

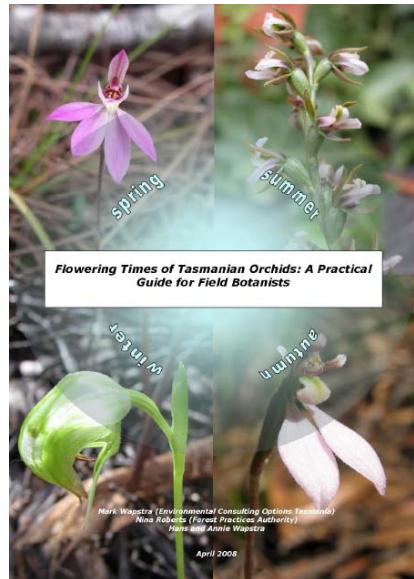
Flowering Times of Tasmanian Orchids: A Practical Guide for Field Botanists by Mark Wapstra, Nina Roberts, Hans Wapstra & Annie Wapstra Self-published, 2008 paperback, 44 pages.

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The *Flowering Times of Tasmanian Orchids: A Practical Guide for Field Botanists* presents a tabulated key showing the potential, peak, and mainland flowering times for all of Tasmania's 210 native orchid taxa. The document is available from a range of sources in printable PDF format free of charge (DPIW, FPA and ECOtas websites all have downloadable versions). The background section highlights the plight of Tasmanian orchids and the need for the document, followed by an outline of its purpose and an instructional section on how it should be used. All these are concise and effective. The key is alphabetically ordered by genus, with an explanation of each genus and short note about each species, giving useful information such as disturbance requirements for flowering. The PDF web-based format allows the document to be updated readily, and indeed this is the intention according to the authors. This feature is particularly appealing given the fluid nature of orchid taxonomy.

Threatened species are identified by an * preceding the species in the table. There is no other information given regarding the species' status which could result in the importance of some species being overlooked. However, this seems unlikely and users are recommended to confirm the status of a species prior to making management decisions. The only other useful addition might be distribution maps for each species similar to those in *The Orchids of Tasmania*. However, these would be difficult to produce and update.

This document fills a significant gap in the Tasmanian orchid literature. Given the inherent difficulties in locating and surveying orchids in their natural habitat, an accurate guide to their flowering times will be an invaluable tool to field botanists, consultants and orchid enthusiasts alike. *Flowering Times of Tasmanian Orchids: A Practical Guide for Field Botanists* has been developed by Tasmania's leading



orchid experts, drawing collectively on many decades of field experience. The result is the most comprehensive State reference on orchid flowering available.

By virtue of its ease of use, accessibility and identification of accurate windows for locating our often-cryptic orchids, it will actually assist in conservation by enabling land managers and consultants to more easily comply with the survey requirements of a range of land-use planning processes. The use of this guide will enhance efforts to locate new populations and increase our understanding of the distribution of orchid species. I commend this guide and strongly recommend its use as a reference whenever surveys for orchids are undertaken.

A Guide to Flowers & Plants of Tasmania (Fourth Edition) by
Launceston Field Naturalists Club (edited by Marion Simmons, Hans & Annie Wapstra), Reed New Holland, 2008, paperback, 176 pages.

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A Guide to Flowers & Plants of Tasmania was first published in 1981 – in 2008 its fourth edition was released. This was always one of the best field guides for Tasmanian flora but I for one am glad that the Launceston Field Naturalists Club decided to ignore the old adage “if it isn’t broken, don’t try to fix it”! The fourth edition is not bigger (in fact, it’s actually about 2 cm shorter, which is always good for a field guide) but it is better. First, the revised style is modern and the layout much easier on the eye (fonts, styles, text spacing and colours are all much better selected). Second, the book is released with a plastic cover, recognising that its main audience carry the book in their jacket pockets, shove it to the bottom of a backpack or leave it lying around the floor of the car (no disrespect intended, of course). Third, the text has been updated and is now much more consistent within and between species and sections. Names of species are in line with recent taxonomic changes (of which there have been many to grapple with) and common names follow another recent publication, *The Little Book of Common Names for Tasmanian Plants*. And last, but not least, the Launceston Field Naturalists Club

