

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Australian Orchid Research, Volume 2: New Taxa of  
Australian Orchidaceae***by David Jones*

Australian Orchid Foundation, 208pp, RRP \$24.95

**Orchids of South Australia***by R.J. Bates and J.Z. Weber*

Government Printer, South Australia, 182pp

*Reviewed by Phil Collier*

These two books on Australian orchids are very different. Jones' paper, which fills the second issue in the series *Australian Orchid Research*, describes 108 new species of terrestrial orchids. Meanwhile Bates and Weber is a flora of the orchids which occur in South Australia, similar in aims to Curtis volume 4A in Tasmania.

The taxonomy of terrestrial orchids in Australia, including Tasmania, is currently undergoing a revolution. This started with Jones' *Native Orchids of Australia* in 1988. This volume introduced few new species, but used the work of Mark Clements who had re-appraised early collections of Australian orchids. This process showed that we have been referring to several species by incorrect names over the years. Subsequently Clements published his complete findings in the *Catalogue of Australian Orchidaceae*, which appeared as volume 1 of *Australian Orchid Research* in 1989.

In this new volume Jones has dealt with new species in nine terrestrial orchid genera. All but one of the genera occur in mainland Tasmania. The style of the work is to provide a detailed description of each new species and a description of distribution, habitat, flowering period, conservation status and other notes. There are 64 photographs and numerous line drawings of the new species by Jones in 111 figures. No keys are provided.

Jones has described several new species for Tasmania. Some of these resolve problems which had been known in the amateur community. The December-flowering spider orchid from Fingal is now called *Caladenia helvina*. A mystery in my mind about *C. dilitata* flowering in September on Flinders Island and in December around Hobart is explained. The larger plant on Flinders Island is the true *C. dilitata* while around Hobart we should now use the name *C. corynepetala*.

Some of the issues raised by Jones require a wider view than seen from Tasmanian material. The hyacinth orchid *Dipodium punctatum* is split into several new species. I can relate to this having seen two of the species recently in Victoria. Jones describes a Tasmanian hyacinth orchid under the name *D. roseum*.

I believe that this is the name for all of our hyacinth orchids, but I am unsure because Jones has not re-described what is now left in the original *D. punctatum*. This is a problem throughout this work, which affects several other Tasmanian species.

A more worrying issue became apparent in Jones' work after I tried to establish the status of new species in the genera *Chiloglottis* and *Gastrodia*. Jones has split up *C. gunnii* and *G. sesamoides* and described new species for Tasmania. On referring to material at the Tasmanian Herbarium I was surprised to find these species split up, but not into the species described by Jones. Work by G. Carr, also published in 1991, had established different new species!

In summary I can support Jones in some of his findings through my amateur knowledge of Tasmania's orchids. Some other aspects of the work will require the passage of time to be fully appreciated in Tasmania.

Bates and Weber, in contrast, is a work which I enjoy and recommend unreservedly. It contains keys, descriptions, distribution maps and photographs for all of South Australia's orchids. The photographs are of a very high quality. Many have been taken with assistance from flash, and most are crisp, bright and clear. The orchid species present in South Australia overlap significantly with those in Tasmania, so this book is also useful for Tasmanian orchid enthusiasts.

Bates and Weber was published before the work of Jones which is reviewed here. For this reason it does not help with the very latest name changes, even though there are instances where the new names would have been useful. For example photographs 95 and 96 show two 'forms' of *Dipodium punctatum*, using the old species definition. A few interesting insights are provided on the earlier works of Jones and Clements, where some 'new' names which they introduce are only mentioned in notes and not adopted. Possibly this was due to the timing of the publication rather than a rejection of the new work, although some of the new work has been used.

In summary Bates and Weber is a high-quality flora for many orchids of south-east Australia, bravely produced during a period of turmoil in orchid taxonomy. Its excellent quality makes it an essential addition for any serious student of orchids, even in Tasmania.

The current revolution surrounding orchid taxonomy is possibly only just starting. We have been promised the orchid volume in the *Flora of Australia* in the near future. At least this should include keys which deal with the recent new species. However, in *New Taxa of Australian Orchidaceae*, Jones promises new taxa in *Pterostylis*, a genus not treated in the present work. He also mentions the possibility of 'full taxonomic revisions of many Australian orchid genera after their treatment in the Flora'. Anyone hoping for definitive answers about the taxonomy of orchids will probably have a long wait.