

ACT News

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A Large Autumn Greenhood orchid. *Photo: Tony Wood*

Rare orchid found on Mount Majura

Canberrans' already deep appreciation of Mount Majura (even if only admired from afar it is a shapely monadnock in our landscape and a vital habitat for our fauna and flora) will be deepened by some wonderful news. A rare orchid species has just been discovered there. The Bush Capital is a little bit bushier than we knew.

Orchid-alert naturalist Aaron Clausen was out and about on the mountain on the weekend in the wake of the recent rains and came across some clumps of the discreetly spectacular large autumn greenhood, *Diplodium revolutum*.

The ACT's bushland is blessed with dozens of species of orchids (there are more than 50 species at the floral hot-spot of Black Mountain alone) but he explains that the significance of this discovery is that this species has never been seen on Mount Majura before, even though naturalists' records for that bailiwick go back for more than 100 years.

"So this is a first for Mount Majura and an extremely positive find for the capital," he rejoices.

For those readers not au fait with our native flora, "orchid" will conjure up thoughts of the gaudy, florally bogan, hothouse orchids sold by florists. But the native orchids of the ACT are mostly dainty and discreet, only revealing their complex charms when you get up very close.

"Canberra's really clever and tricky like that," Clausen thinks. "A place can look like just another patch or ordinary old bush but then it's stunning what you can just come across that's been staring you in the face all the time."

Aaron Clausen contributes to Canberra Nature Map which is at <http://canberranaturemap.org/>