

# AUSTRALASIAN NATIVE ORCHID SOCIETY GEELONG GROUP INC.

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June 2024



*Thelymitra X merraniae*

The Australasian Native Orchid Society promotes the conservation of Native Orchids through cultivation and through preservation of their natural habitat.

ALL NATIVE ORCHIDS ARE PROTECTED IN THE WILD; THEIR COLLECTION IS ILLEGAL

## JUNE MEETING:

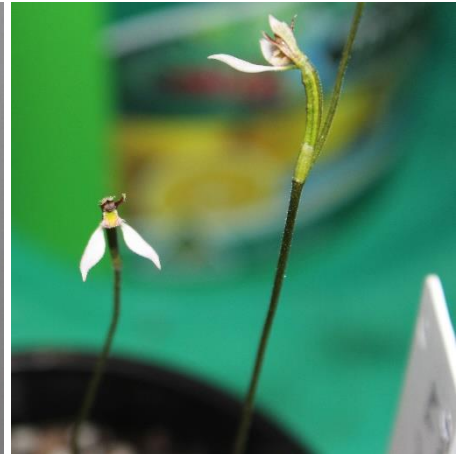
**Where:** Bareena Bowling Club, 89 Noble St, Newtown VIC 3220

**When:** 7.30 PM Wednesday 12/06/2024

**Speaker:** – Murray Harding – The Light Air Water of growing Orchids (part 2)

**Next Month:** 10/07/2024 – Nicole Beres – A September Trip to Adelaide

**Plant of the Night:** Hugh MacPherson was the judge and selected Neil Anderton's *Eriochilus cucullatus* as the Plant of the Night. Congratulations Neil!



Plant of the Night *Eriochilus cucullatus* (Parson's Bands), grown by Neil Anderton

## ANOS Geelong Committee:

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## In the Field: ANOS Victoria Field Trips:

Due to the extremely dry conditions few trips have been organised up to June – hopefully we will have a wet Autumn and Winter to encourage the orchids to flower

Note: You need to register prior to the activities as they may be cancelled at the last minute due to conditions

Contact the ANOS leaders if you are interested in any of the activities for details of meeting places, times, etc., or alternatively contact the TSG leader, Len Carrigan: email [tsg@anosvic.org.au](mailto:tsg@anosvic.org.au)

Please Note: Registration Requirements –ANOS Vic Conservation and Terrestrial Study Group Activities

All dates and activities are dependent on the availability of guides, the weather and other factors not in the Society's control. Activities are therefore subject to cancellation or change. Registration is required for all events.

Register by email or telephone. Details required: - registrant's name, names of others attending, contact telephone number(s), mobile number(s) for activity day, emergency contact telephone number(s) in case of injury, etc., e-mail address. Register at least five days prior to the activity. Note that leaders often leave early to check locations and may not be contactable. It is the member's responsibility to cancel their registration or contact the activity coordinator if they are running late for start time. If you haven't registered, you won't be contacted if changes or cancellations occur. Non-registrants risk inconvenience.

### Terrestrial Study Group Tentative Calendar – March to June 2024

DATE	ACTIVITY	LEADER
Saturday June 15	Habitat enhancement Plenty Gorge Park (Cons Group)	Garry French
Sunday June 23	Brisbane Ranges (Orchids & Drawing)	Johanna Botman/Craig Burgess

Drawing Activity please contact Craig Burgess: [craigbburgess@gmail.com](mailto:craigbburgess@gmail.com) - Registration Details are required to be sent to Len Carrigan, [tsg@anosvic.org.au](mailto:tsg@anosvic.org.au)

Plenty Gorge habitat enhancement E: [gjfrench@bigpond.net.au](mailto:gjfrench@bigpond.net.au) PH: 0407 292 514 on the day

As we are still awaiting further information to be able to lock in our proposals, the planned activities for the remainder of the year will be published in the Bulletin once everything can be confirmed.

\* Short Notice Trips will be notified via the TSG email list if & when a suitable location is "found". If you would like to be added to this email list, please email Len Carrigan:

### Site Maintenance:

Diuris site maintenance : Sunshine site 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays of the month

Laverton Site: 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of month (through to December 9). Contact Garry French if interested in taking part in either activities, Mob: 0407-292-514, email [conservation@anosvic.org.au](mailto:conservation@anosvic.org.au)

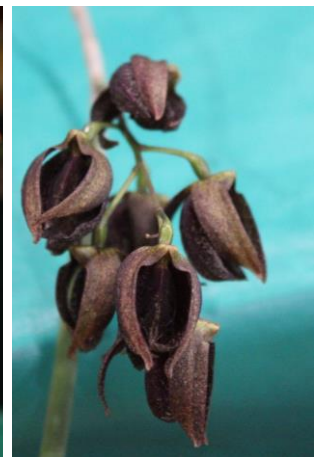
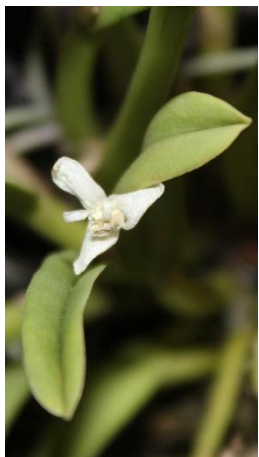
### On the Bench:

**Benched Plant Identification slips – if you would like slips to fill in prior to the meeting, I will have extras at the May (and future) meetings**

Six members benched fourteen orchids at the May meeting, five epiphytes and nine terrestrials

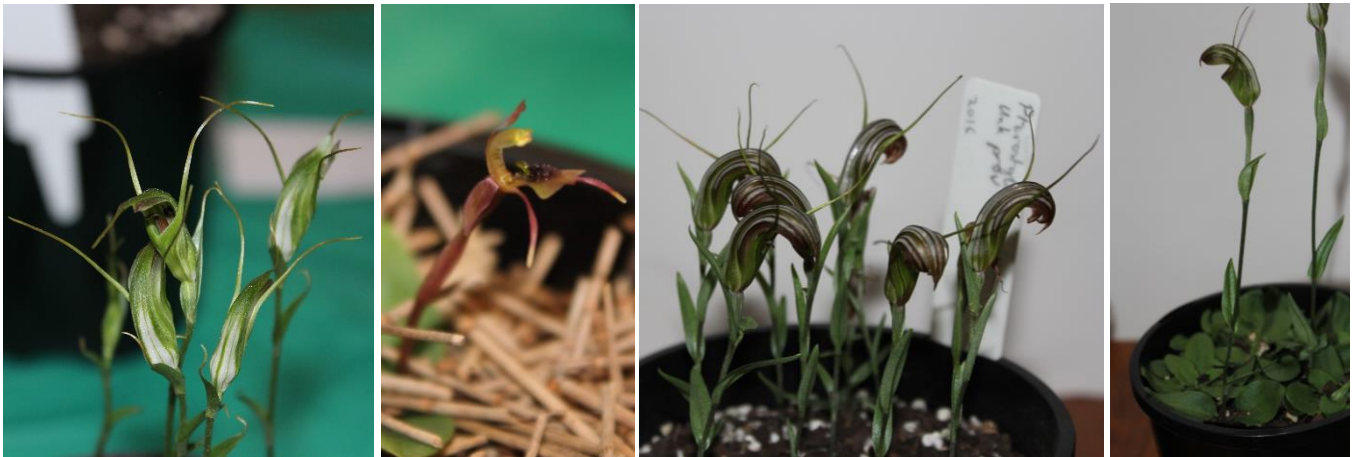
**Epiphytes:** *Dendrobium taylorii* (Geoff Beilby); *Den* Avril's Gold 'Louanne' (Hugh MacPherson); *Den* Star Imp 'Lovely Lady' x Jesmond Sparkler 'Greg Hall' (Wayne Shirreff); *Den fuliginosa* 'Black Pam', *Den tetragonum* (Di Visser)

**Terrestrials:** *Eriochilus cucullatus* (POTN), *Pterostylis abrupta*, *P. x fuscillata*, *P. ophioglossa*, *P. toveyana*, *P. truncata* (x2) (Neil Anderton; *P. laxa* (Tracey Hinton); *Chiloglottis sylvestris* (Hugh MacPherson)



*Dendrobium taylorii*, grown by Geoff Beilby, *Den* Avril's Gold 'Louanne', grown by Hugh MacPherson, *Den* Star Imp 'Lovely Lady' x Jesmond Sparkler 'Greg Hall', grown by Wayne Shirreff and *Den fuliginosa* 'Black Pam', grown by Di Visser





*Pterostylis laxa*, grown by Tracey Hinton, *Chiloglottis sylvestris*, grown by Hugh MacPherson, *P. truncata* and *P. x toveyana*, grown by Neil Anderton

**In the Field:** Helen and Lance were orchid hunting near Steiglitz late May and came across *Acianthus pusillus* (Small Mosquito Orchid), *Pterostylis parviflora*, (Tiny Greenhood), *P. sanguinea* (Banded Greenhood) and *P. striata* (Striped Greenhood). Hopefully there will be more rain soon to bring the orchids on.



Small Mosquito Orchid, Tiny Greenhood, Banded Greenhood and Striped Greenhood, photographed at Steiglitz by Lance and Helen

## May Presentation: Light Air Water of Growing Orchids (Part 1) by Murray Harding

Murray's presentation was essentially a primer for part 2 (coming up at the June meeting), looking at the orchid's environment, from the perspective of potting, mounting and fertilizing.

Part 2 will be examining their environment again, but this time from the perspective of photosynthesis which involves light, air and water, and their importance in growing healthy, vigorous orchids.

He started out by pointing out that while many orchids grow on host trees and shrubs, they are not parasites, as they do not derive nutrition from the host, using the host as support and providing a suitable environment for the orchid. Many orchids suitable for cultivation in Victoria originate in the tropics or sub-tropics, but grow on the Great Dividing Range at relatively high altitudes where it is significantly cooler, growing in tall trees that have plenty of air movement around and through the orchids



Orchid habitat – a multitude of orchids on a host tree, high up in the branches

Murray pointed out that most epiphytes and lithophytes roots are either totally exposed or only lightly covered by leaf litter trapped by the orchid roots – the orchids are exposed to air and even heavy rain does not stay around, with the roots staying wet for only a short time.





*Dendrobium monophyllum* – isolated plant, plant in the wild, on an exposed rock face and mounted on bark to simulate its normal habitat

This should be considered growing these orchids at home, where do the orchids grow what do they grow on and their climate (rainfall/dry seasons, altitude, etc.). As many species have exposed roots, mounts are often a good choice.

Avoiding deep pots and moisture retaining mixes is also necessary. If the mix is waterlogged, roots will rot and starve the plant of nutrients and water, leading to the death of the plant if not corrected.

Shallow pots and baskets with a very open mix are good choices – even pots 5cm high (often used as saucers under large pots) can be very effective.



Pots used for growing epiphytes. Murray prefers the squat pots, wooden or bark baskets and very shallow dishes for his orchids as they provide greater airflow and excellent drainage

Murray then covered potting mix components and mixes and suitable mounts, emphasising the need for good air flow and excellent drainage. He then covered fertilisers and nutrients, including blood and bone and manure based fertilisers.

One aspect he covered was the importance of calcium as a macronutrient for plants, strengthening plant cell walls. Calcium nitrate is highly soluble and a quick way to add calcium to plants as a foliar spray. Gypsum and dolomite are sparingly soluble in water.



Orchids in habitat – minimal to no leaf litter around plant base and roots



Murray finished his presentation with a teaser for next month's presentation:

### “The Importance of Photosynthesis

Plants require sunlight for photosynthesis, which is the process by which plants produce sugars and starches, or carbohydrates. During photosynthesis, carbon dioxide and water combine to produce glucose. This glucose is manufactured by plants to make their own food which is used as an essential source of energy to sustain their growth.

Because water is a part of the photosynthetic process, without adequate water, photosynthesis is slowed or halted. Photosynthesis is carried out exclusively in green, chlorophyll-containing plants. The process is so important to plants that if the process is inhibited for extended periods, plants will die.

Unfortunately I was too busy listening to Murray's fascinating talk to concentrate on taking notes, hence the sparseness of this report. Part 2 is shaping up to be even more informative!



A lovely specimen in a shallow dish

## Anglesea Orchids

With autumn coming to an end and no sign of Large Autumn Greenhoods, *Pterostylis ampliata*, we were very excited to hear that four flowers of this impressive greenhood had been observed on private land at Aireys Inlet. Flowering for this species does depend upon good autumn rains and these have been scarce in the Anglesea district this year. However the good news is that rosettes of non-flowering plants have responded to the rain we have had. Tubers that were transplanted to Greenhood Reserve in Aireys Inlet during building construction on their home turf have adjusted to their new habitat and have produced a few rosettes at each of the chosen sites. The orchids that were transplanted at an earlier time from another construction site are still showing their presence – no flowers but a few healthy rosettes. We were also thrilled to find quite a large colony of rosettes near our small known colony at Gum Flat – again no flowers. However the future of this species in the district seems assured.



Large Autumn Greenhood plus non-flowering rosette



Striped Greenhood plus non-flowering rosette

that are often seen flowering at this time.

Small Mosquito Orchids, *Acianthus pusillus*, are appearing in good numbers. This orchid forms extensive colonies of heart-shaped leaves, green on top, purplish below. Some are already bearing flower stalks with their small insect-like flowers looking quite beautiful when viewed through a hand lens.

The highlight of the month is the emergence of Striped Greenhoods, *Pterostylis striata*, in the site within the Great Otway National Park at Anglesea. Certainly not as many flowers as in previous years, although more should push their way through the damp soil. There are plenty of non-flowering rosettes and the fact that the colony is within the Great Otway National Park we are confident that this species should be able to be conserved. However it is the only known site for this species.

Brown-tipped Greenhoods, *P. clivosa*, and Tiny Greenhoods, *P. parviflora*, are still flowering - scattered throughout the district. Trim Greenhoods, *P. concinna* and Tall Greenhoods, *P. melagramma*, are in bud. Extensive colonies of Nodding Greenhoods, *P. nutans*, rosettes are appearing in so many places - they should be spectacular in the next few months. As yet we have not been able to locate Banded Greenhoods, *P. sanguinea*,



The cheerful Parson's Bands *Eriochilus cucullatus* are still being found in many places and the smooth, ground-hugging leaf is an indication that the orchid has been flowering in that habitat. A few Bearded Midge Orchids, *Corunastylis morrissii*, are still being observed and Fringed Hare Orchids *Leporella fimbriata* are continuing to flower amidst colonies of ground-hugging, red-veined ovate leaves that appear late at the flowering stage. Small Gnat Orchids are producing colonies of heavily veined leaves with tiny buds just starting to form.



Nodding Greenhood rosettes, Small Mosquito Orchid, Trim and Tall Greenhoods in bud

We are awaiting the first of our helmet orchids - Small Helmet Orchid, *Corybas unguiculatus*, that usually flowers in June. This species was once widespread in the district and found in good numbers but it has now become quite rare in the district.



Bearded Midge Orchid, Fringed Hare Orchid, Gnat Orchid leaves and Small Helmet Orchid

It is an interesting time to be out in the field with so many species emerging – mainly at leaf or bud stage that can be quite challenging.

Please let us know of any interesting discoveries. We are keen to hear where orchids can be found in the district.

All of our orchids are documented and photographed in *Orchids of the Anglesea District*. The new edition costing \$30.00 is available from the Angair Natural History Centre on Monday and Thursday mornings, online through the Angair website [www.angair.org.au](http://www.angair.org.au) and from *Anglesea News & Lotto* and *Great Escape Books* in Aireys Inlet.

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**Note: Articles, upcoming events and information for inclusion into the monthly bulletin need to be with the editor by the 28<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication. RSVPs for events need to be after the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the month of publication**