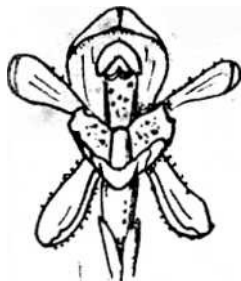


1.

NEW ZEALAND NATIVE ORCHID GROUP  
Newsletter No. 3 September 1962



Dear Member,

Interest is high in our group, numbers are still growing and we have our first Australian member! All we need now is reports - from-all over New Zealand, on anything to do with our native orchids, any article no matter how small is sure to be of interest to somebody and by sharing our knowledge in this way we can all learn that little bit more.

I would like to thank Tony Druce for his kind donation towards costs and I hope to get out one more newsletter before the end of the year.

I feel this group could be useful for all sorts of things - if people will take the time to put pen to paper. One aspect I would like to hear reports of is the finding of two-flowered specimens of those species which normally have solitary flowers.

I have found two-flowered plants of Chiloglottis cornuta, Corybas trilobus and C.oblongus, Pterostylis alobula and P. graminea - all in the Wellington area. Any other reports?

David Given's latest list of endangered New Zealand plants gives as probably extinct:- Chiloglottis fornicifera, Pterostylis nutans and Thelymitra matthewsii; if anyone has any information to the contrary please let me know.

Let me close by thanking all those who have taken the time to contribute - come on all you others!

Dorothy Cooper,  
14 Avalon Crescent,  
Lower Hutt

PRASOPHYLLUM SUTTONII (P. patens) - HOW DO THE SEEDS GERMINATE?

E.D.Hatch

I only ever found Prasophyllum suttonii once, in January 1945 in a pond or tarn in the State Forest plantations above Tangiwai, on the south-western slopes of Ruapehu.

The water was shallow - 100-130mm deep - and studded with little hummocks of Calorophus minor. The hummocks themselves, about 600mm in diameter, supported numerous plants of the washed-out looking Pterostylis micromega and the Prasophyllum grew in the open water between the clumps.

It occurred to me at the time to wonder how the Prasophyllum seed germinated and got to the bottom of the pond. They would obviously come down on the surface of the water - but what happened next? Then there was the anaerobic problem. Orchid development in my experience is notoriously dependent on a free flow of air, and how do they get on under water? We have a great deal to learn about many of those plants before they disappear forever with the draining of the swamps,

It is interesting to note that Cheeseman in the 1906 Manual, records both Pterostylis micromega and Prasophyllum patens, as he called it from the Ngairi (Ngahere?) swamp near Mount Egmont. I found the Pterostylis to be fairly frequent in bogs round the central mountains during 1942-5, and it occurs occasionally in the lower Waikato, but I only once found the Prasophyllum growing with it.

## Book Review:

Recently our Club librarian thrust into my hand a newly acquired book saying "This will interest you, includes some of New Zealand's natives". At the first opportunity I was lost in the pages of 'Orchids for the Outdoor Garden", A.W.Darnell. (A descriptive list of the world's orchids, for the use of American gardens.) Dover-Publications, New York, 1976 first edition. Unabridged re-publication of the work originally published by L.Reeve Ltd., Kent, England in 1930.

Disappointment soon struck when I realised that the work was so outdated and old, Unrevised since 1930, with some descriptions unrecognisable, I felt it a pity, a book in which people would gain nothing.

New enthusiasts would be completely misled with obsolete names and inaccurate descriptions.

Anon.

## ORCHIDS OF THIS COROMANDEL PENINSULA

John Smith

Dodsworth

Acianthus fornicatus	flowering June-July
A.reniformis	Sept-Oct
Calebenia catenata	Oct
Aporostylis bifolia	Dec
Chiloglottis cornuta	Oct-Nov
Corybas aconitiflorus	May-July
C. trilobus	July-Sept
C. rivularis	Sept-Oct
C. orbiculatus	Sept-Oct
C. oblongus	Oct-Nov
Thelymitra longifolia	Oct-Nov
T. carnea	Sept-Nov
T. pauciflora	Jan
T. ixiodes	Oct-Nov
Pterostylis banksii	Oct
P. graminea	Sept-Oct
P. trullifolia	May-Oct
P. alobula	May-Aug
P. brumalis	May-Aug
Orthoceras strictum	Jan-Feb
Prsophyllum patens	Jan
P. pumilum	Mar
P. nudum	Apr
Microtis unifolia	Nov
Earina mucronata	Oct-Nov
Earina autumnalis	Feb-Apr
Dendrobium cunninghamii	Dec-Feb
Bulbophyllum pygmaem	Dec
Drymoanthus adversus	Oct
Gastrodia sessamoides	Nov-Dec
Yoania australis	Jan

George Fuller of Pukekara Park, New Plymouth, has managed to get photos of a small insect pollinating Corybs macranthus. Apparently there has been some doubt as to the species of Corybas as the flower in the photo is above the leaf. A short, time ago in the Eastbourne hills of Wellington, I came across a patch of C. macranthus on a fairly dry bank,. Some plants had very short leaves and the flowers were definitely above the leaves although on close examination it could be seen that they branched off the leaf stalk below the leaf, Some weeks later on looking at these same plants, leaf stalks had elongated and flowers were now below the leaf.

Ed

## ROBERT BROWN AND THE CORYBAS CONTROVERSY

E.D. Hatch

A necessary preface to this note is a very brief history of Robert Brown, who was born at Montrose in Scotland in 1773.

Brown was an army surgeon with an interest in botany, and a friend of Sir Joseph Banks. He sailed to Australia in 1801 as naturalist to Flinders' survey expedition. The Investigator was condemned as unseaworthy at Port Jacks on in 1803, but Brown remained botanising in New South Wales and Tasmania until 1803, when he returned to England and settled down to writing up the botanical results of the survey.

These he published in 1810 as Prodromus Florae Novae Hollandiae et Insulae Van-Diemen (usually cited as R. Br. Prodr. 1810). In 1810 also, on the death of Jonas Dryander, he became the third and last of Banks' librarians. Banks died in 1820, leaving the botanical collections to Brown for his lifetime, with the proviso that they eventually be placed in the British Museum. In 1827 Brown handed the Banksian material over to the Museum in exchange for the position of Curator of Botany, which he held until his death at 84 in 1838. Brown was a friend of Darwin and Sir Joseph Hooker, and an early supporter of the natural system of plant classification which gradually replaced the numero-sexual system of Linnaeus.

R. A. Salisbury was in general a competent botanist (after all he described our kauri, (Agathis australis), but he was apparently not above occasional skulduggery. He is reported to have made a 'rude' copy of a drawing by Ferdinand Bauer (who was the botanical artist on the Investigator), and to have drawn up his description of Corybas from it, Bauer's drawing, which had Browns' name attached to it, showed the colours by a series of figures which were misinterpreted by Salisbury, who also mistook the tubular nature of the labellum and the detailed structure of the anther. Accused of unethical behaviour Salisbury told the tale of the plant growing not long ago in certain- English garden from which he had obtained his data.

In 1810, 5 years after Salisbury had published Corybas, Brown described the genus Corysanthes (Prodr. p. 328). He admitted that his Corysanthes bicalcarata was probably identical with Corybas aconitiflorus, but would not acknowledge the validity of Salisbury's genus. He queried the story of the plant in Lady Essex's garden and doubted that the orchid, which was rare even in the vicinity of Port Jackson, and had only been collected by Paterson, Bauer, Caley and himself, could be grown in the open in England. He also pointed out, to Salisbury's further embarrassment, that it was not possible to ascertain by looking at dried specimens, or even at specimens which had been softened by soaking in water, that the leaves were purplish on the underside!

Brown undoubtedly was, as Gilmour said "perhaps the greatest figure in the whole history of British botany" and his mana was correspondingly high. He was considered to have been badly treated, and the name Corysanthes was generally accepted in English-speaking countries. There had never been any doubt however about the identity of Salisbury's genus, and when the principle of priority later became important to taxonomy, Corybas was revived (by H.G.Reichenbach in 1871) and the now numerous species recombined. The controversy continued until the early 1940's when the international Council of Nomenclature finally refused to conserve Corysanthes and found in favour of Corybas.

This tendency of Brown's, to ignore earlier workers in what he considered to be his field of Australian botany, was also responsible for the Caladenia carnea-catenata confusion.

## A DIARY FROM DUNEDIN

Ian St George

- 15 Dec 80 Flagstaff - C. lyallii flowering.
- 3 Jan 81 12 Mile Creek, Queenstown - T. longifolia in flower;  
Gastrodia sp. in flower;  
Skippers - Microtis and Prasophyllum in flower.
- 24 Jan 81 Flagstaff - T. venosa in flower.
- 8 Feb 81 12 Mile Creek, Queenstown - P. australis dead flowers,  
T. longifolia flowers finished.
- 15 Nov 81 Ross Creek track - E. mucronata in bud;
- 28 Nov 81 Mt Cargill. - Bethuners Gully track; E. mucronata in bud,  
a few flowers in sunny spots; E. autumnalis - no buds;  
D. cunninghamii - no buds: P. banksii and Thelymitra in  
bud.
- 29 Nov 81 Tautuku nature walk - C. trilobus in fruit, P. banksii: in  
flower, C. oblongus and P. graminea? in flower, D.  
cunninghamii no buds. Tahakopa old coach road - P. montana  
in flower, E. mucronata in full flower, E. autumnalis no  
buds, C. cornuta buds and just in flower, C. trilobus in  
fruit, P. banksii in flower. Hinahina forest - D.  
cunninghamii no buds.
- 1 Dec 81 Five Mile Greek, Queenstown - C. catenata in bud and  
flower; Thelymitra in bud, P. banksii in flower. C.  
trilobus occasional fruit only,
- 5 Dec 31 Flagstaff - C. lyallii abundant and in flower, Thelymitra  
in bud Trotters Gorge - P. banksii in flower. C. trilobus  
in fruit.
- 6 Dec 81 C. macranthus in fruit, P. graminea? dying flowers,  
Dunedin Botanical Gardens - Gastrodia sp in bud, C.  
cornuta abundant, in pine bark and chips on track. (? new  
method of spreading now that it has colonised pine  
forests) .
- 12 Dec 81 Pigeon Flat roadside - T. Longifolia just in flower.  
Leith Valley roadside - C. cornuta abundant in flower in  
edge of pine forest; Bush above Chingford Park - E.  
mucronata in  
flower a red stemmed Pterostylis with dead flowers,  
Gastrodia sp. in bud.
- 13 Dec 81 Swampy - A. bifolia, C. cornuta, L. antarcticus in bud, P.  
banksii (? - a very short plant) in flower, Thelymitra in  
bud.

LOCK, LOVE and LEAVE or "CONSERVE OUR NATIVES "

Phil Tomlinson

It may be thought that our natives are so plentiful that there is no need to conserve them. Other countries have thought the same about their own plants, but they now find that these can only be seen in their natural habitat with difficulty, all readily available specimens being long since removed. Don't let this happen here.

While our natives are not as spectacular as their more glamorous cousins, they still have a character of their own. Unfortunately, it has been found that the majority are unsuitable for home culture, as they just do not survive. Therefore they can only be fully enjoyed in their splendour in the bush, banks or streams of the countryside, look for them there, the exercise does us all good.

Do not collect, and especially never in parks and reserves. If you must, go to a habitat that is threatened with clearing, cutting or cultivation, and only salvage the plants likely to be destroyed. The epiphytes are easier to maintain in cultivation with care, although the bulbophyllums are more reluctant. The more common terrestrial species are much harder to cultivate artificially. Some Pterostylis species, A. fornicatus; Microtis unifolia and some thelymitras can be kept with care, but often they can only be kept struggling to produce flowers well short of their real capabilities in nature. Leave them in their real homes; find, look at, love, perhaps photograph, but leave to propagate and flourish for future generations of orchid lovers.