



# Australian Native Orchid Society - Macarthur Group



JUNE 2022

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**President:** Mr. W. Southwell (Ph. 46818589) **Postal Address:-** 20 Colo Street,  
**Secretary:** Mr. R. Morrison **COURIDJAH. 2171**  
**Treasurer:** Mrs. C. Asquith (Ph. 46259874) **Next Meeting: Tuesday, 21st JUNE, 2022**  
**Life Members:** W. & M. Southwell, A. & C. Asquith, R. Morrison, M.Yabsley, (J. English, J. Riley, T. Cooke)  
**Conservation Officer:** *ANOS Macathur Group disclaims any responsibility for any losses which may be attributed to the use or misuse of any materials published in this newsletter*  
**Venue: BIRRAWA HALL** **Should you wish to pay into our account for your fees**  
**FITZPATRICK ROAD** **BSB 062517 A/C 00909929**  
**Mt. ANNAN.** **Doors open 7.15pm, benching closes 7.55pm, meeting starts 8pm**

Hi to All

Many thanks to Matt Misdale from Campbelltown City Council for his presentation on Biodiversity in the area.

Congratulations to Carol & Tony for plant of the night and Mike Harrison for popular choice.

It was sad news that Deane Macdougall is no longer with us, she had many friends in the club and always made a large contribution at our shows and for the sales table. Although unknown to many members, she will be sadly missed

Good growing  
Wally

### Vale Deana McDougall.

Deana passed away quietly 18<sup>th</sup> May at home. Deana was a skilled orchid grower who supported both our local orchid societies although in recent years, did not attend meetings due to health issues. But, she always had orchids to sell at our shows which contributed to our societies viability. She was most unassuming person and very knowledgeable regarding orchids which she passionately supported. Carol and I are trying to dispose of her orchid collection and from time to time, plants will appear at our meetings. She is a great loss to our hobby.

Our sincere sympathy goes to Pam, her daughter and her family.

### General Meeting – 17 May 2022 8.00 pm

#### Minutes of Meeting

The President welcomed everyone to the May meeting and a special welcome to Peter Wise who re-joined the club. Unfortunately due to recent eye surgery the President would only be able to stay a short while.

**Attendance:** Members: as per sign on book but included Wally and Marg S, Carol and Tony A, Brian B, Mike H, Mike M, Graeme M, Jim C, Julia B, Col L, Marge Y, Gordon B, Wendy E, Peter W, Peter B, Robert M.

Apologies: Tony C, Sandra C, Greg S, MaryAnne W, Neil R, Diane Mc, Phil G, Noel B, Ian L.

Acceptance of Previous Minutes: Moved: Brian Birch Seconded: Gordon Bush Carried

**Business Arising** Nil

**Correspondence:**

**Show Results and CCANOS Newsletter were forwarded to members via email**

**Treasurer's Report:** The Treasurer, reported a closing balance of \$10,212.20.

**Moved: Carol Asquith Seconded: Jim Cootes Carried**

## General business

- Show Awards and Prize Money was distributed.

Champions	Plant	Grower
Grand Champion	<i>Pterostylis ophioglossa</i>	M & W Southwell
Reserve Grand Champion	<i>Cadetia taylorii</i>	Mike Harrison
Bigibbum / Influence Champion	Den. Topaz Sweet	C & A Asquith
Other Orchid Champion	<i>Cadetia taylorii</i>	Mike Harrison
Terrestrial Champion	<i>Pterostylis ophioglossa</i>	M & W Southwell
Specimen Champion	<i>Cestichis angustilabris</i>	Mike Harrison
Exotic Champion	<i>Phrag caudatum</i>	S Crosby / T Costa

Sales Plant Monies was distributed.

Peter Wise donated a variety of Orchid books for sale to members.

The Editor highlighted that the Orchid Society of NSW was conducting a Pre-Judging Course. Anyone interested to contact Tony Aquith.

Members Sales Table still operating – please bring plants to on sell to our members.

**Guest Speaker** Mat Misdale – Cambelltown City Council Biodiversity Officer

Mat provided a detailed update on the various Biodiversity projects happening across Campbelltown including projects encompassing the following fauna and flora:

- Koala
- Flying Foxes
- Gang Gang Cookatoos
- Platypus
- Macquarie Perch
- *Pterostylis Saxicola*

Mat encouraged members to become involved in the community projects and thanked Macarthur ANOS for its ongoing support.

## Monthly Benching Results

Benching Class	Place	Plant Name	Owner
<b>Dendrobium species</b>	1	<i>Dendrobium tetragonum</i>	Mike Harrison
	2	<i>Dendrobium schneiderae</i> var. <i>major</i>	Mike Harrison
<b>Dendrobium hybrid</b>	1	Dendrobium Topaz Sweet	Carol & Anthony Asquith
	2	Dendrobium Hilda Poxon	Mike Harrison
<b>Bulbophyllum species</b>	1	<i>Bulbophyllum macphersonii</i>	Mike Harrison
	2	<i>Bulbophyllum macphersonii</i>	Wendy Estall

<b>Australian species other</b>	1	<i>Cadetia taylorii</i>	Mike Harrison
	2	<i>Cestichis angustilabris</i>	Mike Harrison
<b>Terrestrial Pterostylis species</b>	1	<i>Pterostylis ophioglossa</i>	Margaret and Wally Southwell
	2	<i>Pterostylis collina</i>	Mike Harrison
<b>Terrestrial hybrid</b>	1	<i>Pterostylis Ralphcrancii</i>	Margaret and Wally Southwell
	2	<i>Pterostylis x furcillatta</i>	Margaret and Wally Southwell
<b>Terrestrial Species other</b>	1	<i>Corybas hispida</i>	Margaret and Wally Southwell
<b>Australasian species</b>	1	<i>Diplodium repandum</i>	Mike Harrison
<b>Judge's Choice</b>		Dendrobium Topaz Sweet	Carol & Anthony Asquith
<b>Popular Choice</b>		<i>Dendrobium tetragonum</i>	Mike Harrison

Raffles: Four winners - Hmmm

### 2022 MANOS Meeting Dates

18 January	15 February	15 March	19 April
17 May	21 June	19 July	16 August
20 September	18 October	15 November	20 December

Meeting Closed at 9.40 pm

## South Australian Terrestrial Orchid Culture Notes Part Three

Les Nesbitt is a founding member of the Native Orchid Society of South Australia and is our most experienced terrestrial orchid grower. The following posts on growing are from his notes and pictures .

### Maintenance throughout the year

#### Summer

- During summer, very lightly water surface of pots weekly to prevent tuber desiccation especially if dormant seedlings are in the pot.
- Divide overcrowded pots in summer. Tip out and break into slices like cutting a cake. Stand a slice in a new pot & fill spaces with fresh mix. Take care to keep the surface layer at the surface of the new pot.
- Add fresh leaf litter to surface layer in January to February to March.
- **If surface moss gets too thick, peel it off and discard in summer.**

#### Autumn

- Start heavier watering of pots weekly from mid March.
- Mix seed with fine dry sand and sprinkle on mother pots in April.
- Water as required in autumn, winter & spring so that pots never dry out during the growing season yet are not soggy wet.
- Leaves appear from Anzac Day to June.

#### Winter

- Look for flower buds down inside the largest leaves from mid July onwards.
- **Look for new seedling leaves from August to October.**

## Spring

- Enjoy and photograph flowers September to November.
- Hand-pollinate flowers in September – October. Flowers collapse within days of fertilisation.
- Collect seed pods as they turn brown just before they split open in November – December.
- Dry & store seed over summer in paper envelopes kept indoors.
- Allow pots to slowly dry out in mid – late November to induce dormancy and ripen tubers. Plants die down completely in summer to underground tubers.

For further information on growing fungus – dependent orchids refer to:

- ‘*Orchids Australia*’ February 2006, P58, or ‘*The Orchadian*’ Vol 15, Number 3, March 2006, P100.



*Caladenia latifolia* cultivated by LN (Fast Multiplier)

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## South Australian Terrestrial Orchid Culture Notes      Part Four

### Re-establishing Orchids

Replanting in bushland should be restricted to orchid species that grow or once grew in the local area. **No hybrids** please.

If planting out in the garden or bush, choose a location with good air movement and winter sun and a thin layer of surface mulch. Slashed native ground cover is good. Native terrestrial orchids cannot stand competition from weeds, grasses, slugs and snails and scratching blackbirds (all introduced pests). They will rot away in dense weeds or dense understory plants. If in a frost prone area they may need overhead protection from a shrub or trees. For plants in growth, dig out a hole a little bigger than the tube. Knock out the tube and insert the contents into the hole and backfill with as little disturbance as possible. Dormant tubers can be planted in a furrow, 50mm or more deep, and backfilled just like planting beans. Water in. The colony forming species will spread out and form patches of plants over a period of several years.

Orchid seed is like fine dust and can be mixed with fine dry sand to help spread it over a large area. Broadcast using a pepper-shaker over a suitable site. Results are dependent on the season and whether fungi are present. This method is slow to show results as flowers may not be seen for 5 to 10 years after seed is sown. More seedlings germinate if there are mother plants already growing.

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To learn more about re-establishing orchids in the bush, visit the [Vale Park Our Patch website](#) to see the work being done by Heather Whiting and her team

(This article carried a photo of “a pot of *Arachnorchis argocalla*, 40cm tall (Fungi Dependant” see it on the [Native Orchid Society of South Australia Website](#))

**GOOD GROWING**

# South Australian Terrestrial Orchid Culture Notes

## Part One of Four Parts

Les Nesbitt is a founding member of the Native Orchid Society of South Australia and is our most experienced terrestrial orchid grower. The following posts on growing are from his notes and pictures

### Introduction

Australian terrestrial orchids have been grown in pots in Adelaide for more than 50 years. Nowadays with a wider range of species and hybrids available there are an estimated 300 cultivars successfully growing here. When the cultivation of the fungus dependent terrestrials is fully understood this number will increase dramatically.

Australian ground orchids are cool climate plants that follow an annual growth cycle comprising 6 – 8 months as growing plants under cool (5 – 20°C max, 0 – 14°C min) moist conditions and 4 – 6 months as dormant tubers in hot dry (18 – 40°C max, 12 – 30°C min) conditions. All species like good air movement and will not thrive in a stuffy humid atmosphere especially if temperatures are high.

### Growing Area

In South Australia, terrestrials are grown in shadehouses with 50% cloth on the roof and sides. This lets the rain soak the pots and flush out salts from tapwater use. Some growers add a second layer of 50% shade cloth in summer to lower pot temperatures.

It is very important that winter sun and breezes reach your plants so place the shadehouse away from the winter shadows of buildings and evergreen trees. A shade cloth cover or evergreen tree to the southwest and overhead will give protection from frost, hail and storms. Light frosts of -2°C do not worry the majority of species. Galvanised mesh benching about 750mm high will deter slugs and snails and is a convenient height for observing the pots. Watering with rainwater is better than Adelaide tap water. Fungi and orchids do not like salt.

### Light

Some species prefer heavy shade, others full sunlight, but most will adapt to a wide range of light intensity. If the leaves and stems are weak and limp or if the rosettes are drawn up to the light, then the shading is too dense and the amount of light should be increased. The spring flowering species like higher light intensities at flowering time and flowers may have pale colours under dull conditions.

### Watering

The soil should be kept moist at all times during active growth by watering gently if there is no rain. Hand watering is especially necessary in spring as soil in pots dries out more rapidly than in the garden. Watering must be done slowly so that the mat of needles on the surface of the pot is not disturbed. If pots are allowed to dry out during the growing season, the plants may go dormant prematurely.

### Pests and diseases

Slugs and snails love these plants and must be kept under control. Raising the pots off the ground on galvanised steel benching is very effective in controlling these pests. Thrips, aphids, red spider and caterpillars may cause damage. Blackbirds can scratch out small orchids. Various rots can destroy plants. Orchids showing virus like symptoms should be burnt or dumped.

### Fertilising

Be very careful with fertilisers because some terrestrials are easily burnt or even killed by overuse. *Diuris* and *Pterostylis* are very hardy and will benefit from weak applications of foliar feed in the early growth stages.

### Repotting

The new tubers are produced in winter – spring. The fast multiplying types form several tubers per plant each year. Sometime in October – November, the leaves go yellow and then brown and dry, as the days get longer, hotter and drier in late spring. After the leaves have turned yellow, let the pot dry out completely to dry up the old roots and tubers otherwise they may turn into a soggy mouldy mess and rot may destroy the adjacent new tubers.

The pots can be knocked out and the tubers examined in summer without harm, in fact we find at the Nursery that the best results are obtained if the tubers are repotted in half fresh soil mix each year. Our soil mix is 40% loam, 50% sand and 10% organic matter with a little blood and bone fertiliser added. A 5 mm sieve is a useful tool for separating tubers from soil. Replant the dormant tubers with the tops 20 mm deep. Cover the soil surface with a mulch of sheoak needles, chopped to 20 – 50 mm lengths, to prevent soil erosion & aerate under the leaves. Repotting is normally done in November, December, January and February in South Australia. Ideal pot sizes are 125 – 150 mm standard plastic pots.

Keep the pots shaded and allow the pots to dry out between light watering until mid February when they should be set out in their growing positions and watered a little more often. The tubers of some species will rot if kept wet during the dormant period, others will produce plants prematurely which are then attacked by pests such as thrip and red spider and fungal diseases in the warm weather. Each tuber sends up a shoot to the surface in autumn and leaves grow rapidly in late autumn – early winter as temperatures fall and the rains set in. *Pterostylis* are usually the first to appear in March followed by *Diuris* and *Thelymitra* in April, *Caladenia* in May and *Corybas* in June – July.

Sun loving species like *Diuris*, *Microtis* and *Thelymitra* prefer a brighter location for good growth. *Corybas* like the shadiest corner in winter.

Editor's note..article came with a photograph of Thelymitra 'Kay Nesbitt' cultivar.(Fast Multiplier)

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And again, this article, part 2 came from NOSSA website....I will print the other articles next month... (Having a little trouble getting articles out and reproducing them..operators error, of course!!!)

Regards to all and GOOD GROWING

**South Australian Terrestrial Orchid Culture Notes**  
**Part Two of Four Parts**

## Terrestrial Orchid Cultural Groups

Terrestrial orchids can be placed into one of three groups that have similar cultural requirements.

Fast multipliers with an annual increase rate greater than 1.5

Slow multipliers with an annual increase rate less than 1.5

Fungus dependent orchids survival rate less than 1

### Fast multipliers (FM):

Fast multipliers are the easiest deciduous terrestrials to grow and potfuls are regularly seen at orchid meetings and shows. They multiply rapidly by forming 2 – 4 tubers per plant each year. They will take some fertiliser and grow better if repotted annually. It is usually not commercially viable to grow seed of these in flask. They will grow well in premium potting mix from your local hardware store with some sand added. This group contains many genera including *Acianthus*, *Chiloglottis*, *Corybas*, *Cyrtostylis*, *Diplodium*, *Leptoceras*, *Microtis*, *Pterostylis* and some species from *Caladenia*, *Diuris* and *Thelymitra*.

### Slow multipliers (SM):

Slow multipliers are not so easy because there is less room for error. Some very showy *Diuris*, *Pterostylis* and *Thelymitra* fall within this group. A few have a near zero increase rate and will fade away unless additional plants can be produced to make up for occasional losses from predators and disease. They are more expensive because they have to be raised from seed in flasks. Flowering plants are hand pollinated and the seed collected just before the pods split open and the dust-like seed blows away. The pull-off-the-tuber method can be used with some *Diuris* and *Pterostylis* species to double plant numbers annually. Do not fertilise these except when repotting. Those with large tubers such as *Thelymitra nuda* and *Diuris behrii* should be the first to be repotted in November – December.

### Fungus dependent orchids (FD):

Some of Australia's most fascinating orchids rely on a symbiotic fungal association to obtain nutrients from the soil as these orchids have virtually no roots. The majority of Australia's terrestrial orchids are in this group and many are rare plants as they seldom multiply. We talk about survival rates for these orchids that are normally less than one. Propagation is from seed. They have a reputation for being difficult to grow in pots. However some species have been kept alive in pots for nearly 30 years. Never use fertiliser because it can kill the fungi. They should be repotted only when the tubers reach or come out of the bottom of the pot or seedlings get too crowded. A new thin layer of leaf litter is added to the surface each summer to feed the fungi which is active near the surface. Flowers are hand pollinated to get seed. Seed is sprinkled on the pots each autumn and with good culture, seedlings will appear in spring around mother plants.

Since the fungus cannot be seen with the naked eye, the health of the leaves is used to indicate that the fungal relationship with the orchid is working. If seed is sown in autumn, by springtime, when mature orchids flower, there may be a new crop of tiny seedling leaves around the base of the large mother plants. The appearance of new seedling leaves around mother plants each spring confirms that the fungal relationship is healthy. Seedlings take 3 – 5 years to reach flowering size.

## Important Rules

Use a mix that is at least 50% sand. The bottom of the pot can be pure sand.

Never use fertilisers (fertilisers can kill fungi).

Feed the fungus by adding new leaf litter on top of the old litter layer each summer. Chopped up sheoak needles or gum leaf stalks/nuts are recommended.

Do not repot unless absolutely necessary (eg the tubers come out the bottom of the pot, overcrowding, disease).

(Note: This article also had a photo at the bottom of this :

*Thelymitra nuda* cultivated by Les Nesbitt (Slow Multiplier)

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