

14.08.2019 Wednesday Walk Black Mountain Report

16 hardy souls braved the frost, mist and traffic, to meet at the Caswell drive/GDE entrance for the start of the Black Mountain WinterWalk.

The main interest for the walk was to find any of the four winter flowering orchids that are known to be flowering at this time in a good year. But also to look and compare the leaves of the autumn flowering ones that produce leaves, often after flowering, and the leaves that are just emerging for the spring flowering plants.

The first flowering orchid was just a few metres from the entrance, *Pterostylis nutans*. Where in past years there was an extensive colony, it is now somewhat reduced due to Chough activity. However one plant was fully in flower and a few buds sprinkled around. More rosettes and buds of it were noted in moist, sheltered areas throughout the walk.

The next flowering orchid was *Bunochilus umbrinus*, with just one flower fully open, though a number of buds, found in "Lower Tony's Gully".

Along the way *Pterostylis pendunculata*, *Caladenia (Glossodia) major*, *Caladenia (Petalochilus) fuscata*, and *Caladenia (Cyanicula) caerulea* leaves were just emerging, and the two different rosettes of the autumn flowering *Specularantha rubescens* were still fresh.

The disappointment of the day was only a single bud of *Corysanthes incurva* was found on the slopes of Tony's Gully. In good years these tiny Helmut Orchids can be seen hiding under many of the low grass overhangs.

However here the similar leaves of the *Acianthus*, *Corysanthes* and *Cyrtostylis* were compared and the differences highlighted. Further up the Gully many rosettes of the autumn flowering *Diplodium truncatum* and *D. revolutum* and the single leaf (some still with a dried scape) of *Eriochilus cucullatus* were identified.

The final flowering orchid was a small colony of *Acianthus collinus*, a tiny orchid that favours drier areas, hiding under low shrubs.

It was not until we were nearly back to the cars that the sun suddenly decided to appear highlighting just how beautiful the Mountain can be in its many moods.

Jean

Addendum by Kris. While the orchids and the accompanying commentary were certainly the highlights of the day, we also saw swards of flowering *Leucopogon attenuatus*, several flowering acacias (*A. gunnii* and *A. buxifolia*) and *Hakea decurrens*, purple *Hardenbergia violacea* and lilac *Hovea heterophylla*, and a few *Grevillea alpina* flowers. Thanks everyone for a great day.

Photos by Kris Nash (KN), Sam Nerrie (SN) and Jeanette Jeffery (JJ)



Starting out (KN)



Pterostylis nutans (SN)



Bunochilus umbrinus (JJ)



Bunochilus umbrinus "flipped" (SN)



Corysanthes incurva bud (SN)



Cyrtostylis reniformis (veins on leaves) (KN)



Acianthus excertus with purple under-leaf (KN)



Acianthus collinus (KN)



Grevillea alpina (KN)



Hakea decurrens (KN)



Hardenbergia violacea (KN)



Leucopogon attenuatus (KN)