



Dear Member,

Firstly let me apologise for putting Newsletter no.5 at the top of the last issue in December. I don't know what I was dreaming about and didn't notice until half way through folding them for posting. I changed those I still had left to do but other copies were already sealed in their envelopes, so could you please check your last newsletter which should of course, have been no.4.

Secondly, grateful thanks to all those who have renewed their subscriptions for this year. If you haven't done so this will be the last newsletter you will receive, enclosed please find a form to fill in to make things easier.

Thirdly, it was wonderful to get letters of support for setting up this group and many thanks to all those who took the time to add their views on where we go from here. The majority want to leave things as they are for now, affiliation with other societies was not generally favoured, so, as long as everyone out there puts pen to paper and the articles keep coming in, I will continue to put them together as a newsletter. If anything happens to me - beware, it will all be put in someone else's lap!

Lastly, I would like to thank all those who have sent in reports, - however small, on the orchids they have found. That's what this is all about, and is the only way we will learn about our native orchids from all parts of New Zealand. I'm aiming towards a map of some sort in the future showing distribution of species, but in the meantime reports can be shared by airmail and Vm sure we will all learn something.

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One peculiar find I had this summer was a very large specimen of Gastrodia. On 15th Jan 1983 on the new Puffer track Kaitoke, near Upper Hutt a specimen 94cm high, with 23 flowers which were fawn with white petals, was found beneath beech trees, one metre from the track in a very shaded locality. I thought at first it was G. sesamoides, but on dissecting a flower found that it had the short column of G. cunninghamii. I have already found dark green-black specimens with a long column, as in G. sesamoides which is supposed to be cream to brownish-yellow, and now this yellow-fawn specimen of G. cunninghamii, previous specimens which I have found, have all been dark greenish-black. Moral - don't rely on colour! Please send in any reports of colour variations in specimens of this genus in which you have also examined the column.

E.D.Hatch replies:

G. sesamoides must be based on the Australian form, it has been matched well in several Auckland localities, (see illustration in Cady and Rotherham, 'Australian Native Orchids')* (But colour variations cannot be termed new species - Ed.)

G. cunninghamii has a short column and is the common high country Gastrodia (Found 2.1.83 on the Great Barrier, A. E. Wright.)

G. minor previously not recorded north of National Park, has appeared over the last 3 seasons in Spragg's bush in the Waitakeres, with manuka. The column is short. (I have found this in Takaka - Ed.)

The plant illustrated in my book plate 7, looks, like cunninghamii but has a long column, similar plants have been found near Invercargill - L.B.Moore. Now we have a plant looking like sesamoides with a short column! We either have 2 new forms or we are getting hybrids!

