

# Walking in the Wimmera

## A monthly journal of the orchids seen in the Wimmera Region

September /October 2009 by John Richards

Again this month the boundary is being stretched due to a visit to Murray Bridge in South Australia at the end of September. The return trip was via the Coorong as far as Policeman Point then across to Tintinara and the way home.

About halfway between Policeman Point and Tintinara the road passed through a small section of what I think was the Mt Boothby Conservation Park. It looked and was interesting. Just a few metres from the road several *Caladenia cardiochila* were quickly found. They are fairly well camouflaged as they stood about 20 to 25cm high among other ground cover plants of similar height and colours. Several *Caladenia stricta* orchids were seen also.

On the way to Murray Bridge at a roadside stop near Tintinara several were seen and their camouflage was a mixture broken bottles, rusty cans, plastic drink containers, oil cans, discarded mattresses and electrical appliances.

Near the *cardiochila* at Mt Boothby, in a slight depression and a possibly moister area around 20 *Prasophyllum* orchids were very easily seen. These stood well above the ground cover (about mid thigh in height) and looked white from a distance. I believe they were *Prasophyllum odoratum*. Dotted around in the whole area were many pink fingers and *Diuris pardina*



*Caladenia cardiochila*



*Caladenia stricta*

Back near Tintinara at a roadside stop things became interesting again. In a narrow strip between the highway and the water pipeline were several *Caladenia cardiochila* and many *Microtis unifolia* or the Common Onion Orchid.



*Prasophyllum odoratum*

The *Microtis* don't have much visual attraction compared to many of our other orchids and as a result don't make it onto this page.

Crossing the highway you enter a narrow strip (60 - 100 metres wide) of remnant vegetation before the railway line. Soon I was looking at a group of 6 large white *Caladenia* flowers about 40cm high, then a few metres away was another group of 8 about 10cm taller and the labellums were a distinct creamy yellow with more pronounced red markings on the calli and column. The petals and lateral sepals hung differently, this was common to all in each group.

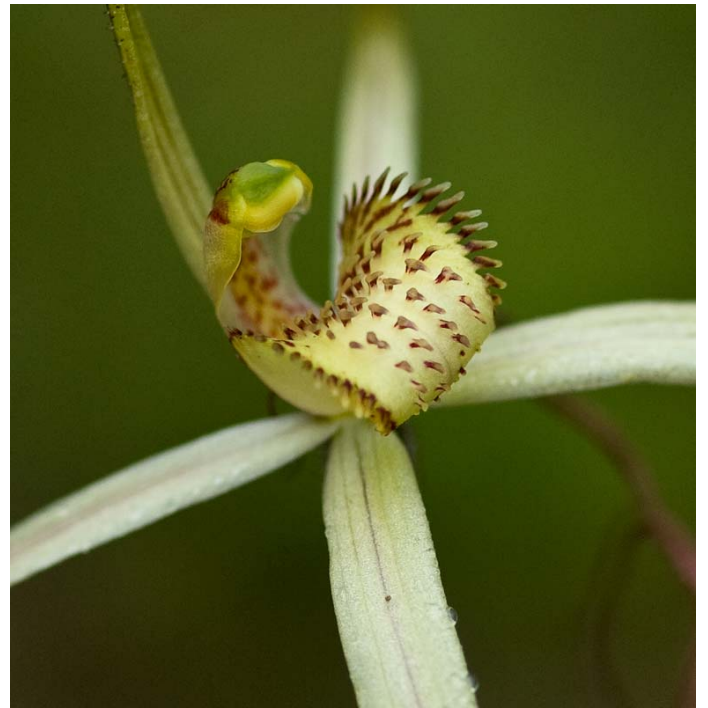
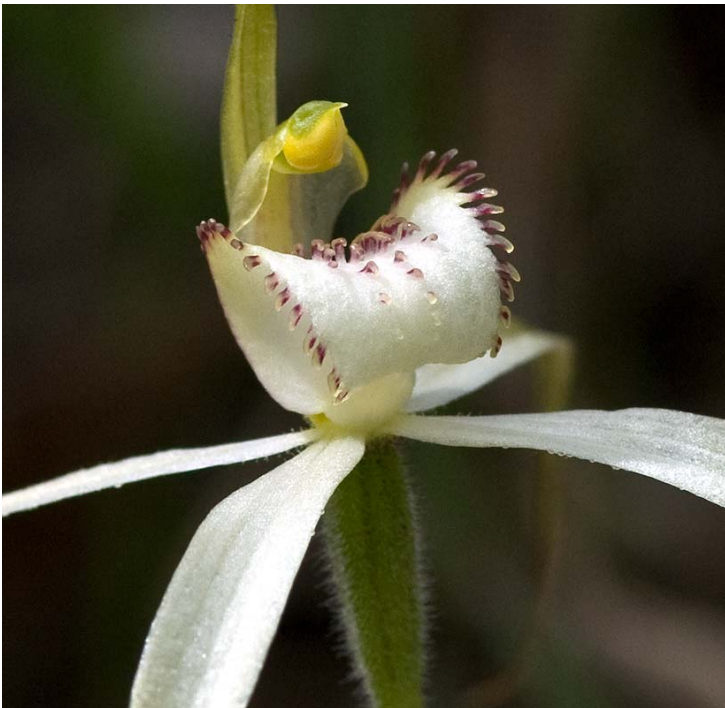
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Obviously these orchids caught my attention and it shows that some of the remnant bushland, though small, can still be significant orchid habitats.

I did get out into the Little Desert into an area where the McDonald Highway and Broughtons Track intersect but that will keep until next month.



For more photos and information (hopefully) go to: [www.walkinginthewimmera.com](http://www.walkinginthewimmera.com)

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