

NOSSA

As an organisation, NOSSA is a custodian of the native orchids throughout South Australia.

As custodians and responsible NOSSA members, we should appreciate and respect the conservation time and effort being put into

- trying to understand the orchids
- enhancing their ability to survive
- reducing the threats to our native orchids many of which are on the verge of extinction

THREATS TO ORCHIDS

Vegetation clearance and overgrazing are obvious examples of the threats to the viability of native orchid populations.

But an incredibly significant threat is posed by every individual who visits our most endangered orchids.

These visits pose a danger to the viability of some of our most threatened species of orchids, particularly those sites where there are only a handful of plants remaining.

Often the damage occurs unintentionally but it is inevitable that damage caused by each and every visit results in cumulative increase in

- soil compaction leading to loss of mycorrhizal fungi upon which the orchids depend,
- destruction of fragile orchid seedlings which are not easily seen,
- destruction to other threatened species and their seedlings.

Orchid recovery depends on seedlings becoming established. These are almost impossible to see for all species and are easily destroyed through foot traffic. This is a significant reason for choosing to not go near the flowering plants.

SENSITIVE SITES

Sensitive sites are herein defined as those containing populations that are recognised by NOSSA as containing the limited numbers of particularly threatened orchids. These sites are **fragile ecosystems**. The locations of these populations are not disclosed in publications or social media and to others in general. They may be fenced to reduce grazing pressure and human visitors.

The Conservation Officer/Threatened Orchid Officer will maintain a register of sensitive sites in consultation with the management committee of NOSSA.

SENSITIVE SITE VISITS

The aim is to **temporarily** limit visits to precarious populations so that they can recover and be enjoyed by future generations. **Orchid recovery depends on seedlings becoming established.**

Visiting such sensitive sites should only be done to increase the viability through activities such as research, monitoring, pollination, seed collection and weed control that are authorised by the Department of Environment Water (or its equivalent), Seed Centre and the NOSSA Management Committee. The person overseeing these activities **must** hold an appropriate government permit. Our aim is to minimize the risk of damage.

If images of orchids from sensitive sites are required, this should be organised through the Conservation Officer/Threatened Orchid Officer and appropriate arrangements will be made.

If we, others, or future generations are to enjoy the orchids, we need to ensure that we are not contributing to their demise by inappropriate, careless or selfish behaviour.

National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972

<https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/LZ/C/A/NATIONAL%20PARKS%20AND%20WILDLIFE%20ACT%201972.aspx>

Native Vegetation Act 1991

<https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/LZ/C/A/Native%20Vegetation%20Act%201991.aspx>

BEST PRACTICE FOR SENSITIVE ORCHIDS

CHOOSING NOT TO VISIT

Appreciating and respecting the conservation work of NOSSA members and others, as well as population recovery, can include making the decision

- **not** to visit sensitive sites during this temporary period
- limit visits to approved activity
 - photography is not an approved activity

Therefore, it is important to ask the question

“Does my being at a sensitive site actively contribute to the survival or only the damage of the population?”

INFORMATION SHARING

Facebook and other social media

- Only post general regions, **do not disclose specific locations, even on private messages**
 - By keeping visitor numbers to a minimum, it will reduce any cumulative damage
- **Delay** posting images until after the flowering time has finished
 - Avoids inadvertently encouraging others to visit
- Notify the Conservation Officer/Threatened Orchid of any sightings of rare or unusual orchids.
 - This will add to our species information
 - Assists in a coordinated approach to caring for the 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.

PRIVATE PROPERTY

- Visiting any private property without permission is **trespassing**
- Passing on information to another person without the owner’s permission destroys the goodwill.

Both these of actions leads to NOSSA gaining a poor reputation and lack of co-operation by property owners

CAGES AND ENCLOSURES

- Cages and labels and other markers at sensitive sites should not be removed or interfered with in any way whatsoever
- Enclosures should not be entered without permission from the appropriate authority

If you have to climb a fence to get in, then you are most likely doing the wrong thing.

Enclosures are to prevent grazing by herbivores, restrict foot traffic and trampling. This is to give the orchid population the best chance of recovering.

PERMITS

- A permit is required for
 - hand pollination
 - seed collection
 - or collecting any part of the orchid
- Do not collect for any person, unless you have written evidence or other positive proof of them being a permit holder (hearsay is not adequate)
- Permit holders **must** always carry the permit as required by the Government.
- The Threatened Orchid Officer holds a list of members with permits

FIELD TRIPS

From time to time NOSSA will consider conducting field trips to some sensitive sites but this will be done in consultation with the Conservation/Threatened Orchid Officer.

- Any other visits not sanctioned by NOSSA will be in contravention of the Society's Code of Ethics
- Such sites should not be the focus of
 - individuals leading and/or directing others there
 - commercial tourism

CONTRAVENTION OF THE CODE OF ETHICS

- Contravening this policy is regarded as misconduct that is detrimental to NOSSA and thus is grounds for expulsion from NOSSA in accordance with the Rules of Association (2020).
- Collecting seeds, flowers, stem, leaf, tuber of the orchid, pollination without a permit contravenes both this Code of Ethics and the National Parks & Wildlife Act (1992).

Any damage/disturbance to the orchids or other native plants contravenes the National Parks & Wildlife Act (1992).

REPORTING INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR

Inappropriate behaviour can be reported to the

- NOSSA Conservation Officer,
- Department of Environment & Water
- or the landholder eg SA Water, Forestry SA, local Council.

