

ETHICAL ORCHID PHOTOGRAPHY

The following guidelines are adapted from *Ethical Nature Photography in Tasmania*
https://www.nrmsouth.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/17_10_24_NRM2866-Ethical-Photography-Guidelines-OUTPUT-WEB.pdf

Ethical Orchid photography applies to all orchids regardless of whether the orchid is common or critically endangered.

While we may view photography as a harmless activity, the way we photograph can cause serious damage to the very orchids that we enjoy and appreciate.

If we want to continue enjoy seeing the orchids, we need to minimize our impact on the orchid habitat. The aim with orchid photography should never be at the expense of the orchid and should never override ethical practices and our respect for the environment. Consider your actions in the context of the potential impacts if everyone was to do the same thing.

Individually, we each need to understand that with each visit we have caused damage and that the cumulative effect can result in permanent loss. How often do we hear the statement – *They were here once*.

Respect the habitat, view ourselves as a guest.

Use the same level of respect as when we are visiting friends.

GETTING THERE

- Ensure you have explicit permission before entering a site
 - Respect property boundaries
- Stay on formed tracks and areas of hardened ground or bare rock
 - Watch your step and where you put your feet
 - Walk softly and avoid delicate soils and plants

ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE

Apply best practice environmental hygiene for the prevention of spread of Phytophthora – see Bushland Etiquette & Fieldtrip Guidelines

- Remember to clean not only shoes but tripods and any camera equipment that touches the ground with Phytoclean (or 70% Methylated Spirits 30% water)

HABITAT & NON-ORCHID SPECIES

Again, watch where you step and where you put your feet

- Be aware that walking across some habitats, eg lichen, can result in die back and death
- Small seedlings, non-flowering plants and other threatened and/or delicate non orchid species can inadvertently be trampled
- Don't leave obvious markers, eg flagging tape
 - leads to increased visits, which leads to increased disturbance

Damaged habitat results in loss of the orchids and fewer photographic opportunities and potential loss of species.

PHOTOGRAPHING

Look first

- do not rush to photograph the flower but check the area for other plants

Maintain a distance of greater than 30cm

Avoid getting **too** close to an orchid

- Increases the risk of accidental damage to
 - the individual plant
 - the seedlings and nonflowering plants
- Concentrates the impacts of trampling and soil compaction around the plant
 - potentially leading to death of the mycorrhizal fungi on which the orchids rely.
- Consider using long focal length lenses and digital zoom
 - equipment that allows close-up images from a distance

Avoid lying down unless it is on a path or an area devoid of vegetation or fungal fruiting bodies.

DO NOT remove any cages for orchid photography or interfere with any tagged plants

PHOTOGRAPHING WITH OTHERS

Be courteous

Do not crowd around an orchid

- increases the risk of damage and soil compaction

Wait until others have finished should you want to take some time to get your perfect photo

Be a good role model to others by the careful way you take photographs

SOCIAL MEDIA

The aim of sharing or collecting orchid photographs

- should be to make a positive contribution to conservation and general awareness and appreciation
- should not place the orchid at risk through greater exposure or a desire to collect a trophy photograph

Facebook and other social media

- Only post general regions, **do not disclose specific locations, even on private messages**
 - it is not always wise to mention a specific park
- **Delay** posting images of threatened orchid species until after the flowering time has finished
- Notify the Conservation Officer/Threatened Orchid of any sightings of rare or unusual orchids

Data Collecting Apps

- Wild Orchid Watch automatically obscures data, nevertheless it should not be used at known sensitive sites because these are already being monitored,
- iNaturalist does not automatically obscure data, so this needs to be done manually.

