

SOS EXECUTIVE

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COC REPRESENTATIVE:

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WEB ADDRESS

WWW.SASKORCHIDS.COM

ANNOUNCEMENTS

EDITOR'S NOTE

THE NEWSLETTER WILL BE DISTRIBUTED ELECTRONICALLY TO ALL MEMBERS FOR WHOM WE HAVE AN EMAIL ADDRESS. IF YOU WISH TO SWITCH FROM PAPER TO ELECTRONIC DELIVERY, NOTIFY ME AT (ROBERT.LUCAS@USASK.CA). EMAIL ME IF YOU HAVE NOT RECEIVED YOUR ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER BY THE THIRD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH.

MARCH MEETING

THE MARCH MEETING OF THE SOCIETY WILL BE HELD ON MARCH 16TH AT DUTCH GROWERS, COMMENCING AT 1:30 P.M.

OSA SHOW

THE ORCHID SOCIETY OF ALBERTA SHOW AND SALE HELD IN EDMONTON ON FEBRUARY 22-24, 2008 PRODUCED A RECORD NUMBER OF AOS NOMINATED PLANTS. THE EDMONTON JOURNAL HAS POSTED A NUMBER OF PHOTOS OF THE SHOW. THEY MAY BE VIEWED AT:

WWW.CANADA.COM/EDMONTONJOURNAL/PHOTOGALLERIES/LARGETEMPLATE.HTML?TOPIC=ORCHIDS

PLANT ORDERS

THE SOS WILL ORDER FROM TWO GROWERS THIS SPRING, WWW.ORCHIDSBYHAUSERMANN.COM AND WWW.ORCHIDINUSA.COM THE ORCHID INN SPECIALIZES IN PAPHS AND PHRAGS. CHECK OUT THEIR ON-LINE CATALOGUES. PAPER COPIES OF CATALOGUES WILL BE DISTRIBUTED AT THE MARCH MEETING, WHICH IS ALSO THE DEADLINE FOR ORDERS. YOU WILL BE ASKED FOR A DEPOSIT EQUAL TO HALF THE VALUE OF YOUR ORDER.



GARDENScape

GARDENScape WILL BE HELD ON MARCH 29-30. THOSE WHO VOLUNTEERED FOR A TWO-HOUR TOUR OF DUTY AT THE SOS DISPLAY MAY PICK UP THEIR PASSES FROM SHERIDA ON THURSDAY NIGHT, MARCH 27TH IN HALL C AT PRAIRIELAND PARK BETWEEN 3:30 AND 7:00 P. M. IF YOU HAVE NOT YET VOLUNTEERED, A SIGN-UP SHEET WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE EXECUTIVE TABLE AT THE MARCH MEETING.

WE NEED MEMBERS' BLOOMING PLANTS FOR THE DISPLAY. YOU MAY DROP OFF PLANTS BETWEEN 3:30 AND 7:00 P.M AT THE SOCIETY DISPLAY IN HALL C. PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOUR PLANTS CAN BE IDENTIFIED AS YOURS AND THAT THEY ARE CLEAN AND WELL PRESENTED. PLANT PICK-UP WILL BE FROM 5:00-5:30 P. M. ON SUNDAY. IF YOU CANNOT PICK UP YOUR PLANTS, BE SURE TO ARRANGE FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO DO SO.

COC SYMPOSIUM

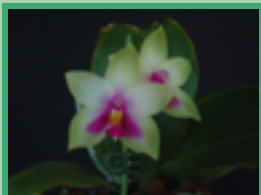
THE COC ANNUAL MEETING AND SYMPOSIUM WILL BE HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE OTTAWA ORCHID SOCIETY SHOW ON APRIL 26-27 AT THE NEPEAN SPORTSPLEX, 1701 WOODRUFFE AVE, NEPEAN, ONTARIO. WWW.CANADIANORCHIDCONGRESS.CA

THE MARCH SLIDESHOW IS ENTITLED "ORCHID JUDGING."



PHAL BEDFORD GEM

DO YOU WANT TO JOIN THE EXECUTIVE AND CONTRIBUTE TO OUR GREAT SOCIETY? IF SO, TALK TO SHERIDA..



PHAL BELLINA

COC EXECUTIVE

THE COC IS LOOKING FOR PEOPLE WILLING TO SERVE ON THE EXECUTIVE. THERE ARE FOUR VACANCIES, SECRETARY, TREASURER, AND TWO VICE-PRESIDENTS. IF YOU ARE WILLING TO VOLUNTEER, SEE JAMES AT THE MARCH MEETING.

CYPRIPEDIUM EXCURSION

THE EXECUTIVE IS EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITY OF A TRIP TO NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN THIS JUNE TO VIEW CYPRIPEDIUM ORCHIDS IN SITU. FURTHER DETAILS WILL BE FORTHCOMING AT THE APRIL MEETING.

CRANBERRY PECAN BAR

ANYONE INTERESTED IN THE RECIPE FOR BRIAN O'KEEF'S BARS WHICH WERE THE HIT OF THE FEBRUARY MEETING WILL FIND IT AT THE LIBRARY TABLE AT THE MARCH MEETING.

FEBRUARY 17TH MEETING MINUTES

THE PRESIDENT WELCOMED EVERYONE TO THE MEETING.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THERE HAS BEEN A GOOD RESPONSE FOR VOLUNTEERS FOR GARDENSCAPE AND THERE ARE ONLY A FEW SPOTS THAT NEED FILLING. VOLUNTEER PASSES CAN BE PICKED UP AT OUR DISPLAY IN HALL C FROM SHERIDA ON THURSDAY ANYTIME AFTER 4:00 P.M. IF VOLUNTEERS CAN'T MAKE IT, PLEASE HAVE A FELLOW MEMBER PICK UP YOUR PASS. YOU WILL NEED THEM TO GET INTO GARDENSCAPE.

TODAY HEATHER WILL GIVE A

ORCHID DIGEST GIVEAWAY

OLDER COPIES OF THE ORCHID DIGEST WILL BE GIVEN AWAY AT THE MARCH MEETING. ALTHOUGH THEY ARE DATED WITH RESPECT TO ADVERTISING, THEY CONTAIN GREAT PICTURES AND CULTURE INFORMATION. THEY WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE LIBRARY TABLE.

SOS EXECUTIVE ELECTIONS

ELECTIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE WILL TAKE PLACE AT THE APRIL MEETING. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN JOINING THE EXECUTIVE, OR NOMINATING SOMEONE ELSE, PLEASE INFORM SHERIDA OR ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE.

MEETING AGENDA

- ANNOUNCEMENTS
- PROBLEM CORNER
- SHOW AND TELL
- COFFEE/SUPPLIES
- SLIDE SHOW
- PLANT RAFFLE AND SALE
- ADJOURNMENT

WARM UP TALK ON THEIR TRIP TO THE WORLD ORCHID CONGRESS IN JANUARY. THERE WILL BE A FULL PRESENTATION GIVEN BY BOB LUCAS AT OUR MAY MEETING ALONG WITH LOTS OF WONDERFUL PICTURES THAT BOB, CHERYL AND HEATHER TOOK. ALSO, THERE WILL BE A SHOWING OF SOME OF THE PLANTS THEY PURCHASED IN MIAMI.

WE HAVE CONFIRMED OUR SATURDAY EVENING PRESENTATION AT GARDENSCAPE, 7:30 P.M, MARCH 29. IN HALL D, PRAIRIE-LAND PARK.. HEATHER, CHERYL, YVETTE AND BOB WILL BE CONDUCTING A DEMONSTRATION CALLED 'BASIC ORCHID CARE.' THEY WILL REPOT DIFFERENT ORCHIDS AND COVER THE BASIC CARE OF ORCHIDS.

A QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD WILL FOLLOW AFTER THE DEMONSTRATION. SO, IF YOU ARE AT GARDENScape AROUND THAT TIME, BE SURE TO DROP IN.

WE WILL BE ORDERING FROM HAUSERMANN ORCHIDS AS WELL AS ORCHID INN AND YOU SHOULD TRY AND HAVE YOUR ORDERS READY TO GO FOR THE MARCH MEETING ALONG WITH A CHEQUE OR CASH FOR HALF OF YOUR ORDER. THEIR EMAIL ADDRESSES WERE LISTED IN THE FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER.

PLANT RAFFLE TICKETS ARE \$1.00 OR 3 FOR \$2.00. THE 20 RAFFLE PLANTS HAVE BEEN DONATED BY SAFEWAY FLORAL.

PROBLEM CORNER

A HEALTHY CATTLEYA HAS HAD A NUMBER OF SHEATHS FOR ALMOST A YEAR BUT THERE HAVE BEEN NO BLOOMS. SUGGESTION: IT MAY BE NORMAL DEVELOPMENT – SHEATHS MAY SIT EMPTY OF 6-8 MONTHS BEFORE BUDS FORM, INCREASE LIGHT DURING THE WINTER AND FERTILIZE.

DEN. KINGIANUM PURCHASED FROM CHANTHON LAST YEAR. IS PRODUCING KIEKIES BUT NO BLOOMS.

SUGGESTION: DRY OUT (IN THE WINTER), GROW COOL, WATER AS USUAL IN THE SUMMER. HELGA SCHULZ HAS A CATTLEYA THAT HADN'T BLOOMED FOR 15 YEARS AND NOW BLOOMS REGULARY.

A QUESTION WAS ASKED ABOUT SOME GENERAL ORCHID CARE FOR ORCHIDS IN A SENIORS COMPLEX – THE MEMBER WILL VISIT TO DETERMINE THE VARIETY AND WILL GIVE APPROPRIATE ADVISE ON WATERING.

SHOW AND TELL

RYAN DENKERT., SARAH NYKIFORUK, BOB FARTHING, HEATHER ANDERSON, RUTHANN HANBIDGE, DELORES CRAWFORD., YVETTE LYSTER, JAMES SATHER AND CAROL STEINHAUER.

COFFEE BREAK

PRESENTATION: HEATHER ANDERSON
PLANT SALE
ADJOURNMENT



PHAL SUN JE
DIAMOND

WEB PAGE OF THE MONTH

EACH MONTH WE WILL FEATURE A WEB PAGE. IF YOU HAVE A FAVORITE, SEND IT TO THE EDITOR. THIS MONTH'S FEATURE, COURTESY OF RON KAUFMANN OF THE ORCHID DIGEST IS:

WWW.SUNSETVALLEYORCHIDS.COM

THIS SITE IS MAINTAINED BY A NURSERY THAT STILL MAKES AND PRODUCES PLANTS PRIMARILY FROM SEED. OWNER FRED

CLARKE SPECIALIZES IN MANY GENERA, INCLUDING BULBOPHYLLUMS, PAPHS, COMPACT CATTS AND PLANTS FROM THE SUBTRIBE CATASETINAE. IT HAS HAD MUCH SUCCESS WITH ITS BREEDING PROGRAM INCLUDING FOUR FCC AWARDS. THE BROWSER WILL FIND HUNDREDS OF IMAGES AND JUDGING RESULTS FROM THE BREEDING PROGRAM.

FREAKS AND SINKERS

BY CAROL SIEGEL. (REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION FROM THE ORCHID DIGEST, VOLUME 70, #4, OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, DECEMBER 2006, PP 268-269.)

WHEN MOST PEOPLE THINK OF ORCHIDS, THEY THINK OF MISS AMERICA, GORGEOUS CREATURES WITH SENSUOUS LIPS, PERFECT FORM AND A LUSCIOUS FRAGRANCE. IN REALITY, MANY ORCHIDS ARE MORE LIKE TEEN-AGE BOYS WITH BLUE HAIR, METAL IN THEIR MOUTHS, UGLY TATTOOS AND A RATHER DISAGREEABLE SMELL. THIS IS THE FREAK SHOW SIDE OF ORCHIDS, THE WEIRD AND WACKY, THE DEFORMED, THE MIDGETS, THE GIANTS, AND THE STINKERS. COME WITH US TO EXPLORE THIS BIZARRE WORLD OF UNBELIEVABLE ORCHIDS.



THE DEVASTATING FOUL ROTTING-FLESH SMELL MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE TO ENTER THE GREENHOUSE.

FABULOUSLY GORGEOUS BULBOPHYLLUM. FLETCHERIANUM HAS THE FOULEST ODOR OF ANY ORCHID. ONE OF THE LARGEST OF THE GENUS, B. FLETCHERIANUM HAS LEAVES THAT CAN BE ONE FOOT ACROSS AND SEVEN FEET LONG, TALLER THAN A MAN! YOU CAN BUY THIS GLORIOUS PLANT ON THE WEB, BUT BE WARNED. UNDER THAT SPECTACULAR LEAF BLOOM 20 TO 30 CLUSTERED FLOWERS, EACH OF WHICH LOOKS LIKE A TOUCAN'S BILL AND SMELLS LIKE A HERD OF DEAD ELEPHANTS. THE DEVASTATING FOUL ROTTING-FLESH SMELL MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE TO ENTER THE GREENHOUSE. LIKE MOST PLANTS OF THE GENUS BULBOPHYLLUM, THIS STINKY BEAUTY IS POLLINATED BY FLIES WHICH LOVE THE SMELL OF URINE, BLOOD, DUNG AND ROTTING MEAT. THIS IS NOT THE FLOWER TO GIVE YOUR GIRLFRIEND AT THE PROM.

TO ENTICE POLLINATORS, ORCHIDS HAVE DEVELOPED OTHER WEIRD SMELLS THAT CATER TO THE KINKY TASTES OF INSECTS. GALEANDRA

GREENWOODIANA SMELLS LIKE A WET DOG WHILE B. PHALAENOPSIS SMELLS LIKE A GARBAGE CAN IN SUMMER, AND PLEUROTHALLIS COCORNAESIS SMELLS LIKE UNWASHED SOCKS. MANY A COLLECTOR HAS WASHED HIS FEET SEVERAL TIMES THINKING IT WAS HE AND NOT THE ORCHIDS THAT NEEDED A BATH. THERE MUST BE A POLLINATOR OUT THERE WHO FANCIES THE SMELL OF DIRTY FEET.

SOME ORCHID FREAKS STINK, WHILE OTHERS ARE BIG ENOUGH TO BLOT OUT THE SUN OR SMALL ENOUGH TO PASS THROUGH THE EYE OF A NEEDLE. WEIGHING MORE THAN HALF A TON AND GROWING TO FORTY FEET ACROSS, GRAMMATOPHYLLUM SPECIOSUM SURELY WINS THE PRIZE FOR MOST MASSIVE ORCHID. MORE THAN 100 HUNDRED FLOWERS CAN BE BORNE ON FLOWER SPIKES FIVE-TO EIGHT-FEET TALL! MEN HARVESTING THE ORCHID HAVE BEEN KILLED WHEN THE ORCHID FELL ON THEM.

ORCHIDS OF SPECIES OF GRAMMATOPHYLLUM FROM SOUTH-EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC ISLANDS TIE WITH THEIR REMARKABLE LOOK-A-LIKE FROM ECUADOR, CYRTOPODIUM LONGIBULBOSUM, FOR SHEER MASS. BOTH THESE SPECIES PRODUCE ENORMOUS CLUMPS OF HUGE PSEUDOBULBS. CYRTOPODIUM BEARS PSEUDOBULBS UP TO 11 1/2 FEET TALL WHILE GRAMMATOPHYLLUM PSEUDOBULBS CAN REACH 16 FEET TALL. HOWEVER, THERE ARE EVEN TALLER ORCHIDS. BEFORE THE DISCOVERY OF

SOBRALIA ALTISSIMA, THE TITLE, "TALLEST ORCHID," WENT TO A RARE PANAMANIAN SLIPPER ORCHID, **SELENIPEDIUM CHICA**. THE STEMS HAVE BEEN RECORDED TO BE 16 1/2 FEET TALL. IT LOST ITS TITLE TO THE GIANT **SOBRALIA ALTISSIAM**, WHICH HAS BEEN RECORDED AT A STUPENDOUS 41 FEET IN HEIGHT, MORE THAN 2 1/2 TIMES AS TALL!. THAT'S AS HIGH AS A FOUR-STORY BUILDING!

WHILE SOME ORCHIDS ARE MONSTROUSLY BIG, OTHERS ARE AS TINY AS AN ANT. A COLLECTION OF HUNDREDS OF THESE MINIATURES CAN FIT ON A SHELF. THESE ARE THE ORCHIDS YOU NEED A MAGNIFYING GLASS TO TRULY APPRECIATE, THE MIDGETS AND DWARFS OF THE ORCHID WORLD.

A BOUQUET OF **PLATYSTELE ORNATE** OR THE **PSEUDOBLUB OF B. GLOBULI-FORME** COULD FIT ON THE HEAD OF A PIN. A BOUQUET OF **LEPANTHES** FLOWERS COULD EASILY FIT INSIDE A WEDDING RING. TINY BLOOMS OF **PLEUROTHALLIS TRIDENTALTA** REST SHYLY NESTLED IN THE TOP OF THEIR LEAVES, VISIBLE ONLY WITH A HAND LENS. THE ENTIRE PLANT OF **PLEUROTHALLIS GROBYI** GROWS ONLY SIX INCHES TALL, WHILE THE BLOOMS OF **TRISETELLA HOEJERI** RESEMBLE TINY FLYING ORIGAMI BIRDS NESTLED IN THE ONR-INCH-TALL FOLIAGE.

AMONG THE STRANGEST MINIATURES IS **PLEUROTHALLIS SCHIEDEI** (SYN. **P. ORNATA**) WITH FLOWERS ONLY 1/4 INCH WIDE. WHITE STREAMERS JUST 1/25 OF AN INCH LONG DANGLE FROM THE EDGES OF THIS MEXICAN SPECIES LIKE TINY FRINGE ON A LAMPSHADE. ANY CHANGE IN HUMIDITY OR TEMPERATURE MAKES THESE STREAMERS WRIGGLE. PASSING FLIES ARE ENTICED TO LAY THEIR EGGS IN THE FLOWER, MISTAKING THE WRIGGLING

STREAMERS FOR MAGGOTS AND THE BLACK DOTS FOR BABY FLIES. IT IS PART OF THE SUBTRIBE **PLEUROTHALLIDINAE**, WHICH COMPRISE FULLY 10 PERCENT OF ALL ORCHID SPECIES. IT IS HERE YOU WILL FIND MANY OF THE LILLIPUTIAN FLOWERS.

AT LEAST THE STINKY GIANT AND MIDGET ORCHIDS LOOK LIKE ORCHIDS. OTHER ORCHIDS HAVE THE AUDACITY TO LOOK LIKE INSECTS, FRUIT, MUSHROOMS OR APHIDS IN ORDER TO GET POLLINATED. THEY LOOK NOTHING LIKE AN ORCHID AT ALL. FULLY A THIRD OF ALL ORCHIDS PRETEND TO BE SOMETHING THEY ARE NOT, STOPPING AT NOTHING IN ORDER TO GET POLLINATED.

IN ORDER TO ATTRACT FRUIT FLIES, **PLEUROTHALLIS ENDO-TRACHYS** LOOKS AND SMELLS LIKE ROTTEN FRUIT. IN ORDER TO FOOL FUNGUS GNATS, **DRACULA VAMPIRA**'S LIP LOOKS LIKE A MUSHROOM AND EMITS A MUSHROOM SMELL. IN ORDER TO MAKE CARRION FLIES VISIT TO LAY THEIR EGGS, **BULBOPHYLLUM GIGANTEUM** LOOKS AND SMELLS LIKE A BIG PIECE OF ROTTEN LIVER.

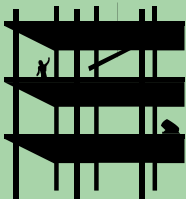
AMONG THE MOST BIZARRE ORCHIDS ARE THOSE IN THE GENUS **OPHYRS**. **OPHYRS** MEANS "EYEBROW," AND THIS HAIRY ORCHID BEARS AN ALMOST UNCANNY RESEMBLANCE TO FEMALE BEES AND WASPS. PLANTS OF THIS GENUS EVEN EMIT A FRAGRANCE IDENTICAL TO THAT PRODUCED IN THE DUFOUR'S GLAND OF FEMALE BEES IN NEED OF A LITTLE MALE COMPANIONSHIP. THE ORCHID LIP HAS A TINY RIDGE, IDENTICAL TO THE RIDGE SURROUNDING THE GENITAL APPARATUS OF A FEMALE BEE. IN THE SPRING, MALE SOLITARY BEES COME OUT OF THE GROUND LOOKING TO MATE. THERE ARE FEWER



PHAL TEXAS FANCY



RHIZANTHELLA GARDNERI. SPENDS ITS WHOLE LIFE UNDERGROUND.



FEMALES AND THEY MATE ONLY ONCE IN THEIR LIVES. SOME MALES ARE REALLY INEXPERIENCED AND ARE EASILY FOOLED BY THE OPHRYS ORCHID. THE MALE BEES MOUNT THE FLOWERS AND ATTEMPT TO COPULATE WITH THEM. IN THE PROCESS, THEY PICK UP POLLINIA AND FRUSTRATED, BECAUSE THE FLOWERS DON'T QUITE DO THE TRICK FOR THE BEE, THEY FLY OFF TO ANOTHER FLOWER AND FALL FOR THE SAME TRICK AGAIN. IT'S CALLED PSEUDOCOPULATION, BUT IT IS ONLY FALSE FOR THE BEE. IT IS REAL FOR THE ORCHID. MANY OTHER ORCHIDS LOOK JUST LIKE INSECTS INCLUDING CALADENIA, TRICHOCEROS AND DRACHEA.

SOME ORCHIDS ARE FREAKS BECAUSE THEY ARE MISSING PARTS OF NORMAL ORCHIDS. THERE ARE ACTUALLY SOME ORCHIDS WITH NO LEAVES. THE ENTIRE PROCESS OF PHOTOSYNTHESIS TAKES PLACE IN THEIR SPECIALLY ADAPTED GREEN ROOTS. THEIR VESTIGIAL LEAVES ARE NOW JUST SMALL SCALE-LIKE STRUCTURES.

THE MOST FAMOUS OF THE LEAFLESS ORCHIDS IS POLYRADICION LINDENII, THE GHOST ORCHID, MADE LEGENDARY AS THE SUBJECT OF THE BOOK ORCHID THIEF AND THE MOVIE ADAPTATION. WHEN NOT IN BLOOM, THE WHOLE PLANT LOOKS LIKE A GRAY-GREEN WAGON WHEEL OF THICK ROOTS ATTACHED TO A TREE TRUNK. THEN, THE NEARLY UNNOTICEABLE ROOTS SUDDENLY THROW A STUNNINGLY EERIE SIX-INCH GLOWING WHITE FLOWER WITH WHAT LOOKS LIKE TWO FROG'S LEGS HANGING DOWN AND AN EIGHT INCH NECTARY. BIZARRE AND LEAFLESS, THIS FREAK MAKES A LIVING WITHOUT ANY LEAVES AT ALL.

ANOTHER BIZARRE LEAFLESS ORCHID IS CORALLORRHIZA STRIATA, GAILY DECORATED WITH A RIOT OF PEPPERMINT STRIPES. THIS ODD ORCHID GETS ITS NOURISHMENT SOLELY BY BEING PARASITIC ON ITS FUNGUS HOSTS. THIS IS ONE OF THOSE ORCHIDS THAT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE MOST PEOPLES' IDEA OF AN ORCHID. KNOWN AS THE "STRIPED

CORAL ROOT," ITS FUNGUS- INFECTED ROOTS HAVE A KNOBBY APPEARANCE LIKE PIECES OF BRANCHED CORAL. IT IS KNOWN AS A MYCOTROPHIC PLANT BECAUSE IT RELIES ON A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH MYCOTROPHIC FUNGUS FOR ITS FOOD. ALL ORCHIDS START THEIR LIVES DEPENDENT ON FUNGUS FOR FOOD BECAUSE ORCHID SEEDS HAVE NO ENDOSPERM OR FOOD TISSUE FOR THEIR GROWING EMBRYOS. THE LITTLE SEED MUST LAND ON THE FUNGUS THAT SERVES AS ITS NANNY PROVIDING FOOD. AS MOST ORCHIDS GROW, THEY DEVELOP LEAVES AND BECOME SELF-SUPPORTING. CORALLORRHIZA STRIATA, HOWEVER, IS LIKE A TEENAGER WHO NEVER LEAVES HOME. IT CONTINUES TO FEED OFF ITS FUNGUS THROUGHOUT ITS WHOLE LIFE. THE STRANGELY-SHAPED PLANTS ARE JUST RHIZOME, STEM AND FLOWERS, AND APPEAR ABOVE THE GROUND TO BLOOM.

AT LEAST THE CORALLORRHIZA BLOOM ABOVE GROUND. SOME WEIRD ORCHIDS LIVE THEIR WHOLE LIVES UNDERGROUND. RHIZANTHELLA GARDNERI, THE UNDER-GROUND ORCHID OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA, SPENDS ITS WHOLE LIFE UNDERGROUND AND IS POLLINATED BY BLIND SUBTERRANEAN TERMITES. IN 1928 FARMER JOHN TROTT OF CORRIGIN UNEARTHED THE FIRST SPECIMENS OF THE ORCHID WHEN PLOWING LAND THAT HAD BEEN BURNT. IT GROWS IN ASSOCIATION WITH MELALEUCA UNCINATA WHICH SHEDS ITS LEAVES TO PRODUCE THICK LAYERS OF LEAF MOULD UNDER WHICH THE ORCHID GROWS. THE HEAD OF TINY, CROWDED ORCHIDS IS EXPOSED WHEN THE FLORAL BRACTS EXPAND AND OCCASIONALLY PUSH THROUGH THE LEAF MOULD, ALLOWING A LITTLE LIGHT AND PERHAPS ANOTHER POLLINATOR TO ENTER. THE "CAPITULUM" OR HEAD LOOKS LIKE ONE LARGE FLOWER, BUT IS REALLY A WHOLE GROUP OF SMALL FLOWERS.

ORCHIDS ARE SURELY A STRANGE AND WONDERFUL FAMILY OF FLOWERS.