

# Orchids of the Tilligerry Habitat

Many orchid flowers are tiny, but once you get used to spotting them they seem to be everywhere. Over 60 species have been sighted on the Tilligerry Peninsula in recent years. Many of them grow in the Tilligerry Habitat Reserve.

## Finding Orchids

Often you will see the leaves or seed capsules rather than the flowers. Leaves of many species start to appear at the end of summer. For many species they are visible for a lot longer than the flowers. Two or more species growing together is quite common. Some species develop large colonies while others may only be seen as single plants. Some species do not have any leaves and rely completely on fungi for nutrients. Many multi flowered orchids only open one flower at a time.



Flat, heart shaped leaves. Mixed colony of *Chiloglottis*, *Acianthus* and *Corybas* sp.



Strappy leaves come in a range of shapes, sizes and colours. *Calochilus* sp. *Thelymitra* leaves are very similar.



Grey-green leaves of *Caleana major* have a dark red underside growing with the thin, upright, thin, green leaves of a *Petalochilus* species.



A colony of 2 species. Rosettes and flowers of *Pterostylis acuminata* growing with the heart shaped leaves of *Acianthus fornicatus*.



A thick, fleshy leaf and well developed flower spike of a *Thelymitra* species



Rosettes. The leaves may have a visible stem (petiole) or none. Edges may be wavy or smooth. *Pterostylis nutans*.

Orchids are insect pollinated. Look carefully and you may spot them at work carrying the balls of yellow pollinia. Many orchids are scented.

## Seed capsule

All orchids have similar looking seed capsules that are often seen in late spring and summer. The capsules vary in size depending on the flower size. They contain extremely fine, dust-like seed. The tiny seed doesn't contain any food resources (think peas). Nutrients are provided by fungi in the wild. In cultivation, nutrient media is used to provide nutrients when growing orchid seed.

## Cultivation

Our native orchids acquire much or all of their nutrients from fungi. This makes many are very difficult or impossible to grow and maintain in cultivation. All orchids are protected species and must not be collected from the wild. Species and hybrids are available from specialist nurseries.



## Orchid Flowers

April, May, June, July



*Taurantha concinna*-Trim Greenhood  
Single flower about 2cm long.



*Pterostylis nutans*-Nodding  
Greenhood  
Single flower about 2.5cm long.



*Acianthus fornicatus*-Pixie Caps.  
Up to 10 flowers 1-1.5 cm long.  
Colour: usually green with a little red but varies from dark burgundy to a pure green alba form.

August- September –the peak flowering time-



*Nemacianthus caudatus*- Mayfly Orchid  
Several flowers 3-4 cm long  
Can be difficult to see due to the dark red/purple colour.



*Dockrillia teretifolia*-Rats Tail Orchid  
Up to 15 flowers 3-4 cm long.  
Heavily scented. The only epiphyte of this group.



*Microtis unifolia*-Common Onion orchid  
Flower about 3-4mm long.  
It is mostly the ovary of this flower that is seen.



*Petalochilus catenatus*-White Fingers  
(Also known as *Caldenia catenata*)  
Flower 2-4 cm tall. Usually single.  
Colour varies from white to pale pink.



*Cyanicula caerulea*- Blue Fairy  
Single flower about 2cm tall.  
There is a very distinct blue tone to the flower.



*Pterostylis baptistii*. King Greenhood  
Single flower 5-6cm long.





Calochilus paludosus- Red Beard Orchid  
Up to 9 flowers, about 4 cm long.

Calochilus robertsonii-Purple Beard  
Orchid  
Up to 5 flowers, around 3cm long  
If you look closely you can see the  
eyes and face.



Thelymitra carnea-Pink Sun Orchid  
Up to 4 flowers around 1 cm diameter.  
Small salmon pink orchid that opens on  
bright sunny days.

Thelymitra species\*  
Up to 4 pale blue flowers about  
1.5cm diameter that open on warm  
sunny days.

Thelymitra pauciflora\*-Slender Sun  
orchid  
Up to 15 flowers approximatley 1.5 cm  
diameter that open on warm sunny  
days.

**October, November, December**



Orthoceras strictum-Birds Mouth  
Orchid  
Up to 9 flowers about 5cm high.  
Colour from greenish brown to  
blackish.

Cryptostylis erecta- Bonnet Orchid  
2-12 flowers around 2.5cm tall.

Spiranthes australis- Ladies' Tresses  
Lots of tiny, (<1cm) bright pink flowers  
usually arranged in a spiral.

## Possibilities

These orchids have been seen growing nearby. They may be growing on the Habitat Reserve.



*Pterostylis acuminata*-Sharp  
Greenhood

April- June: Flower about 2.5cm long.  
Usually has some brown colour on  
the tip of the hood.



*Petalochilus hillmanii*-

Named after a local orchid authority.  
August-September Size from 1-3cm.  
Often 2 flowers.  
Colour- white to intense, bright pink.  
There is a single broad "tooth" on  
either side of the lip.



*Caleana major*-Duck Orchid

September- December. Up to 5 flowers  
about 2cm long.  
View from the side to see the duck.

## Activities

Today's date: .....

Tick the box of any orchids that you see. How many did you see in bloom? .....

Did you see any leaves that look like orchid leaves? .....

Draw a picture of the shape below. How big were they? .....

Did you see any insects or anything that may be pollinating the flowers. ....

What kind were they? .....

Did you find any orchids not shown on this sheet? .....

Please upload a photo or description of the orchid and its location to the Tilligerry Habitat Facebook page

For lots of orchid photos and to help with identification, see [www. http://www.retiredaussies.com](http://www.retiredaussies.com) (note that this website is not associated in any way with Tilligerry Habitat Association.)

\*The identification of these small orchids is yet to be confirmed. The flowers are usually blue but may have a mauve or pink tone. The plants observed may include natural hybrids.