was not quite that large but it did carry one erect raceme of 23mm wide white blooms with a diffusion of maroon in the centre.

Noel also benched a *Dockrillia cucumerina* this is an interesting orchid in as much as its leaves resemble little gherkins, hence the species name, so much so that if they were to be taken of the plant and served in a salad it would be difficult to identify them.(at least until you bit one). Noel grows this plant very well hanging in his shadehouse throughout the year (The plant not Noel). The flowers are creamy white the segments are twisted and produced on short 5cm racemes in groups of 2 to 10. It is not the easiest orchid to maintain in a collection for long unless ideal conditions are provided. They resent disturbance and once established on a mount of hardwood enjoy bright light, air movement & humidity keeping them dry during the winter months.

Russell Job & Edda Viskic brought in the two plants that attracted the members. They were not Australian orchids but Australasian hybrids. Meaning they had at least some Australian species in their makeup. *Dendrobium* Kenny Green is a crossing of *D.* Aussie Green x *jonesii* and *D.* Violet Yamaji (voted flower of the night & popular vote choice) a crossing of *D.* Midnight x *spectabile*. This hybrid has quite large infusions of the Australian Natural hybrid *D.* x Superbiens in its background that was probably responsible for the subtle lilac colouring in the labellum of the large pristine white open starry flowers of this attractive hybrid. Because of the many infusions of tropical species in the makeup of these orchids they do require a little more coddling than the shadehouse conditions most of our natives thrive under.

From the Summer Orchid Information Newsletter from Hills District Orchids-
website of David Banks; davidpbanks@veritel.com.au

Victorian International Orchid Fair: (Friday to Sunday) 19th, 20th, 21st May 2006
The third VIOF will be held at St SAVA Church Hall, 212 Diamond Creek Road,
Greensborough, on Friday 19th, Saturday 20th and Sunday 21st May 2005. The Fair
will feature twenty displays and trade stands by many of Australia's leading orchid
nurseries and stockists.

For further details please contact Bill & Jan Miles on 03 5345-6387 or email:
miles@netconnect.com.au and website www.orchidfair.com.au

Historical article: 'Before there was NOSSA'

Bob Bates

Before there was NOSSA there was "*The Australian Native Orchid Study Group of South Australia*"

This group of native orchid enthusiasts first met at 33 Welwyn Rd Manningham on November 6th 1968. About a dozen people were present but we do not know who they all were ... *Harold Goldsack* who was NOSSA's first life member, was an apology. *Ray Nash* proposed the name for the group. *Vera Cruickshank* author of a book on wildflowers of the Adelaide Hills was there as were *N. George* and *Miss C George*, *John* and *Jim Kruyssen* and six others.

At the next meeting *Mrs Pat Foreman* author of a book on South Australian orchids joined up with her husband, as did Mr G Sargent and Mr and Mrs Martin.

Meetings were held in members' homes and an average of 15 people attended in 1969.

During 1969 the following became members: *Syd Monkhouse*, *C. England*, *J. Lewis*, *Mr and Mrs Nicky Zurcher*, *H. Stocker*, *S & D Johnston*, *Janice Bendt*, *Mr Earle*, *B. Theobald*, *Clive Marsden*, *Murray Rohrlach* and *A. Kirtland*. How many of those names are familiar to us nearly forty years later!

Like NOSSA they had regular field trips (mostly local), published a newsletter and had speakers including *Jack Warcup*, *Warren Bonython* of the Conservation Society, *Alwyn Clements* of the Natural History Society, *Harold Goldsack* and *Noel Lothian* at that time Director of the Adelaide Botanic Gardens. Most of the above also spoke to NOSSA years later or were members or in the case of Noel, patron of our society, or in the case of Alwyn, father of Mark Clements one of Australia's top orchid experts.

Interstate members included Bill Murdoch after whom the Bill Murdoch trophy is named.

At various times the group was affiliated with OCSA and ANOS Australia.

In 1970 their name changed to the "*Australasian Native Orchid Club of SA*" and meetings began to be held in the Lutheran Church Hall at Greenacres. Sadly membership dropped to only 14 by the middle of 1971 and at the annual general meeting of that year they were unable to raise a quorum and the group folded.

I would love to hear from anyone who attended meetings of this forerunner of NOSSA. Perhaps someone could give a reason as to why the group was unsuccessful while just ten years later NOSSA had over 200 members.

ORCHID GRID – 7 March 2006

Les Nesbitt

Nothing much to report about the grid so far this year. Only one *Dipodium roseum* flowered in the grid this past summer. It was in a different location to those that flowered the previous summer. No new orchid leaves have appeared. The grid has not been slashed this summer because my mower has been playing up and there have been other more urgent priorities. All trees in the grid have been cut down except for the two native cherries and several seedling golden wattles that will be allowed to remain.

***Oligochaetochilus despectans* monitoring experiment in the mid-north of
South Australia, 2005
Thelma Bridle**

Oligochaetochilus despectans, the lowly greenhood, is a small terrestrial, 'rufa' group species found in the dry Mid-North of South Australia. The same species also occurs scattered in drier regions of Victoria and in NSW near the Victorian border (D Jones pers comm. to R Bates 2006).

It can realistically only be located in the winter months, when a ground hugging rosette of 10-15 leaves can be identified on shallow, sparsely vegetated hard soils in open peppermint gum woodland.

Two to six translucent flowers with brown stripes on the galea and brown/grey markings open in succession. On 5-8cm stems, they hang close to the ground with the lateral sepals touching similarly coloured soil. The rosette is withered by flowering time (Nov-Jan in SA), late for a dryland orchid species. The pollinator is unknown. Seedpods develop with an upright pedicel and ripen Jan-Mar.



DEH/NOSSA conduct annual surveying for new populations and extensive monitoring of *O. despectans* at 3 mid-north sites. The following brief report covers an experiment Phil and I set up in the interest of learning more about the species. For further details or the full 2005 report, please contact me.

The Heritage block at Koolunga has been fenced and ungrazed for the past 40 years. Natural vegetation at the site is good with many flowering plants and shrubs. *O. despectans* tend to grow under young golden wattles amongst peppermint gums. There are several other native orchid species eg. *Diplodium robustum*, *Linguella nana*, *Arachnorchis toxochila*, *Thelymitra megalyptra*. Invasion of wild oats from surrounding agricultural land is increasing.

Part of the paddock at Mount Bryan, where *O. despectans* grow has been fenced from grazing since 2001 and native vegetation is returning. Noticably, the uncommon *Calocephalus citreus* (lemon beauty heads) has returned to the site. This species is also found in Peppermint Gully in a paddock not used for grazing for several years, but not on the property mentioned in this report as a monitoring site, which is still subject to light grazing during the lambing season.

White-winged choughs and apostle birds are always seen at the Mount Bryan and Peppermint Gully sites and they attend our progress through the paddocks. Fortunately they do not dig up orchid tubers, as such birds do in Victoria, although both species are ground foragers. A few kangaroos are usually seen on the Mount Bryan block and also at Koolunga but their grazing does not seem detrimental to the orchids.

Thanks to the landholders at Mount Bryan, Peppermint Gully and Koolunga for allowing us regular access to their properties and giving permission to carry out orchid monitoring.

South Australia experienced a very dry autumn/early winter in 2005. Different areas in the mid-north received rain at both differing times and in varying amounts during winter and spring. Although Mount Bryan and Peppermint Gully are only separated by a hill, rainfall in Peppermint Gully was good in June and again in spring, whereas Mount Bryan received a lesser amount, particularly from the June falls. 65km west, Koolunga lies in rain shadow. Winter rainfall was low and spring falls below average.

Five to six, metre square grids were set up at each of the 3 mentioned sites in 2003. These have been monitored since 3 times a year for *O. despectans* rosettes (end July), flowering (early Nov), flowers and seedpods (end Dec). A few plants within these grids have been monitored since 2001.

In 2005 a 17% increase in rosettes was recorded for Peppermint Gully, probably as a result of the good June rainfall. Flowering of the monitored *O. despectans* here rose from 9% in 2004 to 41% in 2005. Whilst plant numbers were slightly fewer at Mount Bryan than in 2004, flowering rate (33%) was equivalent, with the number of flowers per plant increasing from a mean of 3.6 to 5.6 and up to 8 flowers recorded from a single plant. Flowering at Koolunga, at 28%, was equivalent to 2004.

	Total no. flowers & plants			Mean no. flowers per stem		
	2003	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005
Koolunga	-	60/24	82/24	-	2.5	3.4
Parker, PG	21/8	18/4	92/21	2.6	4.5	4.4
Mount Bryan	54/15	52/14	50/9	3.6	3.7	5.6

Naturally pollinated seedpod production at Mount Bryan was excellent in 2005, with 50% of flowering plants developing mature pods. Two of these plants produced 2 seedpods. Some developing seedpods recorded at Koolunga in November subsequently aborted by early January, probably due to lack of moisture in the soil from the reduced rainfall.

With *O. despectans* monitored regularly for the past 3 years it was possible to commence tracking individual plants from year to year, which was the aim of this experiment. From data collected so far, some plants flower each year and some biennially. Flowers tend to occur on larger plants as determined by rosette diameter measurements recorded in winter. More data is required, especially on seedpod production as this is generally very low for the species (<10%).

Monitored, recurring *Oligochaetochilus despectans* in m² grids

	Number rosettes : number flowering : number seeding		
	2003	2004	2005
Mount Bryan	33 : 14 : 1	31 : 12 : 0	25 : 10 : 6
Peppermint Gully	27 : 7 : 0	23 : 4 : 0	23 : 13 : 0
Koolunga	44 : 27 : 2	52 : 18 : 1	48 : 14 : 1

The number of rosettes at Koolunga increased in 2004 with a number of small, non-flowering plants coming up in grids 3 and 4, sited close to a dense population of mainly small rosettes. There had been 2 seedpods in grid 4 during the 2003 season. The monitored rosettes were still not sufficiently mature to produce flowers in 2005.

	Mount Bryan	Peppermint Gully	Koolunga
Rosettes 2003,4,5 not flowering	9	4	10
Annual flowering 2003,4,5	4	1	9
Biennial flowering 2001,3 and 5	1	1	-
Biennial flowering 2003 and 5	2	3	5
Flowering 2003,4 not 5	5	1	4
Flowering 2004 and 5	3	1	0
Mature seedpod 2003 and 5	1	0	0

Note: 2002 was a drought year with many buds aborting prior to monitoring

Phil and I are looking forward to future observations on *O. despectans* for several years to come in order to learn more of this survivor of harsh conditions.

Two new Spider Orchids for South Australia

Bob Bates

Arachnorchis aurulenta DL Jones and *A. interanea* DL Jones both new and both from Eyre Peninsula were described in the latest Orchadian.

Both have been known to NOSSA field trippers for many years and we are very pleased to have them named. Both of the species occur in and around the Gawler Ranges.

The first species, *A. aurulenta* is the most spectacular as it has 'long golden bayonet' shaped clubs on the sepals, in fact that was the tag name given to this species of damper fertile sands around salt lakes and granite rocks. The name '*aurulenta*' means adorned with gold. There is another un-named species with short yellow bayonet clubs on EP with the tag name of *A. 'short golden bayonets'*. This species occurs throughout central EP and it too may be named one day.

The second species *A. interanea* is one of several *Arachnorchis tensa* look-alikes. It differs from *A. tensa* in its long sturdy stems, larger leaves and flowers a little like *A. tentaculata* yet it is a pastoral zone species found almost exclusively on the cool southern slopes of granite hills, especially in the Gawler Ranges where it grows under shrubs in cracks through the rocks, in gorges etc, in fact the name '*intraterranea*' may have been just as suitable as *A. interanea*. '*A. interanea*' means "spider orchid of the inland".

Pictures of both may soon be seen in the *Arachnorchis* section of Orchids SA electronic on NOSSA's website which hopefully will be up and running next month.

Australian Native Plant Sale
Wayville Pavilion
Saturday 29 April 10am -5pm and Sunday 30 April 10am -4pm



DO YOU KNOW YOUR LEAVES?

1 *Corybas diemii*; 2 *Actianthus*; 3 *Crylostylis reniformis*; 4 *Eriochilus cucullatus*;
 5 *Leporella fimbriata*; 6 *Pyrorchis nigricans*; 7 *Lepoceras menziesii*; 8 *Glossodia major*; 9 *Disa bracteata*;
 10 *Diplodum alatum*; 11 *Diplodum doliochitum*; 12 *Lingulella nana*; 13 *Caladenia tentaculata*; 14 *Pterostylis nutans*; 15 *Urochilus sanguineus*. PHOTOS by ROBERT LAWRENCE