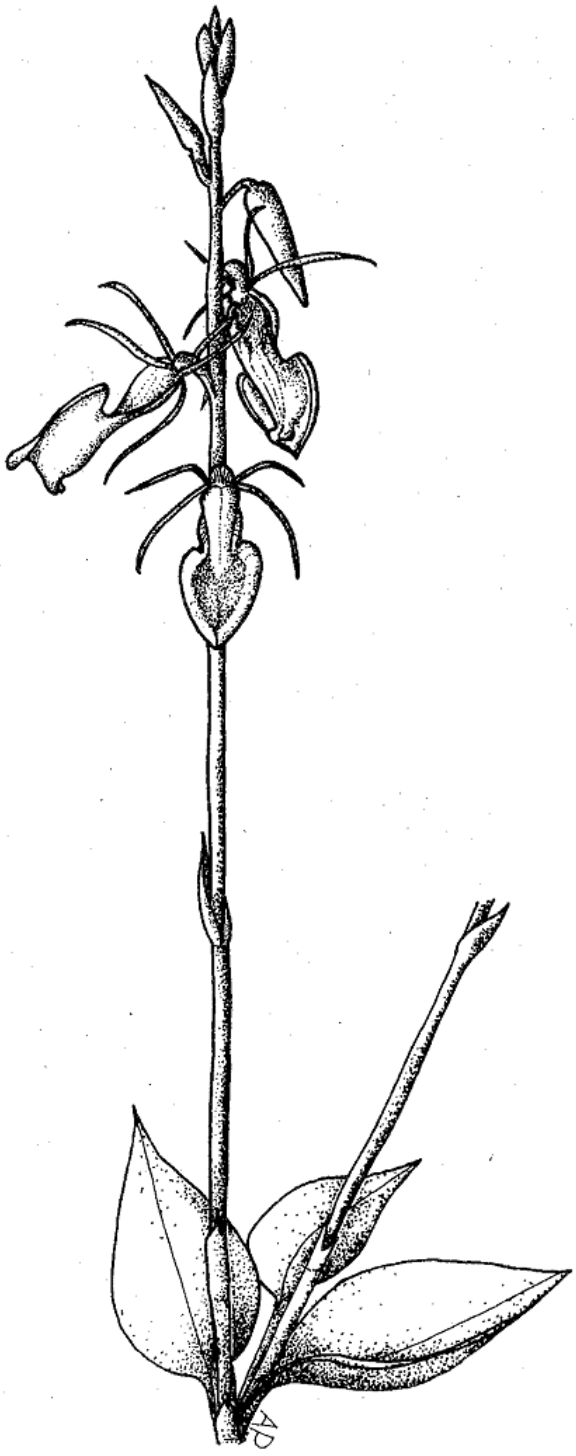
NATIVE ORCHID SOCIETY

of

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

JOURNAL



Cryptostylis ovata

NATIVE ORCHID SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

JOURNAL

Volume 9, No. 3

April, 1985

Registered by Australia Post Pub. No. SBH 1344 Price 5o¢

CONTENTS:

NEXT MEETING

When: Tuesday, 23 April, 8.00 p.m.

Where: St Matthews Hall, Bridge Street, Kensington.

Subject: Dr. Richard Williams will be speaking to us on the function of Black Hill, and in particular the native orchid section.

HILDA POXON GROWERS

Members who participated in the competition last year please bring their specimen of Hilda Poxon to the April meeting for comparisons to be made.

CORRESPONDENCE

I have received a letter dated 12/3/85 from a Mr Rod. Peakall of the University of Western Australia, Department of Botany, enlisting our help. He is in the process of researching various aspects of genetic systems of Australian terrestrial orchids.

Mr Peakall is interested in hearing from anyone who has observed the pollination of *Leporella fimbriata*. It would be most helpful if the pollinator were captured and sent in a small jar containing 70% ethanol and 3% glycerol. Details such as location, observation, date, etc., should also be provided. He also would appreciate tubers of eastern states terrestrial orchids, especially those which produce active root systems. The tubers of the eastern *Cryptostylis* species are of most interest as chromose counts need to be compared with the Western Australian species *Cryptostylis ovata.*

Seed from any other species of native orchid would also be appreciated as Mr Peakall will be attempting to asymbiotically germinate them. Details such as species name, location, collector and other relevant information should be clearly printed on the accompanying seed package. Detailed information of results and reprints of publications will be provided when they become available.

Please forward all information and queries to:

Mr Rod Peakall
Department of Botany
University of Western Australia
NEDLANDS. W.A. 6009
Telephone (09) 3802207

Editor.

NEW CONSTITUTION

Changes to the Rules and Bylaws of our Society were approved at the last Annual General Meeting. Copies are now available from the Secretary.

WORLD FIRST

We were most honoured to have in our presence at our last meeting the first *Rhizanthella gardneri* grown in cultivation and, of course, its grower Dr. J.H. Warcup. He gave a very modest appraisal of his achievement. The good doctor has kindly consented to write an article for our Journal -- so keep your eye out for it!

IRA BUTLER AWARDS

Ira Butler awards were presented to:

H. Goldsack, 1982, *D. gracillimum* (Spring Show).
Mr and Mrs L. and R. Moore, 1983, *D.* Bardo Rose Kenna (Spring Show)
Mick Ryan Nursery, 1984, *D.* Rosemary-Jupp (Spring Show)

NOSSA PRESIDENTS REPORT - 1985

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Although the last twelve months of NOSSA have not been ones of great change, we have nevertheless seen some important developments.

We saw the establishment of a Conservation Group dedicated to the pursuit of the original aims of our society as set out in our Constitution. Within a short time they have succeeded in casting their message far and wide. It is a development which has lain dormant for some time and has been brought about through the getting together of the right people who believe in these ideals. It is, I am convinced, a timely development for our orchids are under an ever increasing threat through land clearing for various purposes. Even our National Parks are not always safe havens for our natural heritage, as their very popularity brings the danger of people trampling the plants they have come to admire. Education of the public about our orchids will have to play an increasing role in the activities of NOSSA to help safeguard the object of our admiration - our orchids.

Another way of helping to understand our orchids is through cultivation and it is an activity that has always been strongly represented in NOSSA. Although cultivation will probably never save a plant from extinction it may help us to better understand its needs and perhaps apply this knowledge to save them from total destruction in their habitat. One of the developments in terrestrial orchid culture during the last few years is hybridising. It is a facet of cultivation which will continue to have an important place amongst the devotees who indulge in it, and, although I am one of them, I hope the cultivation of species will not be pushed into second place through the pursuit for the perfect artificial bloom to be admired on the show bench. The right path may well lie in the field of selection of better clones or line breeding to improve species regarding floriferousness or disease resistance. Who knows? It is something we need to devote some thought to.

Another welcome development is the experimenting of flasking of both epiphytes and terrestrials by some of our enthusiastic members. We may see some of our better plants selfed and eventually distributed amongst other members. Judging by the interest shown so far, it is going to be a very popular activity in time to come.

While my term as President has been very satisfying and enjoyable there have been a few items that I have not been able to finish or pay enough attention to. The Index of our Journal is one, however, it is still being worked on and will be published as soon as it is finished. Regrettably a lack of spare time has not enabled me to attend meetings of other clubs or their functions like a President should. Not being on the next Committee may enable me to do so now.

As most of you will have noticed we now have a new Editor - Letizia Gentile. She is already doing a good job and I hope you will support her by supplying regular articles for the Journal. It will make her work a lot easier and help to share the knowledge you have gained. Besides myself, two other people are retiring from the Committee. Margaret Fuller, I regret, has decided to step down. She has done a great deal of work and has been particularly interested in conservation and the education of the public, particularly the young, through displays, shows, etc. I would like to thank her for what she has done so far, and when I say so far I know she will keep on working towards these goals for she has a genuine interest in the welfare of our orchids.

President's Report 1985 (contd.)

Peter Barnes, our Trading Table convenor has also decided to have a rest from committee. Another tireless worker who put the trading table on a sound business-like basis making it easier for the next person to take over the running of this important part of our society's activities. Thank you Peter.

Societies like ours grow and thrive because of the efforts of members who are willing to pitch in and help do the work that needs to be done and a lot of work lies ahead yet, particularly the organising and taking part in of the 1986 Adelaide Orchid Conference. A lot of planning is already under way and NOSSA is going to play a big part in it. We need to plan for it individually also. Preparation and planning for exhibits needs to be done well ahead of the actual day it happens and I urge all members to become involved where they can as a show such as this gives you the opportunity to make lots of new friends, and to learn more about our favourite plants.

Finally I would like to mention all those people who I have been privileged to work with on committee and those many workers behind the scenes one rarely hears about but who really make sure everything in this Society runs smoothly. Although I am sure you all get a lot of satisfaction from what you do I would like to personally say thank you all and hope you will continue to do so and keep NOSSA in its rightful position at the top.

Thank you, G* Nieuwenhoven.

ORCHIDS ON DISPLAY

Epiphytes

D. "Gloucester Peaks" x *D. canaliculatum* var. nigrescens (now var. Johannis)
D. delicatum (deflasked 26.2.85)
D. bigibbum "superbum"
Liparis ?
Cadetia taylori
Sarcochilus cecilae
Bulbophyllum exiguum
Liparis reflexa
D. "compactum"

Most of the orchids displayed were "glasshouse" varieties.

Popular Vote: *D. bigibbum* "superbum" - Ms E. Veskic.

Terrestrials

Pterostylis revoluta
P. decurva
P. coccinea
P. obtusa
P. cucullata x *P. ingens*
P. daintreana
P. nutans (flasked)
Prasophyllum archeri
P. nigricans
Rhizanthella gardneri

Pterostylis revoluta is distributed from Victoria to New South Wales to Queensland and flowers after autumn rains. *P. daintreana* occurs in northern New South Wales and has no leaves or rosette from which it flowers. In general it was suggested that slightly damp conditions are most favourable for autumn-flowering terrestrials.

Popular Vote: *P. coccinea* - Mr Unsworth.

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE STATUS OF *T.* X *JUNCIFOLIA* R. Markwick

(Continued from the March issue of the NOSSA Journal,
Vol. 9, No. 2, pages 16, 17.)

On 3 November, 1984 at Lake Fyans near Pomonal in Victoria, I photographed a plant which closely matches details of plants illustrated by Nicholls, which he called *T. ixioides* var. *truncata*. It was growing in lightly-wooded grassland among many fine specimens of plants formerly known as *T. aristata* Lindl. (a name now recognised as being misapplied to the polymorphic species *T. nuda*) and *T. aristata* var. *megcalyptra* (R.D. FitzG) W.H. Nicholls ex J.M. Black both now reduced to synonymy with *T. nuda* R.Br. (although W. Curtis, with qualified reservations, still retains T. megcalyptra for a population of plants in Tasmania). I suspect the subject of the photograph to be a *T. ixioides* x *T. nuda* hybrid.

While rather more slender in habit than its *T. nuda* neighbours, it is nevertheless a very attractive orchid. The more-or-less concave floral segments are bluish-mauve in colour, veined with darker blue stripes, both on the inside, and on the more lightly coloured exterior of the petals, sepals and slightly spathulate labellum. The dorsal sepal and lateral petals carry dark spots. The venation is a common feature of the *T. nuda* growing nearby. *T. ixioides* was not seen to be growing in the area, but Nicholls noted that his plant sometimes appeared in habitats remote from *T. ixioides*.

The mauve to deep reddish-purple colouration evident in the column, column-arms and cilia, is a distinctive feature of the plant. The dark sub-terminal part of the column is very obviously tuberculate, the margin of the column hood is yellow, glandular, slightly bifid (or notched) and noticeably denticulate, more-or-less truncate as described by Rogers for his *T. truncata* but gives the appearance of being thickened and incurved, a feature which departs from the description of *T. decora* in Black's Flora.

The affinities with *T. ixioides* and the many surrounding *T. nuda* are obvious even to the casual observer, particularly the numerous pronounced tubercules on the column which presumably derive from the *T. ixioides* and the darker coloured veining of the floral segments presumably from the *T. nuda*. I reiterate that it differs markedly from anything I have seen in South Australia although it is perhaps worth noting that since hybrids are notoriously variable, it is unlikely that all such hybrids will be identical.

In December, 1984, I had the opportunity to examine Lindley's type specimens of *T. juncifolia* (Gunn 936) end his drawing of the column structure on microfiche at the Adelaide Herbarium. In my opinion, this record shows the plant to be *T. ixioides* the species, not a hybrid. In "The Orchids of New South Wales", H.M.R. Rupp considered *T. juncifolia* to be synonymous with *T. ixioides.* If this be true, what then is the status of the various putative hybrids discussed in this paper?

It is my understanding that when we name a species we make a convenient label for a group of more-or-less closely related individuals, but do not necessarily indicate anything which is either permanent or capable of definition with mathematical precision. To name a hybrid when doubt remains as to its parentage, and to reduce other names to synonymy when the plants in question may or may not have arisen from the same origins, seems to me to be a move with a fairly high potential for creating more problems than it solves.

While I can understand the difficulties confronting orchidologists when they attempt to determine the status of closely-related species and particularly self-perpetuating hybrids, numerous questions arising from the matters

Some Thoughts On The Status Of *T.* X *Juncifolia* (contd.)

discussed, puzzle me as an amateur. Have other members experienced difficulties in trying to determine the correct status of different but morphologically similar plants, using descriptions and keys provided by different authors? Other difficult taxa for example are the *Prasophylla* and *Pterostylis* spp. of the rufa group. Have others, who have been forced to refer to botanical works for difficult determinations, found the necessary comparative study of classification and nomenclature at times rather confusing, and the revisions of late (which include changes in accordance with the rules of priority and changes to satisfy the varying philosophies of "lumpers" and "splitters") rather hard to keep up with, especially when disagreements arise among the professional botanists?

The purpose of plant-taxonomy is to get as close to the truth as possible. The truth, however is sometimes elusive. Clearly, there are representatives of the Australasian Orchidaceae, including both species and naturally occurring hybrids, which require further study directed specifically at defining their correct taxonomic status.

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HELP

We need a conscientious person, who regularly attends meetings, to volunteer to run our Library.

Please contact the Secretary if you are interested.

Articles of interest from other Orchid Journals received have been outlined below. Editor.

ORCHID INDEX

A new Hybrid? (epiphytic)
A brief article describing the orchid and an illustration. Australian Native Orchid Society. North Coast Branch. February, 1985.

Growth and Development, P.C. Tomlinson.
Basic culture considerations are set out for growth and development of plants in glasshouses.
Wellington Orchid Society Journal, Vol. 8, No. 7, December 1984, pages 141-147.

Soft Cane Dendrobium Culture Notes, Late Russell Martin.
Description of methods used to grow this genera successfully in commercial quantities. Gawler Districts Orchid Club Inc. Vol. No. 1, February, 1985, pages 8 and 9.

Pterostylis cocinnea, S. Herd.
Distribution, description and cultivation outlined in article. A.N.O.S. (Newcastle Group), March 1985, page 4.

DIURIS LONGIFOLIA EXPERIMENT D.H. Wells

Several years ago, after repotting *Diuris longifolia* tubers, small broken and shrivelled pieces were found in the bottom of the dormant tuber container.

As it was the end of a busy repotting season, enthusiasm was waning. Normally these pieces would be classed as rubbish bin material, but as every piece of native orchid deserves a chance to grow, the pieces ware planted in an icecream container (drainage holes made) in what I term my "Cymbidium mix" - a mix personally made up and not to be confused with commercial mixes on the market. This mix was decided for me as all my normal potting medium had been used up. All I had available was my cym mix.

Ten pieces of tuber were planted along with an additional unidentified tuber. The pot was marked for identification and placed in its growing position. This pot produced 10 single leaf plants: also a rufa group rosette from the unidentified tuber. An end of season examination revealed 10 small healthy tubers.

All were replanted for the second growing season in the same used mix of the previous year. This season produced 10 double leaf plants. A subsequent

Diuris Longifolia Experiment (contd.)

end of season examination revealed 15 *Diuris Longifolia* tubers, two of which had joined as in a flowering size plant.

The tubers have now been replanted in the same pot of mix (third year of use). This year should prove the use of this mix - maybe flowers are possible. Not only have the pieces of tuber been saved, they have multiplied as well. The rufa group tuber rotted the growing stem in the second year. However, a new tuber was remade without any growth being evident. This tuber has since been repotted in a different medium as it is obvious that the cym mix is too soggy during the depth of winter.

This mix has been successfully used for other genera. Also, with additional ingredients, it has proven satisfactory for many more.

The mix is:

1/3 volume rice hulls
1/3 volume tree fern fibre (chopped up)
1/3 volume Red Gum sawdust (aged)

The plants were grown in an Adelaide suburb under 50% shade cloth conditions, full winter rains, no fertilisers and placed on mesh benches 2/3 metre from the ground.

Advantages	Disadvantages
1, The mix eliminates the search for the correct soil, loam content, used in most mixes as many soils are unsuitable.	1. While ingredients are procurable, they are sometimes hard to find.
2. The ingredients are procurable and a stable mix is obtained.	2. Pots fall over when transporting.
3. Its use for some other genera is very successful.	3. Tall and top heavy plants tend to lean over in the softer mix. (Now experiment- ing with a top layer of ¼" Dolomite gravel or a gravelly Dolomite sand which sets hard. This could also prevent quick drying off as below.)
4. Different mixes can be obtained by adding extra ingredients to the basic mix, increasing the practibility of growing further species.	
S. Excess winter rains drain quickly be- cause the mixture is very open.	
6. Seedlings can be raised in some mixes, using the cym mix as a basis.	
7. No crocking required.	4. Pots dry out much quicker. In early and late season growing, watering has to be watched more carefully to eliminate tuber shrivel in early season and drying too fast in later season.
8. Tubers easily recovered in sieve.	
9. Ideal mix for unidentified tubers as transplanting can be carried out with- out damaging plants during the growing season.	
10. Pots are light to handle.	
11. Compost used for at least three years without repotting.	

This article is written with the object of helping anyone who was in the same position as I found myself a few years ago, uncertain, looking for a good reliable compost, frustrated season after season.

Growers having success should continue with their own mix.

ORCHIDS OF THE WARRUMBUNGLE MOUNTAINS R. Bates and P. Brew

The Warrumbungles are situated in central northern New South Wales near the town of Coonabarabran. It is a fascinating area of rocky spires and domes which are all that is left of a large volcanic centre active some 13 million years ago. The volcanic vents were plugged with fast cooling lava and as these formed a very hard rock they remained after the volcanic cones themselves had eroded away to give bizzare vertical-sided peaks such as the n "Breadknife".

Rainfall is similar in amount to that of the Adelaide Hills but falls irregularly at any time of the year. Parts of the Warrumbungles look very much like the Adelaide Hills while the rocky places with their forests of native pine look more like the southern Flinders Ranges. Not surprisingly many of the orchids of the Warrumbungles also occur in the Adelaide Hills and southern Flinders. The Warrumbungles are, in fact, a meeting place of plants from arid outback to the west and the rainforest of the east and at one place the dry-land *Pterostylis, P. boormanii* can be found growing next to *Chiloglottis gunnii*, an orchid more commonly associated with cool damp places.

There is always some orchid or other in flower in the area. In summer one can find the tall pink *Dipodium punctatum*, the leafless saprophytic "summer Hyacinth" on Siding Rock Mountain on the southern slopes just below the giant telescopes which sit astride the summit. The very similar yellow-flowered Dipodium hamiltonianum is a rare plant of the rocky slopes toward the western plains.

In autumn the large greenhood, *Pterostylis revoluta*, flowers in abundance after rains and is found throughout the area especially in the National Park. Less common is the small flowered greenhood *Pterostylis parviflora* found in both heathland and low forest. It was curious to see that flowers of *Eriochilus cucullatus* "Autumn Rabbits" are normally pink in this area whereas in South Australia we are used to the flowers being white. One miniature *Prasophyllum* occurs in the Warrumbungles but we were unsure if it was *P. nigricans* or *P. rufum* as flowers exhibited features of both!

Winter in the Warrumbungles tends to be very cold, especially at night, but on the frost free slopes the green flowers of *Pterostylis longifolia* manage to find shelter from the cold. The small blue fairies *Caladenia caerulea* are reputed to grow in the park but we saw none.

As in the Adelaide Hills, spring is the time to see the greatest variety of orchids. On the south side of the higher peaks *Glossodia major* gives its welcome splash of purple and the familiar *Caladenia dilatata* was a further reminder of home. Other orchids familiar to us included *Caladenia catenata*, *Calochilus robersonii* and *Thelymitra nuda*. Most of the greenhoods were known to us too. These included and *Pterostylis mutica, P. rufa* and *P. boormanii*, but one which was new to us at the time was *Pterostylis hamata*. It was interesting to see just how distinct these were from the plant we were at one stage calling *P. hamata* in South Australia. None of the donkey orchids were familiar and the best match for names we could do indicated *Diuris abbreviata* and *D. citrina*. Although this latter name is supposed to by a synonym of *D. platichila* the plants were quite distinct from that species seen elsewhere.

Both *Microtis unifolia* and *M. parviflora* were found and rather to our surprise *Chiloglottis gunii* of an unusual form. We had not expected to see *Chiloglottis* in the dry heathland in which we found it.

Orchids of the Warrumbungle Mountains (contd.)

The only *Prasophyllum* seen in the area was *P. patens* but this was in the flat country north of the mountains. We are sure there are other orchids in the Warrumbungles but this brief resume is based on short visits made by the authors in September, October, December and April.[1]

(1) R. Bates early September 1982 (during drought) and December 1984. P. Brew in October 1983 and April 1984.

7th REGIONAL ORCHID CONFERENCE

October 19 and 20, 1985.

Host Club: Gosford and District Orchid Society.
Secretary: Mrs M. Trotter, P.O. Box 541, Gosford, N.S.W. 225O
Telephone: (043) 28 1485
Venue: Florida Hotel, Terrigal.

Fellow orchid growers, you are invited to a mini orchid conference. Gosford Orchid Society promises you a stimulating weekend, enjoyable socially, scenically and orchidaceously.

Terrigal is the heart-beat of the picturesque Central Coast, and is only an hour's drive from Hornsby. Slightly longer by the old road which winds through unique sandstone gullys and ridges rich in wild flowers during late spring. Or you can come by train from Sydney or from the north and be met at Gosford station.

Saturday's programme is to be based on panels of experienced growers dealing with such aspects as species growing, nutrition and those genera now gaining popularity such as Lycaste, Pleione and the Ondontoglossum alliance. A banquet on Saturday night will prove Florida's high standard of catering. Arrangements are pending for a guest of international acclaim in the orchid world to be the after dinner speaker. The registration fee covers morning and afternoon tea, lunch and banquet, printed proceedings, plus some surprises. It does not include accommodation or Sunday meals. Registration is $60.00 per person.

On Sunday a day in the Wattangen Mountains will feature orchids in the wild and a giant barbecue. You will see the finest views on the coast and some bush orchids. Cost $15.00 includes transport and mid-day barbecue.

Special arrangements to visit nurseries and private collections will be made for those who can arrive on Friday or stay over until Monday. Registration folders will be available early in 1985, in which the full programme will be listed.

Mark the 19th and 20th October in your 1985 diary now.

FIELD TRIP TO MT COMPASS SWAMPS

The season was rather a dry one so any orchid hunters could have been called optimists. Sixteen such cheerful people turned up at the Mt. Compass Post Office at 10.30 a.m. and, led by Bob Bates, proceeded firstly along the Nangkita Road for 5 kilometres to a gravel pit.

After a search of five minutes in a swampy area on sloping cow pasture we found *Prasophyllum archeri* in flower but starting to collapse. This orchid is now rare in the Mt. Lofty Ranges. Several dried and split seedpods of *Thelymitra pauciflora* var*. holmesii* were also seen.

The next location to visit was Warner's Swamp at Yundi on Proctor Road, and, after our leader had obtained permission, we entered. There were plenty of ripe, large, blackberries to partake of while walking to the swampy areas. The first orchid to appear was indeed the rarest and it was in flower with some ovaries swelling. It was *Pterostylis aphylla* (see NOSSA Journal, July 1983). In all we counted some 30 flowering plants; with a more intense search no doubt more could be found as their green shade is identical to the surrounding marsh grasses.

Nearby *Cryptostylis subulata* was almost finished, one solitary open flower remaining. This plant would have been at its flowering best in December. A few good specimens of *Spiranthes sinensis* were also in flower including one with all white flowers. An eye lens was used to show up the full beauty of these delicate little orchids. In addition to dodging many spiders in their webs we noticed many leaves of *Prasophyllum australe* and a few *P. hartii* in seed.

In returning to the cars we passed by more blackberry bushes laden with ripe fruit, some supplementing our lunch. All agreed that the orchids had been good, even considering the dry summer. Three of the group continued on to a swamp close to Yundi township and fronting Burma Road after the rest of the group had dispersed. There we found dozens of *Thelymitra venosa* in seed and a fern ally rare to South Australia, *Lycopodium serpentium.*

Orchids Seen

Locations: (a) Nangkita gravel pit swamp.
(b) Warner's swamp; Yundi.
(c) Burma Road swamp.

In flower	quantity
Presophyllum oroheri(a)	1
Pterostylis aphyIIo (b)	30
Cryptostylis aubulata (b)	1
So1rntheo sinensis (b)	5
Dipodium punctatum (in eucalypt forest near swamps)	1
In seed	
Thelymitra pauciflora var " holmesii (a)	4
Prasophyllum hartii, (b)	3
Thelymitra venosa (c)	50
Cryptostylis subulata (b)	100
Leaves	
Prasophyllum australe (b)	50

TOTAL: species 9, 5 of which were in flower.

SHOW DATES FOR 1985

Club	Autumn	Winter	Spring
O.C.S.A.	2 May	13-14 July	30 August - 7 September
N.E.D.O.S.*	-	19-29 July St Philips Parish Hall	5-7 September St Philips Parish Hall
Orchidaceous	-	27 28 July Thebarton Town Hall	23-28 September Tea Tree Plaza
South Coast	-	22-27 July Colonnades	23-28 September Colonnades
N.O.S.S.A.	-	-	14-15 September Goodwood Orphanage
Gawler	-	20-21 July T.A.F.E.	30 September - 15 October Elizabeth Town Centre
Riverland	-	-	8 September Waikerie Institute
Whyalla	-	24-27 July Westlands Agric.	18-21 September Westlands - Showgrounds 24-25 August
Pt Augusta	-	to be advised	-
Pt Lincoln	-	-	18-21 September
Sunraysia	-	to be advised	-

* N.E.D.O.S. Exhibition at Gilles Plains Shopping Centre 26-28 September.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

PLEASE NOTE

Subscriptions are now due:

Single $6.00
Family $8.00