

Orchids

(Orchidaceae family)

With over 28,000 species, **orchids** are the world's second largest family of flowering plants - with more being found each year.

The daisy family is the largest.

There's over 700 orchid species in Australia and over 130 in the Blue Mountains.



Spotted Sun Orchid



Large Duck Orchid

Many orchids only appear for a few weeks each year.

And then due to the weather (too hot, too cold; too wet, too dry), or their ground being disturbed, they may not appear the following year.

Orchids fall into two groups - ground orchids and tree orchids.

That is, orchids that grow in the earth and orchids that grow on trees and other plants. Rock orchids are usually grouped with tree orchids.

Ground orchids are best found on the sides of walking tracks.



Pink Fingers or Lady's Fingers

Vanilla flavouring comes from the seeds of the **Vanilla Bean Orchid** - which originated in Mexico and Belize.

Sun orchids only open on sunny days.

Donkey orchids get their name from their top two petals which resemble the ears of a donkey.



donkey orchid



Potato Orchid

Potato Orchids or **Cinnamon Bells** sometimes pop up in gardens.

Orchids can be hard to identify as there are so many similar species.

Look for orchids on the sides of walking tracks, but be careful not to disturb them.



Have you seen a Sun Orchid?

Have you seen Lady's Fingers?

Have you seen a Donkey Orchid?

Have you seen a vanilla pod or tasted vanilla?