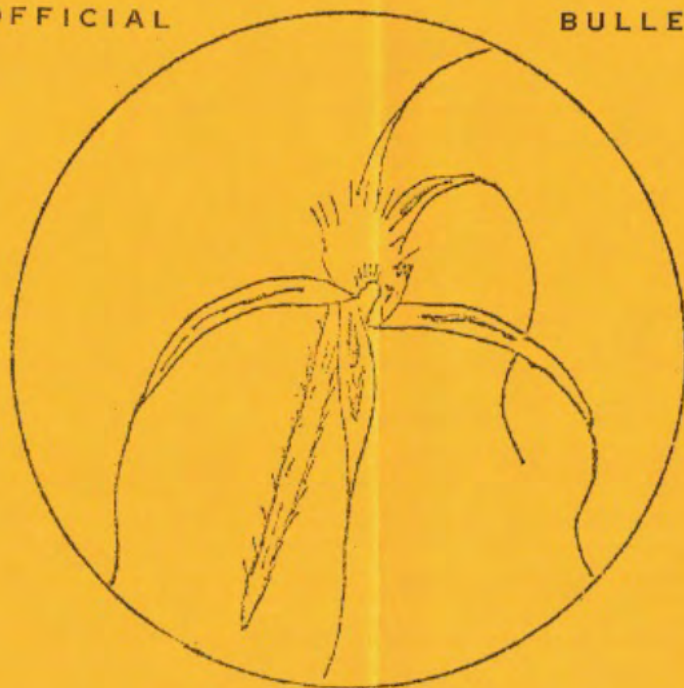


OFFICIAL

BULLETIN



Registered for posting as category "B"

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PRICE 20 cents

**MAY 1978**

## TOPIC TALKS FOR MEETINGS 1978

Date	Item	Speaker
February	Slides for identification and of interest Potting demonstrations	G. Kierath
March	How I grow my Orchids	F. Bishop
April	Pterostylis general	A. Brown
May	Registrar's talk Seeds	R. Brown L. Sheppard
June	Group Involement	A. George
July	Lesser Known Orchids	N. Hoffman
August	Growing & Pressing	R. Lander
September	How I grow my Orchids	H. Foote
October	What to expect to find in the S.W. corner Seeds	L. Sheppard
November	Thelymitra	F. Gordon
December	Social Gathering	

Meetings are held at the Department of Agriculture FILM ROOM, Jarrah Road, South Perth on the 1st Friday of each month.

February 3rd AGM

April 7th

June 2nd

August 4th

October 6th

December 1st Christmas Meeting.

March 3rd

May 5th

July 7th

September 1st

November 3rd

The May meeting was highlighted by a talk on the recordings of orchids found by the Group and recorded by the Registrar, Mr Roy Brown. Roy has gone to a lot of work in drawing maps of the Stn West and pin pointing areas in which different species are found.

These recordings are taken from field sheets submitted to him by members.

There were also a few slides shown of the area 'Cristata Compound' and erecting the fence.

Albany Trip - April 15 & 16 - Faye Gordon

A total of 4 cars made the trip to Albany 3 from Perth and one from Salmon Gums. It was pleasing to see Don Voigt and Fred Nananganeti had taken the trouble to drive over from Salmon Gums to join us.

Ron Heberle, as usual showed us some local spots but finds were few. The recent onslaught of Albany had caused a lot of damage and Ron was of the opinion that many orchids had been damaged by wind and sand.

Eriochilus dilatatus were found scattered through the bushland but Caladenia aphylla was notable by its absence - we found only one - at Bakers' Junction on the Sunday.

The biggest surprise of the weekend was the number of Leporella fimbriata found in Flower. Along Millbrook road near the edge of the swamp we found numerous flowering plants in a fire-break. The numbers of immature plants there was quite incredible. Andrew Brown has found this orchid



in the same area and conditions over a period of four years. This would appear to be a complete contradiction of the widely held theory that Leporella only flowers after a fire since it was obvious that no fire had been through this area in recent years.

On the Sunday, although Ron could not be with us, we spent the morning at Bakers' Junction where we found alone C.aphylla, Bricochilus dilatatus and numerous spiders and assorted insects for our young entomologist - who incidently upset the 'mob' by disturbing a very smelly dead dog.

The area was generally very dry and 'Alby' did a great deal of damage, but those of us who made the trip were quite pleased to have found examples of the only 3 species flowering at this time of the year.

One previously unnamed species was 'dubbed' by Fred and Ian - the ti-tree var Liptonia sub species Jiggler - after we had stopped for a cuppa and adorned a tree with our used tea bags.

Our grateful thanks to Ron Heberle and also to Norm Butler who gave their time so willingly to show us around.

Orchid of the Month - A. Brown

Caladenia drummondii - the winter spider was originally described by the early naturalist "James Drummond" in the 1840's. Giving the type locality as the Swan River Colony he set naturalists a mystery which was not solved for nearly 120 years.

Over the years botanists and orchid enthusiasts

searched for this orchid (described as looking similar to Cal. hirta) along the Swan River, however, it was not seen again until 1953 when Mrs Rica Erickson discovered it at Wongan Hills.

At first it was thought to be a new species until 1960 when it was confirmed as being Cal. drummondii. Since then it has been found in habitats extending from Korawa to Kondinin, but is under threat of extinction due to clearing for agriculture.

Cream and maroon in colour, the winter spider grows to 10cm in height and is produced from a small leaf which often trebles in size after flowering. Its usual season - late May - Mid June.

#### New Members

We welcome into the Group two new members:

Mr Des Kruske

Mr O'Connell

#### Rhizanthella gardneri - Alex George

Mr Jack Trott, discoverer of the strange Underground orchid, has offered a reward of \$100 to the first person to find the orchid again. Mr Trott found the first specimen while clearing his farm near Corrigin in 1923. Since then it has been seen only four times, in each case by a farmer clearing new land. The last was in 1959, near Babakin.

There are only two underground orchids known in the world, the other being in New South Wales. They have intrigued scientists who still do not know how the flowers are pollinated, and seeds spread. As far as is known, the flowers never appear at the surface of the ground.



The Underground Orchid (*Rhizanthella gardneri*) is like a daisy head, with bracts surrounding many tiny flowers, the whole head 4-5 cm ( $1\frac{1}{2}$ -2 inches) across. It is borne on a fleshy stem. The whole plant is almost white, tinged with purple. It has no green parts.

It should not be confused with Broomrape, another purplish plant with small flowers in a spike on a stout, hairy stem, and a bulb with orange roots. This plant appears above ground and although orchid like in appearance has no relation to orchids.

The Underground Orchid flowers from May to August and has been found in the wheatbelt from Goomalling to Corrigin but probably has a wider range. It grows in loam or clay-loam, probably cream-white, where the vegetation consists of tall mallees and shrubs. Several of the previous finds have been close to plants of the Broom Honey Myrtle (*Melaleuca uncinata*) which has needle-like but rather soft leaves 2-4 cm long with hooked points. This may have been coincidental, since Broom Honey Myrtle is one of the most widespread shrubs of the wheatbelt.

It is thought that the plants may flower only in certain seasons such as the one we are currently experiencing when there have been late summer rains. The best chance of finding one may be to search new land being ploughed for the first time. Otherwise many hours may be spent in fruitless searching. It may, however, be worth investigating small bumps in the soil such as are caused by mushrooms before they break the surface. One may be the elusive Underground Orchid.

Anyone finding what they believe to be an Underground

Orchid is asked to forward it immediately, in a plastic bag with damp (not wet) paper, to Mr Alex George, Western Australian Herbarium, Department of Agriculture, Jarrah Road, Stn Perth, W.A. 6151. Mr George will check whether or not the plant is the orchid.

### Seed Raising

We are endeavouring to interest members in trying to propagate plants by seeds. Seeds are vital to ensure the survival of a good many of the terrestrial orchids. With this in mind we have started seed collection and have a small amount available.

A lot of study and experimental work has been going on in the flasking of the seeds, some species have responded, but certain species are proving difficult, in most cases they germinate but fail in the re flasking.

This method requires equipment which is not available to everybody and leaves us with the method used by Mr Les Nesbitt of South Australia, who is having success, and can be done by anyone having adult plants.

His method is:

"Pots used for seed raising are topped with a thin layer of rotted gum tree leaves and bark sufficiently thick to just cover the soil, and the pot must contain a living plant. Sprinkle the seed over the pot, where it eventually washes down into the surface layers. Seeds may be sown from October to June. I prefer to store my seed in envelopes through the summer and sow in April-May to minimise loss of seed.



Germination takes place in the wet winter months and protocorms must not dry out during this stage of 2-3 months.

I prefer not to disturb the seedlings until they have completed two growing seasons, as they make only small tubers in the first year."

In view of this project we would like members who take seeds to record exactly - name, collection date, locality, time of setting, method, and whether successful or failure. This information can be supplied to our culture registrar Alison Harrington.

We have now purchased a projector with a slide cartridge, 36 size and a drum to hold 100 slides. This has been our aim and at last we have been able to purchase this piece of equipment. We must at this stage thank Mr Herb Foote who used his projector at all the meetings to show slides of the talk programme and others of interest.

There was a report in last month's bulletin of an additional set of prints. I must correct that now: There are two sets available at \$7. each set of 13.

#### Plants on show at the meeting

Those in flower were: *Eriochilus dilatata*, *Fraso nigricans*, *Pteronana*, not in flower but nice healthy plants - *Pteronana curta* (Sth Australia).

The opportunity table was again well supported with plants and customers - keep up the good work.



The raffle, a cake donated by Ruth Bishop, was won by Jean Long.

Librarian report on slides

Although we have a good collection of slides, there are quite a lot of orchids which we do not have slides for. These will be listed each month in hope that the members may have some of these or will endeavour to photograph the required species to make our slide library complete:

- |                       |                   |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| A.tenuissimus         | M. atrata         |
| C. caerulea           | M. brownii        |
| C. cristata C. carnea | M. media          |
| C. graminifolia       | Pr. brownii       |
| C. lavendulacea       | Pr. cyphocilum    |
| C. marginata          | P. giganteum      |
| D. laxiflora          | T. spirali        |
| E. emarginata         | T. tigrina        |
| M. alba               | T. villosa        |
| Fr. grimwadeanum      | C. geminata forma |
| Fr. lanceolatum       | lutea             |
| Fr. nigricans         | Drakea jeanensis  |
| Fr. sargentii         | Fr. macrostachyum |
| Fr. triangulare       | var ri gens       |
| Ft. mitchellii        | Fr. nigricans     |
| Ft. plumosa           | Ft. vittatata var |
| T. mathewsii          | subdifformis      |
| T. sargentii          |                   |

+++++

Remember articles for sale for the opportunity table for the next meeting.

The deadline for the next edition of the bulletin is June 2.

Send your article to:  
The Editor (Lal Sheppard)



If this space is filled in your subscription is now due:

Mr  
Mrs .....  
Miss

Arrears \$  
Current \$

\_\_\_\_\_ \$

\_\_\_\_\_  
Treasurer.



## FIELD DAYS FOR 1978

Date	Time	Meeting Place	Locality
April 2nd	10.00.am.	Hollywood Reserve	
April 15th 16th	1.00.pm	Roundabout - Albany	
May 14th	10.00.am	Hollywood reserve	
May 28th	8.00.am.	Midland Railway Station. Car Park	Wongan Hills
June 17th	10.00.am	Hollywood Reserve	
July 23rd	10.00.am.	Booragoon Car Park	Collecting
August 13th	9.00.am.	Armadale Railway Station	Dwellingup
September 10th	10.00.am.	Collie River Bridge Daton	Bunbury
October 7th	11.00.am.	Busselton	Augusta
October 8th	9.00.a.m.	Tourist	and
October 9th	9.00.am.	Reserve	Margaret River
October 22nd	10.00.am.	Hollywood Reserve	
November 25th	1.00.pm		
November 26th	9.00.am.	Roundabout - Albany	

† October weekend: Intending Travellers Please book accommodation early  
†

Car stickers are a good identification for field days  
Personal badges are too  
They are obtainable from the Secretary

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