

# ISSUE 2 - APRIL 2020



## WANOSCG

The Official Bulletin of the Western Australian Native Orchid Study & Conservation Group



### How quickly the world can change

It seems like it was only yesterday that I was piecing together the last bulletin to go out to our membership and trying to encourage people to get involved in club roles and activities for 2020. At that time, the coronavirus had only just been given its official name and we had just started to see cases arriving in Australia. Despite working in emergency healthcare myself, I still had no insight into how quickly our world would change from business as usual to chaos, panic and heartbreak for many. Our priorities and goals for the year have vastly transformed in response to the global outbreak of Covid-19. There may be members who have been adversely affected by this pandemic whether that be financially, physically or mentally and we ask that you reach out to other members if you need any assistance during these times. As many of us will now be housebound to help prevent the spread of the disease, it's a good opportunity to reflect on how important our environment is to us as human health depends on healthy ecosystems. If one good thing can come out of this whole situation, it is that the environment gets a good break from our human impact. Eventually, this pandemic will pass and the orchids will still be there waiting for another occasion, hopefully thriving. Meanwhile, I hope everyone and their loved ones stay safe through all of this and I look forward to when we can commence formal club activities once again. I'll be surviving by pretending this is the view from my home:



A great location for orchids - Cape Le Grande National Park in July 2018

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### Next General Meeting:

Kings Park Administration  
Building

*Next date to be advised*

### The Committee:

**President** – Ramón Newmann  
**Vice President** – Ian Puddey  
**Secretary** – Pat Richards  
**Treasurer** – Jay Steer  
**Committee Members** – David Lawson, Kevin Uhe, Debbie Proudfoot, Andrew Brown, Bill Gaynor

## Message from the President by Ramón Newmann

What a start to the year!

Though WANOSCG is in a caretaker mode at the moment, the Committee continues to function with the aid of a bit of technology, so WANOSCG is still ticking along.

Last week the Committee held a meeting using video conferencing – once we overcame a few teething problems we got through the agenda covering off a few key points.

One of those key points was the makeup of the 2020 Committee. Though we have not been able to hold an AGM due to the current COVID-19 restrictions, the Constitution allows for the 2019 Committee to continue until we are able to have an AGM.

We have had two Committee resignations (Margaret Petridis and Jon Warren), however the Committee can appoint replacement Committee Members if any vacancies arise. To this end, Bill Gaynor has been appointed as an Ordinary Committee Member, and at the same time we also appointed Nathan Piesse as the Facebook Administrator to succeed Lyn Alcock. Thanks to Lyn for her service running the Facebook page. Both Bill and Nathan submitted Nomination Forms ahead of the due date. So, we are up-and-running!

The 2020 membership subscriptions are due now of course; however, we do recognise that paying them now may be a challenge for some Members. If you can, please do pay now, but if you are unable, we will still keep sending the 2019 Members any material or communications until the crisis is over. We do not want to lose touch with our Members.

It is heartening to hear how individuals and groups are stepping up to help others during these difficult times. I would love to hear from you all as to how, during these times, WANOSCG may be able to support its Members, their communities, and the orchids of course. Just send a note to me, a Committee Member, or the [WANOSCG@gmail.com](mailto:WANOSCG@gmail.com) email address and the Committee will consider the ideas.

Group field trips are off the agenda; however, individuals may have an opportunity to visit some orchids later in the year, consistent with Government health directives. Kevin Uhe is putting together a list of recent burns which some Members may be able to investigate as and when circumstance allow.

To end on a brighter note, we would like to announce the winner of the 2019 WANOSCG Award – Margaret Petridis! You will be able to read more about what Margaret has done to deserve this award in the Bulletin – but I think that most of you already know about the great contribution she has made to WANOSCG over a number of years. Well done Margaret.

I would also like to thank Rachel, our Editor, for putting together this Bulletin under such a trying time!

Don't forget to let me know what you think that WANOSCG can do to best support our Members, and make sure that you keep in touch with the latest communications from the Government, and always follow their advice and directives.

Ramón Newmann



## WINNER OF THE 2019 WANOSCG AWARD – by Ramón Newmann



Margaret Petridis has been awarded the 2019 WANOSCG Award!

Though the Award could not be presented at the AGM, it is being announced now with the presentation of the certificate to follow.

Margaret first joined WANOSCG when it was first formed in 1974 and was an active member for 8 years before moving overseas and returning to WA in 2008. She has been an active member ever since.

Listed below are some of the contributions she has made over the many years she has been a member of the Group. Margaret has made both outstanding contributions to WANOSCG as well as to knowledge and conservation of native orchid species in Western Australia and is very deserving of the WANOSCG award for 2019.

Overview of Margaret's contributions to WANOSCG:

- Committee member for 10 years (1979-1980, 2012-2019)
- Treasurer for 2 years (1979-1980)
- Field Trip Coordinator 7 years. (2013-2019)
- Whilst FTC she has also:
  - Coordinated and lead field trips with locals and DBCA where applicable.
  - Initiated field trip reports which included locations and species found.
  - Conducted Priority and Threatened orchid surveys
- *Caladenia drummondii* study group/survey coordinator since 2016
- *Caladenia drakeoides* surveys for DBCA since 2017
- *Caladenia melanema* (Critically Endangered) research and discovery of a new population
- Frequent photo and ID contributions to the WANOSCG Bulletin and Facebook page
- ADORP involvement
  - *Caladenia cristata* since 2011 (leader)
  - *Paracaleana dixonii* since 2012
  - *Thelymitra* sp. Ongerup since 2014
  - Assisted in surveys/monitoring *Paracaleana granitica*, *P gracilicordata*, *Caladenia postea*, *Caladenia dundasiae*, *Thelymitra jacksonii* and *Pterostylis frenchii* at various times.



Images of Margaret Petridis supplied by Ramón Newmann  
Images of ADORP orchids surveyed by Margaret - *Caladenia cristata* and *Thelymitra* sp. Ongerup supplied by Kevin Uhe



Another aspect of contributing to the conservation effort is Margaret's ongoing efforts to undertake surveys when visiting priority orchid populations. Counting numbers and filling out Priority Report Sheets (not something which most WANOSCG members get excited about or actually do, though its invaluable for the conservation of these Priority orchids).

Congratulations Margaret on a well-deserved Award for 2019!

# WANOSCG Database Template Update by Ramón Newmann

As I am sure that you are aware, WANOSCG records the orchid sightings of its members in a database for a range of uses. These uses include research on specific species and locations, conservation activities and submissions, field trip planning etc.

Now is an excellent time to contribute your recent and past sightings to this Database by submitting them through the updated WANOSCG Sightings Input Template! By then submitting the completed Template to the Registrar, your records can become part of the WANOSCG Database.

The Template asks for the sighting information that is the most useful (however, include what you can) and it provides a drop-down list of the orchid names (including some old names which are then updated for you!). For each species entered, it will tell you where and when it is usually found to help you cross check the identification.

Attached to the bulletin email is the very latest version of the WANOSCG Sightings Input Template (MS Excel), including all of the latest species name updates (version March 2020). It would be most helpful if you could please use this latest version to submit your data from now on, as it has some important updates. If using the template is a challenge, don't let that stop you from submitting your data anyway – other members help to convert the non-standard submissions.

Please fill in the Template (instructions are on the first tab) and send in your data to me using my email below. Once you've submitted your sightings, you will be able to request information back – e.g. where and when certain orchids have been sighted, or orchids in an area. Bearing in mind that there are restrictions on access to GPS and the Threatened and Priority species data.

## Answers to some recent Questions:

1. What if you are not sure of the (a) Current species name or (b) Sub-species?
  - (a) At the bottom of the dropdown list you can find the old names, starting with z.
  - (b) Simply select the name at the species level – e.g. *Caladenia flava*, rather than *Caladenia flava subsp. maculata*
2. How do you make a copy of the Sightings Tab (e.g. one for each trip or year) whilst keeping all of the functionality?
  - An extra copy of the Tab can be added to the Spreadsheet by right-mouse-clicking on the Tab, picking 'Move or Copy', then check the 'Make a Copy' box and click OK. This carries over all of the drop-down lists etc.
3. What if I don't have the GPS reading for the sighting?
  - Provide as much detailed information under Location Name and Description, and we will then interpret/retrofit a GPS value into the Database.
4. What if I have data in an earlier version of the Template?
  - Still submit the old version, as it can be converted as required.

Now is the time to preserve your sightings and potentially put them to some good use!

Looking forward to your valuable data.



Artwork by Trish Newman – Watercolour of *Caladenia sigmoidea*, *Caladenia voigtii*, *Caladenia brevisura*.

## ADORP News by Kevin Uhe

I have received a number of requests to list the current taxa being studied under the ADORP program, especially with the number of additional taxa that have been added in the last few years.

Listed below are the current ones being currently surveyed:

<b>Caladenia</b>	<i>abbreviata</i>	<i>granitora</i>
	<i>ambusta</i>	<i>luteola</i>
	<i>applanata</i> subsp. <i>erubescens</i>	<i>nivalis</i>
	<i>Bigeminata</i>	<i>pholcoidea</i> subsp.
	<i>caesarea</i> subsp. <i>maritima</i>	<i>augustensis</i>
	<i>cristata</i>	<i>postea</i>
	<i>denticulata</i> subsp. <i>albicans</i>	<i>startiorum</i>
	<i>dundasiae</i>	<i>swartsiorum</i>
	<i>erythrochila</i>	<i>uliginosa</i> subsp.
	<i>exilis</i> subsp. <i>vanleeuwenii</i>	<i>patulens</i>
		<i>validinervia</i>
<b>Diuris</b>	<i>brevis</i>	<i>heberlei</i>
	<i>eburnea</i>	<i>oraria</i>
<b>Drakaea</b>	<i>elastica</i>	
<b>Paracaleana</b>	<i>alcockii</i>	<i>granitica</i>
	<i>gracilicordata</i>	
<b>Prasophyllum</b>	<i>paulineae</i>	
<b>Pterostylis</b>	<i>frenchii</i>	<i>heberlei</i>
	<i>hadra</i>	
<b>Thelymitra</b>	<i>dedmaniarum</i>	<i>stellata</i>
	<i>jacksonii</i>	<i>variegata</i>
	<i>magnifica</i>	<i>yorkensis</i>
	<i>Sp. Ongerup</i>	

All the 2019 ADORP information has now been entered into the DBCA database (TPFL) after the big effort last year to get the ADORP information up to date in their system. Once again, the DBCA Species and Communities Program have provided access into their system to allow this to happen which is greatly appreciated.

In 2019, nearly 200 DBCA Threatened and Priority Flora Report's (TPRF's) were submitted by ADORP members so this creates a big strain on the DBCA system, hence the reliance on WANOSCG to be able to enter this data into the system. DBCA are currently developing a new system which once completed will streamline the current process and possibly allow direct uploading.

Finally, I hope everyone is well and keeping safe.



## “Recollections” by Alex George

Born just before the start of World War II, I lived for my first 15 years on Canning Highway, Melville, just west of Wireless Hill (its mast towering above the bush). Opposite us was a Dairy (now Tompkins Park) and Alfred Cove. Stepping through a narrow gate in our picket back fence we were immediately in bushland – woodland of Jarrah, Marri, Banksia and Sheoak. My parents loved being in the bush and had an interest in orchids so I soon got to know these (and other wildflowers). I learnt where to find Hare, Bee, Bunny, Donkey, Cowslip, Banded Greenhood and Spider Orchids and would report the first flower each year.

Farther afield we sometimes drove to ‘Peel Estate’ (Jandakot area) where we had spots to see species such as the Queen of Sheba, Shirt Orchids, Babe-in-a-Cradle and, along the southern edge of Thompson Lake, a wonderful array of spider orchids. In late winter and spring, we would visit Nicholson Road in Canning Vale (all uncleared) to find Mosquito, Flying Duck, Pink Bunny and Hammer Orchids (some years later, after a fire, we found Purdie’s Donkey Orchid there).

Another outing, once a year, was to Wanneroo to see orchids along the western edge of a lake (now Mariginiup Lake) where White Spider Orchids bloomed in profusion. One year my brother found a specimen with nine flowers (now in the WA Herbarium). We also had a spot at Swanbourne where we went in winter to see Shell Orchids (and eat Quandongs near the beach).

We sometimes visited my grandfather in Boya where we saw larger White Spider, Pink Enamel, Blue Lady, Bird and Jug Orchids and in early summer, Elbow Orchids. We visited other spots in the Hills to see Tall Leek, Leaping Spider and Clubbed Spider Orchids.

In the August school holidays our parents sometimes took us for a week or two to the country, staying in hotels at York, Toodyay, Bolgart or Wongan Hills. These introduced us to further orchids such as Zebra, Drooping Spider, Frog Greenhood, Sugar, Ant, Fringed Mantis and once, a Lazy Spider.

... Continued on next page



These incredible botanical watercolour paintings featured here and on the next page were created by Alex George’s father, Russell George in the 1930-40’s. Russell George was a draftsman for the Department of Lands and Surveys during that time.

## ***“Recollections” by Alex George continued...***

On one occasion, as we came back to the hotel at Bolgart carrying a bunch of orchids, a farmer asked our parents where we had found them. He said, ‘I think you should come and meet my wife’ – it was Syd Erickson! So, at the age of about six, I met Rica, little realising that, many years later, I would work with her on the book *Flowers and Plants of Western Australia* (1973), and even edit *Rica Erickson: A Naturalist’s Life* (2005).

At that time our only reference book was Emily Pelloe’s *West Australian Orchids*. It was a game-changer when Rica Erickson’s *Orchids of the West* appeared in 1951. As we grew older my brother and I entered competitions for ‘best collection’ of wildflowers and orchids at the annual Wildflower Show, held in the Perth Town Hall.

My interest in orchids waned somewhat during my high school years but was rekindled the year after I did the Leaving Certificate. I met John Tonkinson (a former member of this club) and together we explored locally, then farther afield. A particular favourite place was a swamp and adjacent sandy rise on Bartram Road, Jandakot. Over several years we found 45 species of orchid there, including Beard and Slipper Orchids, both quite rare locally. Sadly, this (and a number of my other early sites) has now disappeared under houses and other development.



Images from left to right: *Leporella fimbriata* – Maggie Whittle, *Corunastylis fuscoviridis* – Mick Hurdus and *Eriochilus dilatatus subsp. dilatatus* – Krystyna Rees

## “A Tribute to WANOSCG” by Patrick Garnett

On the weekend of June 11<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> 1988, my daughters and I went on one of WANOSCG’s field trips in search of the underground orchid (one of many WANOSCG excursions we enjoyed). From memory, the excursion to the Corrigin/Babakin district was led by Andrew Brown and the group stayed overnight at the Ardath Pub. We enjoyed a hearty evening meal there but the cold showers, although memorable, were less enjoyable. The excursion was successful and you can imagine my eldest daughter’s excitement to discover one the orchids growing in association with a *Melaleuca* species that grows in the area. The excursions our kids experienced with WANOSCG were, I think, a major factor in their lifelong interests in the Western Australian environment and orchids, in particular.



Images supplied by Patrick Garnett –

Close up detail of *Rhizanthella gardneri* (left) and family members with orchid in habitat under the *Melaleuca* trees

## General Business

### Regional Travel Restrictions

In order to reduce the spread of COVID-19, the Western Australian government has introduced intrastate travel restrictions. From Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March, people will not be able to travel outside of their designated region. Some exemptions occur for people travelling for work or medical appointments, compassionate grounds and a few other reasons. These regions are:

- Perth and Peel
- South-west
- Great southern
- Goldfields-Esperance
- Mid-west
- Wheatbelt
- Gascoyne
- Pilbara
- Kimberley

As this is a rapidly evolving situation, these restrictions may change on any given day so it is best to check the WA government website for instructions when considering travelling.



Photo by Mick Hurdus – *Corunastylis fuscoviridis*

## 2020 Proposed Field Trips

At this stage, there will be no planned field trips for 2020 until we have the green light to safely travel and socialize once again. The role of Field Trip Coordinator is also yet to be filled. We had hoped this year to explore more areas of bush that have not been thoroughly surveyed to see what discoveries can be made as well as surveying some of the lower priority orchids. Keep in mind for later this year or likely next year, any potential suggestions that you may have for destinations.



*Praecoxanthus aphyllus* – Image by Krystyna Rees

## General Meeting Rosters

All official WANOSCG meetings are suspended at this stage until we receive any further directives from the Western Australian government. We will keep members updated on any changes through email.

## Membership Renewal

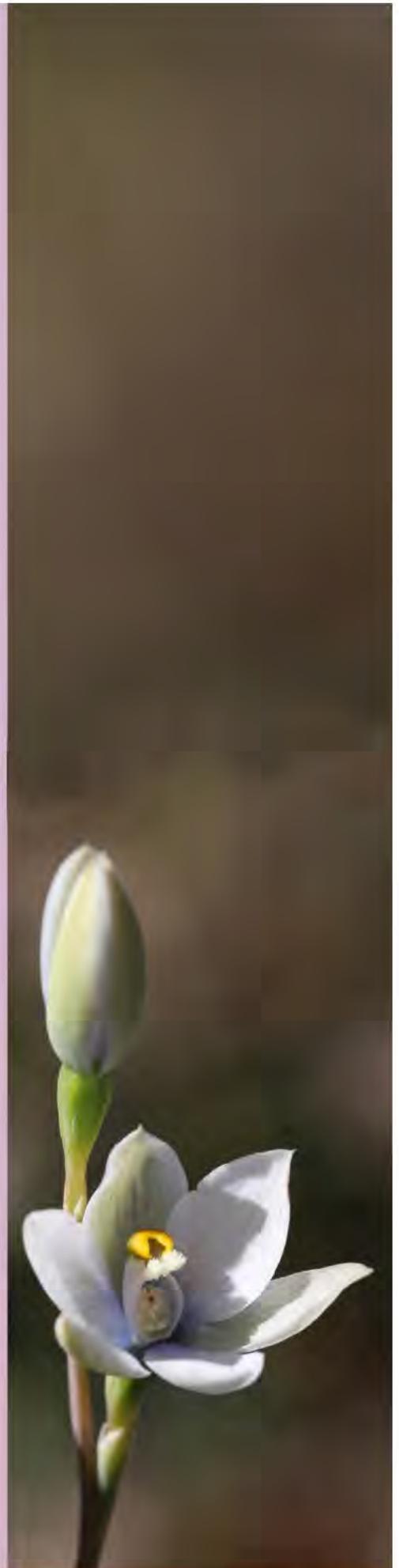
Membership fees for 2020 are now due. Full details are available on the WANOSCG website.

- Ordinary Membership fee of \$35 - This entitles a member to vote and receive a copy of the WANOSCG Bulletin for the months of March to November inclusive and the use of club's library
- Associate Membership fee of \$20 - This entitles a member to receive the Bulletin, but not to vote
- Family Membership fee of \$45 - This cover up to 2 Ordinary Members plus 3 Associate Members at the one residence

Payment of the Annual Fees can be made by:

- Mail with cheques made out to WANOSCG and sent to WANOSCG, PO BOX 323, VICTORIA PARK, W.A. 6979
- Electronic transfer to the WANOSCG bank account: BSB: 306044, Bank name: Bankwest, Account number: 5492468

Note: If you choose to send money electronically please identify what the payment is for (e.g. Annual Fees, Nomination Fee) and send a copy of your electronic receipt to [wanoscg@gmail.com](mailto:wanoscg@gmail.com)



# A Review of South-west Orchid Habitats – by Rachel Halls

While we are awaiting permission to go outside and for the orchid season to truly warm up, I thought it might be useful to have a quick review of orchid habitats. So that when you next head out and drive past an interesting patch of bush or undeveloped land, you can get an idea if it's worth pulling over and exploring and have a think about what may possibly grow there.

One of the most fascinating things about our native orchids is that they seem to be able to grow almost anywhere, even the most seemingly inhospitable, dry looking areas. Orchids are known to be most profuse along coastal habitats along the South-west corridor. I'm sure that I am not the only one that has craned their head looking under the low coastal scrub for Snails and Pink Fairy orchids when heading down a path towards the beach.



Image above – Coastal habitat

*Caladenia* species can grow in almost any habitat though certain species will only grow in one or two habitats whereas species like Cowslips (*Caladenia flava*) can be found in many varied habitats from forests to the coast.

In coastal dunes, the sandy paths provide a great habitat for *Paracaleana* and *Drakaea* species in Springtime. Other species such as Rattlebeaks, *Elythranthera brunonis*, *Thelymitra* and several Snail orchids can also be found in these sandy areas.

Image below – Eucalyptus woodland

*Pterostylis* species can be found in a variety of habitats but generally prefer shaded areas or habitats where they can benefit from the moisture due to water runoff. When exploring she-oak woodland, it always pays to examine the base of the trees as these orchids like to make home amongst the fallen needles or under any low-lying shrubs in the area which can protect them from the sun.



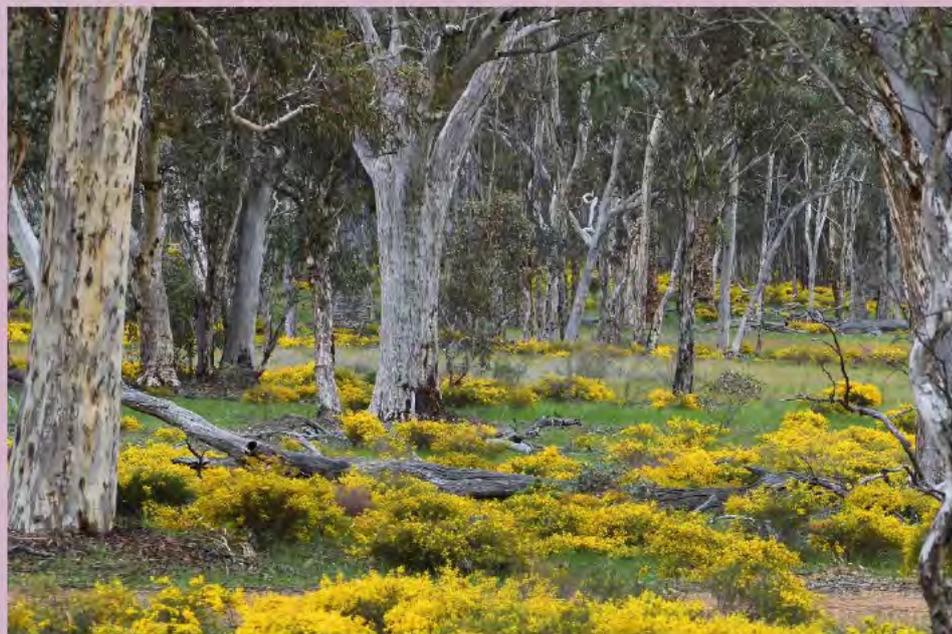
Image below – Salt Lake margins



I have found salt lake margins to be one of the most rewarding habitats to search. A surprising plethora of orchids can be found in the moist soils surrounding these often-dry lakes from *Caladenia* species including *Caladenia exilis* subsp. *exilis*, *Caladenia melanema*, *Caladenia harringtoniae*, *Caladenia drakeoides* to some *Pterostylis* species like greenhoods and several later flowering *Prasophyllum* species like *Prasophyllum drummondii*.

## “Review of habitats” by Rachel Halls continued...

My personal favourite place to roam is undoubtedly any Wandoo woodland. The image the right was taken in Wandoo National Park in August 2018. Not only is it just an extraordinarily beautiful place for a walk outdoors, but there are so many different species to discover. We have found many *Caladenia*, *Thelymitra*, *Pterostylis*, *Cyanicula*, *Diuris*, *Paracaleana*, *Drakaea* and *Prasophyllum* species in these habitats. If you travel through this habitat during different times of the year you can get a true sense of the diversity of species as different orchids come into flower.



Wandoo woodland by Ian Puddey



Where rainfall is limited, particularly inland, there is less diversity in species of terrestrial orchids than towards the coast. Orchids growing in these areas tend to favour shallow soils on granite outcrops or occupy the surrounds of wet winter swamps. On granite, you can find several species of snail, duck and bunny orchids, several *Thelymitra* species including *Thelymitra anteniferra*, *Prasophyllum* and much more. So, if you see a big rock, resist the urge to do donuts in your four-wheel drive on it and instead, get out and comb the rocks for cool looking orchids.

Image left and below – Different rocky habitats

The *Corybas* genus prefers to grow over moist areas with less sunlight so if you seen moss growing then it is worth a look for Helmets.

Beard orchids and some of the *Thelymitra* species including *Thelymitra latiloba* love growing within the dense leaf litter of wandoo and mallee woodlands in late Spring.

*Microtis* species are often considered the weeds of the native orchid world as they will grow just about anywhere, including carparks, in the fertilizer you pour in your backyard and median strips. It's a pity they aren't prettier!



**“Review of habitats” by Rachel Halls continued...**



Images above - Mallee and Wandoo woodlands



Image above – Karri forest

Karri, Marri and Jarrah forests produce a variety of *Pterostylis* orchids in late winter, *Caladenia* and *Diuris* orchids in spring due to the moist soils. These habitats can have orchids flowering all the way through to summer especially down in the Walpole region. Many tall species of *Prasophyllum* can be found amongst the forest floor. Following a burn, the forest can be particularly prolific with Silky Blue orchids, Pink bunnies, Pink fans and Red Beaks.

Image below - Burn area at Johnston Road, Yarloop in 2016

Lastly, remember not to forget certain factors about habitats that are definitely worth stopping and taking a look –

- Burn areas, particularly following a summer burn in the previous 1-2 seasons
- Fallen logs, on the undersides as well as growing along the top of logs is often a favourite place for orchids to grow.
- Co-habitation – if you find an orchid of one species e.g. *Caladenia drummondii* or *Pterostylis scabra*, then remember to scour the area for orchids that are known to flower at the same time and in the same habitat as they will likely be there.



## Question Time!

This section is for any burning questions members may have in regards to Western Australia's native orchids. I'm eagerly awaiting submissions from members again this year and will do my best to provide as accurate answers as possible with help from the experts as required. Answers will be published in the next edition of the bulletin.

### Last month's question:

**True blue pigmentation in flowers is a rare colour to find so how do the *Thelymitra* species display such brilliant blue colours?**

Blue pigmentation in flowers is indeed rare with less than 10% of all flowering species displaying this colour as they don't contain the genes required to produce blue pigment. Plants use anthocyanin cyanidin pigments to create blue colour by modifying the chemicals that make red pigments in plants. Several *Thelymitra* species particularly show true blue pigments, but none more so than that of *Thelymitra crinita*, the Blue Lady. Blue orchids seen in the market such as *Phalaenopsis* orchids are not naturally blue and are instead dyed to achieve their blue colours.

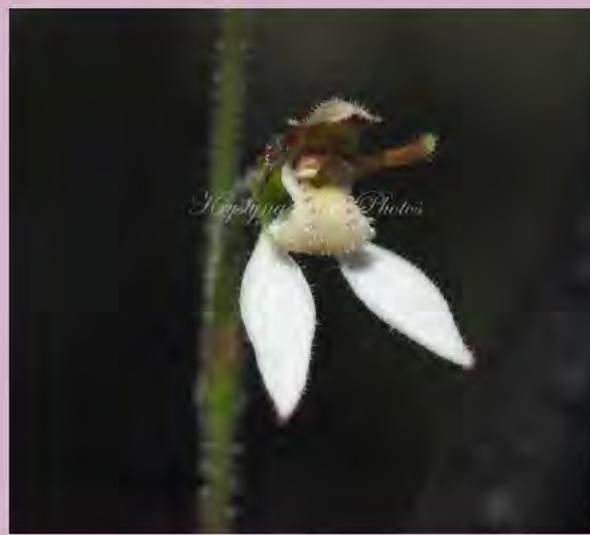
### This month's question:

**Why don't *Pterostylis* species generally flower prolifically after a summer burn?**

*Please send any questions / responses to [wanoscg.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:wanoscg.newsletter@gmail.com). Looking forward to your contributions!*



*Praecoxanthus aphyllus* – Image by Maggie Whittle



*Eriochilus dilatatus* subsp. *multiflorus* - Image by Krystyna Rees

## Bulletin Articles

Please send Bulletin contributions to the Editor – Rachel Halls at [wanoscg.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:wanoscg.newsletter@gmail.com)

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