

BULLETIN SEPTEMBER 2010

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Wongan Hills Wanderings



The Wongan Hills Tourist Bureau was abuzz with noise just before 10am on Saturday 14th August. Both inside and outside, about 20 WANOSCG members chatted and looked at photos of Wongan Hills orchids. Sonya Thomas from Wongan had organised lots of local help with Rod from the Bureau giving us maps and then another local, Lyn Phillips, became our guide for the morning. The starting point was Christmas Rock, and after walking down the airstrip we fanned out through the bush. The conditions were deceptively good as the ground was moist from rain the day before, but prior to this there had been no rain for 5 weeks. We weren't expecting too much.

A reasonable number of *C. hiemalis* (Dwarf Common Spider Orchid) were soon found, together with large numbers of *Pheladenia deformis* (Blue Fairy Orchids). As the searching continued a few spider orchid plants were discovered that were larger and had quite stiffly held petals and sepals. So arose the debate, 'Were these something different or not?'



The 'large' flower



The 'typical' flowers

Gary and Sue McDonald together with Kevin Uhe had been there the day before and were happy to show the group the *C. radialis* (Drooping Spider Orchid) and the *C. roei* (Clown Orchid / Ant Orchid) specimens they had discovered. Around the granite rock outcrops a few *Pras. gracile* (Little Laughing Leek Orchid) had emerged despite the dry conditions.

After lunch, the group headed out to Elphin Reserve and Wayne Merritt led the group to a spot where there were *C. longicauda* type flowers. Again discussion ensued about the identification as they did not look quite like *C. longicauda* subsp *eminens* (Stark White Spider Orchid). Some had 4 rows of calli and others 6, but this is often not a particular distinguishing feature.

There were also a range of donkey orchids and while it seemed that some at least were *D. sp* "Three Springs" (Dainty Donkey Orchid), not all the sepals were strongly recurved. In the absence of an identification key, members found it hard to be sure about what we had seen. Some had the view that they were *D. corymbosa* (Common Donkey Orchid).



C. longicauda species

We moved on to Mount Matilda and found more donkey orchids in the carpark and up along the track. We continued to be perplexed about identification, especially with further examples that had quite crowded flower heads. Margaret Petrides discovered some *Pt. sargentii* (Frog Greenhood) and took some interesting photos. Note the labellums!!



The final stop for the day was at Gathercole Reserve where the first of the season's Cowslips (*C. flava* subsp *flava*) were found. Despite limited orchids a wonderful bushwalk was enjoyed (although a bit long for some).

That evening, a number of members came to the Caravan Park and in a lounge area we thrashed out at least some of the identification issues. It was a great evening of chatting, nibbles and wine.

Sunday saw a change of the original plan to go north. Lyn Phillips joined us again and led us to the town nature reserve. This proved disappointing, so the group headed out just north of town where more Dwarf Spiders, more Blue Fairies and more Donkey Orchids were seen. There was some discussion as to whether a few of the spiders were actually *C. dimidia* (Chameleon Orchid). The consensus was that perhaps they were.

We began the homeward journey on the road out to the Rica Erikson Reserve going via Calingiri. A couple of stops on the way yielded a few of what we thought were Dainty Donkey Orchids (*D. sp* 'Three Springs').

Rica Erikson Reserve yielded half a dozen beautiful specimens of *C. xantha* (Primrose Spider Orchid). The colour was a very rich deep yellow. (Did you recognise this on Pg 1?) Some attractive Jug Orchids (*Pt. recurva*) were also found as well as more donkeys.

Only a few hardy souls continued on to Seven Mile Well Nature Reserve where the other front cover photo was taken. This was the Bird Orchid (*Pt. barbata*). This concluded a successful field trip.

John Ewing

FROM VICTORIA

Where are the Foxes?

Mike Duncan

For anyone who has been wondering where Ross & Margaret Fox are, I'm pleased to report that they recently joined a bumper crowd on a WANOSCG (Eastern Sub-branch) field trip around some of the orchid rich reserves in Melbourne's 'green wedge'. Ross & Margaret's presence swelled the number of WANOSCG members to a record high of three! – Ross, Margaret and myself.

On a bright sunny late winter's day, we enjoyed a great display of orchids, due largely to the uncharacteristically wet weather we've been experiencing over the past few months (it's looking like a bumper spring!). The eastern winter staples of *Pterostylis nutans*, *curta*, *melagramma* and *pedunculata* were all spotted in flower within the first 10m of our journey. Although this pace of species spotting could not be sustained, there were orchids in flower everywhere we looked. *P. smaragdina* was in good numbers at its type location, while getting a good photo of the distinctly notched labellum of the tiny *P. concinna* required considerable flexibility, and an albino *P. pedunculata* was still in bud. Seed pods of autumn flowering species such as *P. parviflora*, *revoluta* and *striata* were also abundant.

Corybas incurvus and *diemenicus* were in flower, snugly nestled in spongy green mossbeds. Very photogenic! Ross was determined to find an *Acianthus pusillus* flower that was still open. Hundreds of plants were spotted, but Margaret was the one to discover a single flower on a single plant that was 'less finished' than the rest.

On the sunny side of the hills, the first of the Caladenias were in flower. *C. caerulea* is the eastern cousin of *C. apertata*, so it was familiar to Ross & Margaret, while we were also lucky enough to spot a single *C. praecox* in flower. Unfortunately our luck didn't hold for the spider orchids, with the first of the lovely candy pink

flowers of the nationally threatened *C. rosella* being a week away from opening. The first of the donkey orchids (*Diuris pardina*) were also a week away. Oh well, we've got to keep something for them to see during the rest of their trip!



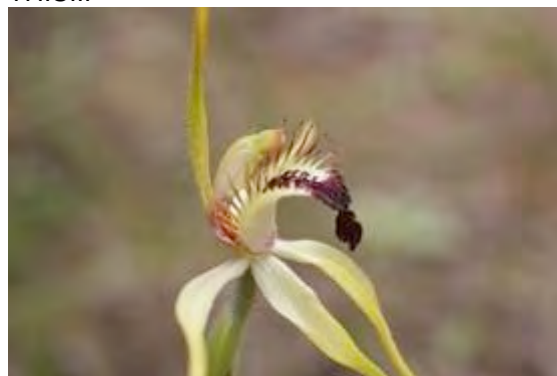
Ross and Margaret examining *Corybas diemenicus* flowers

THE DAVID JAMES TOUR

David James from Queensland, whom some members will remember from Jerramungup in 2009, joined the club trip to Eneabba (see next Bulletin for the report) and renewed acquaintances there. After this, he and John Ewing took off north to Kalbarri. They found an interesting range of species including a small red spider orchid at Yerina Spring Road



and much to their surprise in a nearby location THIS!!!



Having stayed overnight in Kalbarri and listening to the sound of rain all night they arrived at the road to the Z bend to be met by

the ranger with the 'Road Closed' barrier. All the best laid plans are still subject to the weather. They pushed on down the road and eventually finished up in Geraldton.

Here they met local identity Peter Mack who showed them over Byne Park which is out near Walkaway. Peter has worked hard on conservation, although is facing a losing battle against invasive weeds. There were many Daddy Long-legs white spider orchids (*C. longicauda* subsp *borealis*) and a few other species including the Kalbarri Cowslip (*C. flava* subsp *maculata*).

To the east of Geraldton David and John had the very great pleasure of finding another TEN of the caladenia species pictured above (see pg 7 if you don't know what it is).

Moving south they were travelling along the Gunyidi-Wubin Road and came across a group of local people erecting a memorial plaque to the Miamoon Primary School. The locals suggested searching the nearby rocks. The search turned up the Yellow Spider Orchid (*C. denticulata*), donkey orchids, snail orchids and a Dainty Blue Orchid (*Cyanicula amplexans*). At another nearby rock was a huge population of Bee Orchids (*D. laxiflora*)

While a number of sites had yielded little or nothing due to the dry winter, we saw many species and had a great time.

CONSERVATION AND STUDY

Charterhouse Street John Ewing, along with a number of others, has been visiting this site for a number of years. Each year he has noted that the weeds are getting thicker and thicker. Having been to Victoria and seen the restoration work being done there, he has investigated whether this site can improved. After consultation with the Daradanup Shire he has been given permission to remove some of the weeds. What now needs to be established is what to remove, how much of the 'cover' to leave, when to remove weeds and what is the best method. This needs to assessed so that the tubers of the *Pt angusta* (Narrow Hooded Shell Orchid) and the other species are not damaged or unduly disturbed. Any members interested in helping with this restoration project should contact John.

ADOPT AN ORCHID (ADORP)

This will be a joint WANOSCG and DEC project which we hope to implement next year. WANOSCG's goal is to obtain better knowledge of the ecology, biology and status of Priority orchid flora in WA in order to improve their conservation in the wild and improve our members' knowledge and expertise.

DEC's goal is to obtain and collate data, beyond their available resources, that can be used for the conservation of these species.

We are asking for small groups of members (2-6) to study and closely monitor, new and priority 1 and 2 orchids, doing at least 2 field trips for each orchid at flowering and fruiting times. The group will need to fill out a DEC survey report at both times. This will be for known sites and also attempting to locate new sites.

Groups will be provided an information pack on their orchid by DEC's Andrew Brown.

Please contact Kim Hanson if you have any thoughts on this project. [redacted] or [redacted]

THANKS REGARDING THE SURVEY OF MEMBERS

– The committee would like to thank all those who took the time to return the survey forms. As announced at the August meeting, opinions and comments have resulted in the committee taking direct actions to implement some of the suggestions by members (see the minutes for specific details). Not everything can be accomplished immediately, but overall the exercise was very positive as it will help in making our club even better.

AUGUST MEETING MEMBERS' SLIDES

Jay Steer presented slides that he had shown to his work colleagues, most of whom knew little about orchids. He showed members the background about the structure of orchids and then presented a range of photos from different genera, including *caladenias*, *diuris*, *pterostylis* and others. It was an excellent coverage of a range of beautiful species with some stunning photos of *T. apiculata* (Cleopatra's Needles) and a VERY pink *C. vanleeuwenii* (Moora Spider Orchid)





Keith Lightbody followed with another stunning array of photos of *T variegata* (Queen of Sheba) that had been taken down at Albany only 3 days before. The remarkable range of colour forms demonstrated why this flower has this botanic name.



Thirdly Eric Schwartz showed an array of local species found in the Canning Nature Reserve, which is quite close to where he lives. His photo of *Pt. sanguinea* which was a rich golden brown, showed the 'flat' lateral sepal which is the distinguishing characteristic of this species.

IMPORTANT

OCTOBER MEETING

During this meeting we are going to focus on *thelymitras* (Sun Orchids). We would like a range of photos to be sent to the editor (John Ewing – email is [redacted]) with the aim of doing some "study" in the meeting so that we will be better equipped to identify the various sun orchids over the October/November season. For this to work well, we need your photos of the 'harder to identify' flowers. You will need to say where and when the flower was photographed, even if **you** are not sure what it is. These photos need to be sent **ASAP** so that a composite file can be compiled.

If you live outside WA and would like to contribute some sun orchid photos for our meeting, please send some pictures to John (up to 5 of your favourite shots) Please identify

your species and what general region in your state they come from, and we will enjoy your favourites.

OBJECTIVES OF THE GROUP

- a) To promote interest in and preserve Western Australian indigenous orchids.
- b) To learn the best means of cultivation and do all things possible for the conservation of native orchids in their environment.
- c) To learn their habits and keep records.
- d) To have field days and learn to recognize the different genera and species.
- e) To hold meetings for the exchange of knowledge and furthering of interest in W.A. orchids.
- f) To affiliate with kindred organizations.
- g) To make rules for the governing of the Group's domestic affairs.
- h) To do all such lawful things as are incidental to or conducive to the attainment of the above objectives.

Note: The opinions expressed by contributors to this Bulletin are not specifically endorsed by this Group.

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WANOSCG GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, 18th August 2010

Meeting held at: BGPA Boardroom, Kings Park.

Meeting opened: 8:08 pm

CIRCULATION OF REPORTS:

Attendance Book and Treasurers Report were circulated to the members

ATTENDANCE: 26 members present;
4 apologies; 1 visitor

RAFFLE : Kindly donated by Kevin Uhe

1. PREVIOUS GENERAL MEETING MINUTES Amendments: None

The General Meeting Minutes as distributed are a true and correct record of the meeting of 21st July 2010.

Moved: Jay Steer and Seconded Garry McDonald and carried

2. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING : None

3. CORRESPONDENCE

1. A letter was received from DEC informing WANOSCG that our submission for the Community Environmental Grant (*Caladenia heugelii* water relationship project) was not successful.
2. An invitation from the Conservation Council of WA was received for a free

workshop on the week-end of 30th of October

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM CORRESPONDENCE: None

5. FIELD TRIP REPORT:

1. The Field Trip Co-ordinator gave a summary of the forthcoming trips.
2. The Julimar Forest trip on Sep 5th is at 10 AM at the end of Stevens Road.
3. Over 20 people attended the Wongan Hills trip, with a range of orchids being found (30 species/subspecies, including leaves). There was great help from the Wongan Hills Tourist Bureau.
4. No names have yet been received for the forthcoming Esperance trip.

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

Members Survey- further to the results published in the Bulletin, a brief summary and discussion of the survey results was presented:-

1. Most members agree that the Group should take an active role in the conservation of orchids; the Group's name should retain the word "conservation"; there has been an opportunity for comment on the Group's conservation activities, and the Committee has taken an active role in the management of all actions. Members should make any further comments known to the Committee
2. It would be desirable for more information to be presented to the general membership. On this point, a new initiative – Adopt an Orchid - was introduced to the Meeting by Kim Hanson. This initiative is still being developed and is not finalised – it is being discussed with the Department of Environment and Conservation.
3. There is a need to better help members identify orchids – to help with this the Committee is exploring the drawing up of information sheets/packs on different orchids. Donna Wajon has started on information of the *Caladenia* genus – more volunteers are needed.
4. There is some uncertainty around the purpose and use of the Group's Database – the Committee has undertaken to review this and to report back.
5. Membership promotion – Increased membership numbers has its challenges, with the potential of increasing the damage done to the orchids and their environment with an increasing number of people on field trips. Some measures are being taken to limit the size of groups on trips.

However there is still a good reason to promote the Group and to get more members – the Committee will be seeking a volunteer from the general membership to help collate and action ideas to promote membership.

6. Funding of conservation groups and activities – the Committee has decided to bring to the General Meeting any significant expenditure on conservation matters before they are made.
7. A summary of Committee Meeting topics discussed will be presented to the General Meeting and put in the Bulletin in the future.
8. The floor was opened for any further comments:
 - i) Jack Eborall expressed the view that members should be trusted, and that they should have access to the Group's Database information, and that restricting the access to the Database should not cut across the good feeling in the Group.
 - ii) The danger of orchids being dug up was raised – any members seeing any signs of such activities can report the matter to the Committee or directly to DEC.
9. Positive comments were received about the new Bulletin format. A question was asked about a colour paper version of the Bulletin – John Ewing indicated that this would be very expensive, but he is looking for ideas of how to reduce the cost. Suggestions would be welcome.

7. PRESENTATION

3 members presented their orchid photographs – Jay Steer, Eric Swarts and Keith Lightbody

8. GROWERS TABLE

Clive Pegler presented a flowering hybrid *Pterostylis* plant. It was from Victoria and is known as Nodding Grace being a hybrid of *Pt nutans* and *Pt curta*.

9. RAFFLE DRAW

Drawn by Jay Steer, and won by: Heather Hills

MEETING CLOSED: 9:15 pm

COMMITTEE MEETING DISCUSSION ITEMS

(This is the first Bulletin to contain a brief outline of the main topics discussed in the committee meetings. It is not a set of minutes and so does not include procedural matters. It will occur in each month's Bulletin in future)

AUGUST ITEMS – the whole time was devoted to survey comments from individuals. It was decided not to publish individual comments to maintain confidentiality of those

offering their personal views. An outline of these views was covered by Eddy Wajon (Chair of the meeting) in the General Meeting (see minutes above).

PROPOSED FIELD TRIPS

Mid - Late September - day trips in or near Perth on dates to be decided. The aim is to build the data base information for the Metro area. There could be more than one location on any day.

SEPTEMBER 25-27th - Esperance. **Note – date is a correction from previous bulletins**
Meet at 12 midday in parking area on beachfront at corner of Norseman and Goldfields Road (Norseman Road is the main road into town –this corner is before you get into town – it has a fishing jetty right next to it.)
OCTOBER 23&24th - Collie and surrounds.
Meet at 10am in Darkan at the War Memorial (on the Collie-Darkan Road) – o/night in Collie
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER – Christmas trip still to be decided.

THE PHOTOS ON PAGE 3

The red spider is undescribed. It looks like the Crimson Spider (*C footeana*) being about the same size (nearly 20cm tall). The second photo is Hoffman's Spider Orchid (*C. hoffmanii*).

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday 15th September 2010 at 7.00pm at the Lecture Theatre, Kings Park Admin. Office.

NEXT GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 15th September 2010 at 8.00pm at the Lecture Theatre, Kings Park Admin. Office.

BULLETIN ARTICLES

Please email any Bulletin contributions to John Ewing at [redacted] or call on [redacted]. Articles for the next Bulletin need to be submitted by 1st of next month

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	Raffle Roster	SPEAKERS 2010
MAR	Ramon Newmann	Andrew Brown - New Caladenia species
APR	Donna Wajon	Ramon Newmann – slides from 2009
MAY	Bill Burton and Sarah Atkinson	Kingsley Dixon Conservation ‘in situ’
JUNE	Christine Lock	Mark Brundrett Wheatbelt Orchid Rescue programme 2009/10
JULY	Jeremy Storey	John Ewing – Orchids of South Australia
AUG	Kevin Uhe	Members’ Slides
SEPT	Stuart Harris	Carmel Wallace – Victorian Orchid society
OCT	Scilla and Gerald Stack	Identifying <i>thelymitras</i> using members’ slides
NOV	David Lawson	Photo competition and members’ slides

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FORTHCOMING FIELD TRIPS
 September – various around Perth and environs
 September 25,26,&27th Esperance
 October 23&24th Collie and environs