



Ambitious Thinking

The Path to Wild Orchid Watch

A major citizen science initiative using innovative digital technologies to enhance our ecological knowledge of Australian orchids

Got an idea...
... go for it!

Robert & Rosalie Lawrence

2011 Background

- ❖ **Sept 2011** – Two publications
 - Start With the Leaves (a simple guide to orchids)
 - South Australia's Native Orchids DVD
- ❖ Resulted in
 - public talks (developed credibility)
 - collaboration with the Herbarium
 - realisation of a need for orchid information



2012 An Idea

- ❖ **2012** Go Botany plant identification website by the New England Plant Society (USA) sparked the idea for an Australian orchid equivalent
- ❖ Purchased a Domain Name



2012 – 2016 Exploring the Idea

- ❖ Discussions with Herbarium
 - Potential for research **after** website development
- ❖ Various activities
 - Grant from Australian Orchid Foundation
 - Attempted to adapt GoBotany software
 - Permission to adapt copyrighted material
 - Recruited people with different skill sets
 - WOW Steering Committee formed
- ❖ Networking +++
- ❖ We needed to communicate better
- ❖ **2016** Understood problems & developed solutions

2016 Idea Rebooted



2016 Consolidating the Idea

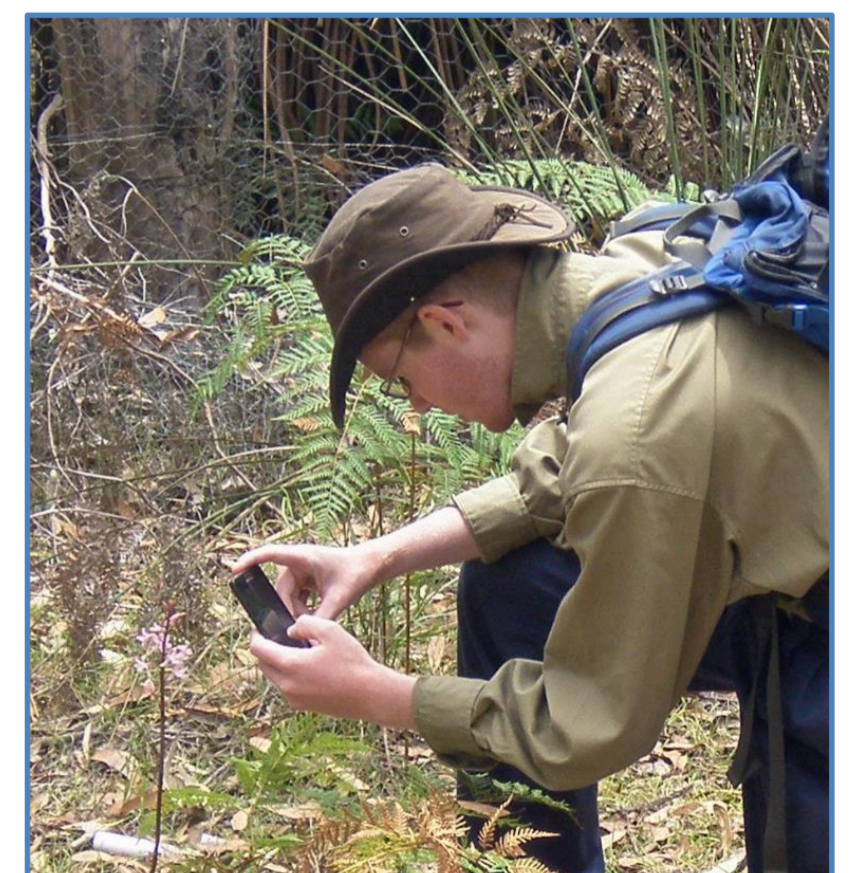
- ❖ **July 2016 Brainstorming & lessons learnt**
- ❖ Importance of
 - documentation of technology
 - IT consultants for communications
 - continuing to network
- ❖ Make it national
- ❖ New ideas including
 - Orchid Monitoring
 - Machine Learning
 - Teaching identification tools within App
- ❖ **Actions taken**
- ❖ **Oct 2016** User survey to check interest & build credibility
- ❖ **2017** Collaborations with two universities for student projects

2017

Partners Together A Great Opportunity

2017 CS Grant

- ❖ Project with research **beginning much earlier than intended**
- ❖ **July 2017 – June 2020** funding period
- ❖ Opportunities for undergraduate & graduate research projects
- ❖ Focus on citizen science engagement, incorporating gamification strategies



2017 New Collaboration

- ❖ Grant announcement, seized the opportunity
- ❖ Partnership with TERN & University of Adelaide
- ❖ Resulted in focussing the direction of the project



An Awesome Future

- ❖ Tools developed and lessons learnt adaptable for other CS projects
 - An app for data collections
 - A database with ability to interact with other systems
 - An interactive project website
 - Significant stakeholder interactions

Network

Keep talking, you never know who can help

Be Adaptable

Setbacks are stepping stones
Seize opportunities
Think laterally

Persist

It takes time to mature a concept