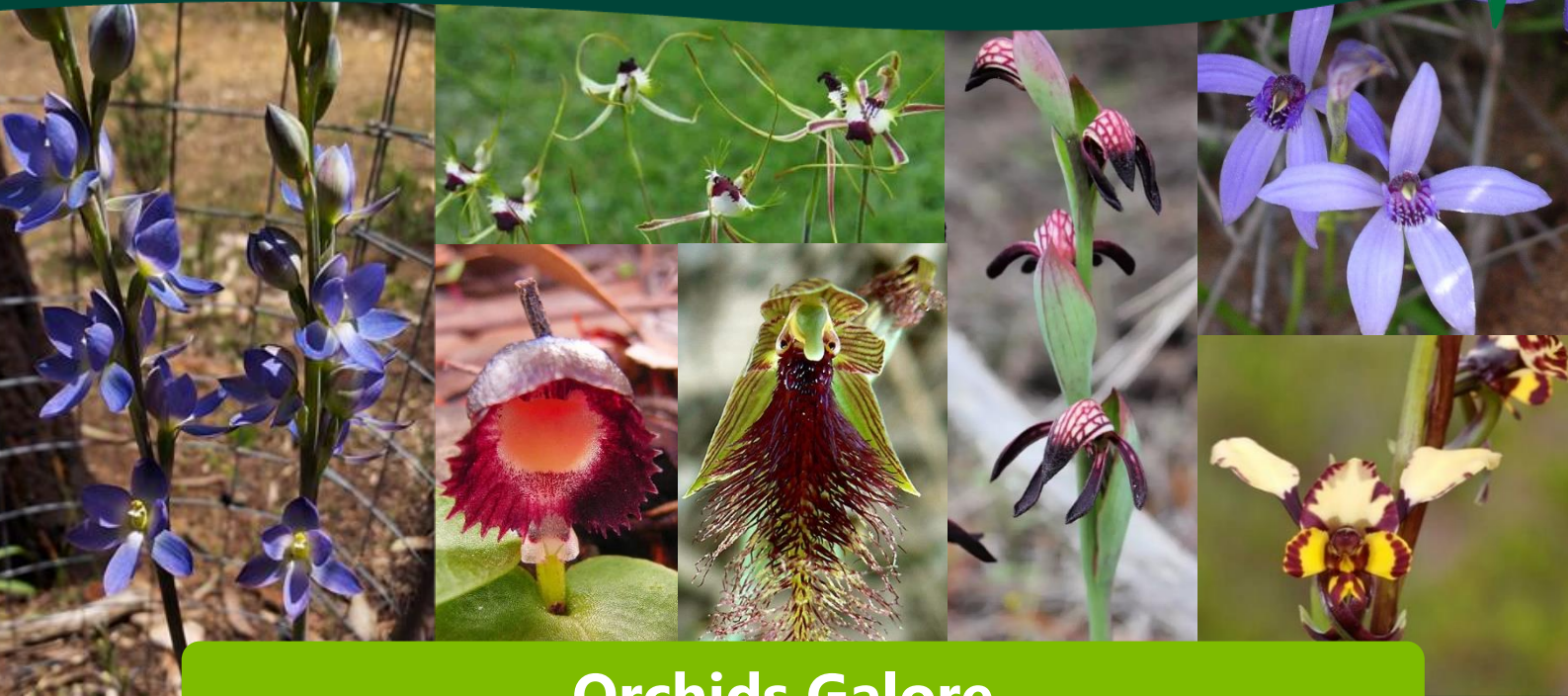


Gumnut Gazette

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Orchids Galore

Small but Special!

What is an orchid? Good question!

An orchid is a plant.

In fact, orchids make up one of the largest and diverse families of plants.

The family of orchids contains more species than any other family of plants! Botanists believe the family have between 20,000 to 25,000 species!

Orchids are part of a large family of flowering plants called, *Orchidaceae*.

The flowers are specially designed for attracting, tricking, and influencing insects.

Orchids grow all around the world and we have some pretty cool ones here in South Australia!

Orchids are quite different from other flowering plants...

Read on to find out how in this exciting issue of the Gumnut Gazette!

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Acknowledgement to country

The Department for Environment and Water acknowledges Aboriginal people as the First Peoples and Nations of the lands and waters we live and work upon and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge and respect the deep

spiritual connection and the relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have to Country.

The Department works in partnership with the First Peoples of South Australia and supports their Nations to take a leading role in caring for their Country.

FUN FACT

Some orchids have been known to live up to 100 years!



Oh my Orchids!

Find-a-word

R	E	L	W	N	P	G	N	F	Z	K	R	B	L
Q	Q	J	N	V	L	W	P	A	R	F	Y	M	H
P	N	D	K	O	A	K	U	L	T	H	V	I	H
H	W	S	N	F	U	N	P	I	A	I	L	Z	L
A	P	H	E	G	W	B	I	O	U	N	V	V	E
L	U	F	T	E	Z	Q	Q	L	B	S	T	E	A
A	B	E	A	R	D	I	E	S	L	Z	U	Q	F
E	E	P	I	P	O	U	F	P	G	A	O	N	L
N	W	H	K	D	S	R	L	I	M	Q	R	G	E
O	T	E	V	T	G	O	O	D	E	S	C	X	S
P	U	Q	Y	Q	N	O	W	E	P	E	H	E	S
S	B	H	Y	V	W	T	E	R	P	W	I	P	Y
I	E	Y	B	W	N	S	R	U	S	E	D	L	Y
S	R	L	Y	J	P	O	L	L	I	N	A	T	E

ORCHID
FLOWER
SEED
PLANT
POLLINATE
SUN
PHALAENOPSIS

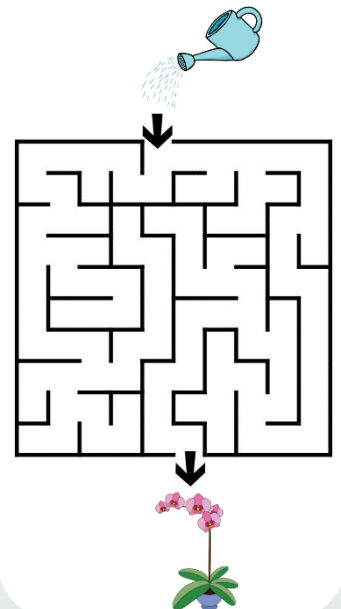
ROOTS
TUBER
SPIDER
VANILLA
BEARDIES
NATIVE
LEAFLESS

Jumble Word

W L F E R O

Maze

Can you help water the orchid?



Quiz Time!

Where in the world do orchids NOT grow?

A -----

Maze credit to: printableparadise.com



Pyrorchis nigricans (Fire Orchid)
Image credit: Anne Rick, Heartland Journeys



Calochilus robertsonii (Purple Beard-Orchid)
Image credit: Friends of Lane Cove National Park



Arachnorchis tantacula (King Spider-Orchid)
Image credit: NOSSA

Did you know?

Orchids come in all shapes and sizes, some looking like spiders, flying ducks, helmets and even ants.

SA Locals

Orchids you might find in South Australia

Native orchids are a very important part of our environment and there are over 250 described species in South Australia. They are delicate and have a special role in ecosystems. Much like frogs can tell us if water is healthy, orchids can tell us if an area of native vegetation is healthy.

Look below for some of the magnificent orchids we have here in South Australia.

- **Purple Beard Orchid** (*Calochilus robertsonii*) grows to about 30cm, has one single dark green leaf with up to nine flowers. Flowering season is October-December. It has green, often red veined flowers, a purple "beard", and two pretend eyes.
- **King Spider Orchid** (*Arachnorchis tentacula*) is one of the biggest spider orchids, growing up to 60cm! September-December is flowering season, then during the summer months, the King Spider Orchid dies back to a dormant tuber underground.
- **Fire Orchid** (*Pyrorchis nigricans*) grows in groups and gets to about 30cm. The Fire orchid gets its name from the flowers it grows. The flowers are red and white, but then they turn black when flowering has finished. Fun fact: the Fire Orchid only flowers after a fire has passed through!

Around the world, most orchids grow on rock surfaces, trees or on other host plants. The technical name for this trait is 'epiphytic'. SA orchids are unusual because they grow directly in the ground.

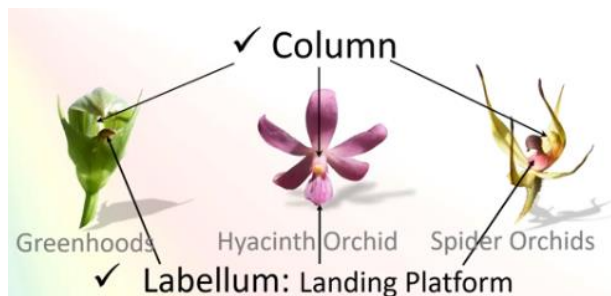
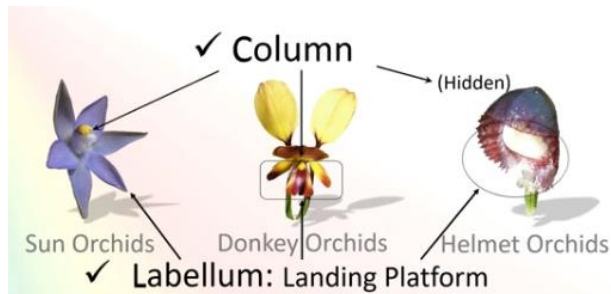
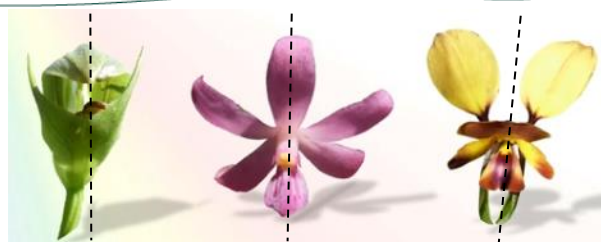
I'm Different!

Different to other flowers how?

Orchids come in an amazing variety of shapes, colours and sizes, but orchids are different to flowers.

How can you tell? Orchids share the same unique features:

- They can be divided in half in one plane only. Orchids have three petals and three petal-like sepals.
- Labellum: which is a highly modified petal. This is the landing platform for pollinators and makes the orchid bilaterally symmetrical.
- Column: a single structure where both the stamens and style (male and female parts) are fused together.
- Pollinia: where the pollen is bound together in a large mass.
- Resupination: the flower stem twists around during growth so that the lip is upside down.
- Orchid seeds are tiny and there are lots.



Orchids, column, and labellum
Image credit: South Australia's Native Orchids – NOSSA



Colour me in!



Image credit to the Department of Environment and Water (DEW) (2013).

Great Sun Orchid

Information:

Scientific name: *Thelymitra grandiflora*

Appearance:

- eight blue/purple flowers
- has only one single leaf near the base of the plant
- grows to 1 metre

When does it flower?

Flowers September-November

Found: Native to Australia. Often found In Cleland National Park.



Sun Orchid at Cleland National Park
Photo credit: Cleland Wildlife Park employee

FUN FACT

The Sun Orchid is named from its habit of staying closed unless exposed to strong, direct sunlight!

Pollination

Careful with your step...

When walking, we need to be careful not to step on orchids; being small they can be hard to see!

Orchids are clever and have different ways to pollinate. Some are self-pollinating, where they can produce seeds without the need for pollinators, but majority of the orchid family need external pollinators such as birds, bees, ants, flies and wasps to name a few.

Some orchids use rewards to attract their pollinators, such as nectar. Bees will drink the nectar, get pollen on their bodies and then transfer it to other orchids and fertilise them.

Other species of orchid trick their pollinators. Like the Canberra Spider Orchid, who disguises its flower as a female thynnid wasp through looks and smell. This attracts the male wasp, thinking he's picking up a mate, but really he is transporting pollen between orchid flowers.



Canberra Spider Orchid
Photo Credit: John Bromilow (CSIRO.au)

Christmas at Cleland!

**From 16th – 20th
December 2024**

Bush Buddies

Animal tracks and Christmas craft.

Mon 16th at 11:00am

Tues 17th at 10:00am

Thurs 19th at 11:00am

Fri 20th at 10:00am

Christmas Mayhem in Nature

Wednesday 18th Dec

10:00am – 3:00pm

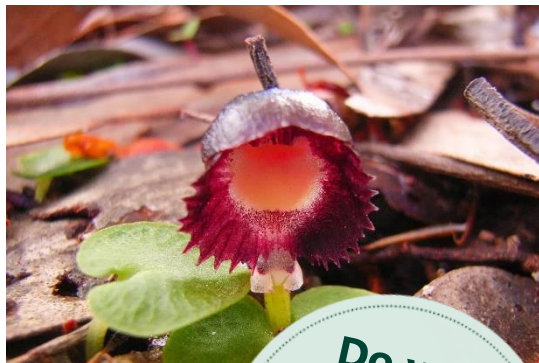
**Orchids grow from the Arctic to the Equator and south
in all the continents except Antarctica!**

Veined Helmet

(syn *Corysanthes diemenica*)

This tiny orchid is only 2cm tall so you will have to look carefully when trying to spot it! Luckily, the Veined Helmet Orchid grows in a group (or a colony) which makes them easier to find when they flower in July and August.

How to recognise it? Search for a flower that looks a lot like a gum nut from above. If you have a magnifying glass, you'll see that this tiny orchid has tiny teeth!



Veined Helmet Orchid
Photo Credit:
David Manglesdorf

Do you know?

Vanilla beans come from a species of orchid that is native to Mexico!

Spotted Donkey Orchid

(*Diuris pardina*)

This orchid has been named for its looks, from the spotty flower and the flower petals that look like big ears. Some also call this the 'Leopard Orchid'.

From August through to October, you can find this orchid flowering at around 40cm tall but only 3cm across.

What a trickster! The Spotted Donkey Orchid relies on pollination through insects. The bright colours of the flower attract flies, wasps, and bees into thinking they can get something to eat, but the orchid doesn't produce any nectar!



Spotted Donkey Orchid
Photo Credit: Kris Kopicki

Just Remember...

Just remember that under the National Parks and Wildlife Act, plants of any type cannot be taken from parks or reserves. If you want a souvenir, a photo is the best option – so make sure you pack your camera!