

W.A. NATIVE ORCHID STUDY

CONSERVATION GROUP

NOVEMBER 1975

PRESIDENT H.E. BOOTH

VICE PRESIDENT A. BROTH

SECRETARY L. SUPPARD

TOPIC

The topic talk was given by Mrs Faye Hoffmann on Thelymitre and these are the notes taken from her talk, which was supported by very good slides.

The Sun Orchids or Thelymitre are found in New Zealand, New Caledonia, Java and Australia. The genus name "Thelymitre" refers to the hooded column with appendages & means literally "Women's Head-dress."

In W.A. we have 27 species and x varieties.

They appear in W.A. from at least as far north as the Murchison River to Albany and Esperance in the south, and to Coolgardie in the east, some varieties such as *T. antennifera* being found in all localities.

T. mucida "Flum Orchid" found in the wet areas in the south, SEPT - OCT.

"*T. pauciflora* - sometimes so pale as to be nearly white, rarely open and probably self pollinating. SEPT - OCT.

T. erinacea - "Blue Lady" Fairly common throughout the S.W.

T. nuda "Fair Highway end of October, can have 15-20 flowers to a spike. Varies from white through to mauve & pink to blue. Erickson says rarely collected but she obviously did not go where we went SEPT - NOV.

T. maculata "Swamp Sun Orchid" white or cream, purplish red spots. Grows on the wet lands around Albany. Have collected these as late as early January.

T. pauciflora "Sandplain sun orchid" A close relative of *T. antennifera* from which it differs mostly in the squat column. We found this growing amongst Antennifera north of Borden in early September. Erickson says October but I feel this is a little late.

T. macmillanii "Galion Sun Orchid" Another close relative of Antennifera with which it almost invariably grows. Varies from pale peach to almost red found near Cranbrook in Sept-Oct, also east of Southern Cross in October (extra red).

T. antennifera "Vanilla Lemon Scented, mustard Sun Orchid, widespread in Aug.

T. villosa "Custard Orchid" Flowers are usually large & marked with dots or spots, though sometimes lacking markings at all. Fairly common around Narrogin area SEPT - OCT.

T. flexuosa "Twisted Sun Orchid" A small wiry little plant with the typical right angle bend in the stem. 1-4 small yellow flowers. Fairly common in damp places. SEPT. - OCT.

T. fuscolutea "Loop r. Orchid." There are two varieties of this orchid.

T. fuscolutea var *fuscolutea*

T. fuscolutea var *stellata* Which is a much browner type with the column fringe bright orange. Found throughout the coastal plain & sometimes further inland. SEPT - DEC.

T. variegata "Queen of Sheba" Truly the most spectacular of our sun orchids. There appears to be two of these - one flowering in June & July, the other in August, September. The early flowering type from Moqumba area has distinct points to the column arms where the late flowering variety does not have these.

POWERS OF INTEREST

The Nedlands Shire Council have offered the Group a parcel of land with the promise of reticulation of the trikile system. The Group can transfer endangered orchids into this A class reserve. The Committee have been empowered to act on the decision of the inspection party. This is a start in our conservation plan.

W.A. Native Orchid display at the Sydney Orchid Conference received fourth place and created a lot interest amongst the visitors.

FIELD DAY

The long weekend 11th, 12th & 13th of October was very interesting and successful trip - 52 species were found in this 50 mile trip. The meeting place was Munirap, B.C., I caught the 10 a.m. to Port Alberni, North Cowichan and then back to Bridgetown.

Sunday along the hair highway to Lake Muir, which has always proved good hunting and findings, this time proved no exception. Then moved on through Frankland and found the elusive *Ca. luteola*, boobook. The next stop north of Cranbrook at the Gordon River, Thelymitra was out in profusion and all variations of colour was to be seen.

St. Barker was the resting place for Sunday night and Monday morning began the trip back north through Cranbrook to Campbellton to Kootenay and northwards to Hazelton and the Highway, finally searching in the twilight for *Calochilus robertsonii* and believe it or not, finding it.

By this time it was late, so a quick change out of the bush clothes into something respectable and all had a good hearty dinner at the Food Inn to end a very good trip.

No report of the Western Field day as yet.
