



THE SPECIES ORCHID SOCIETY OF WA INC.

<https://speciesorchidsocietywa.com>

Vol 38 No 2 July 2026

NEWSLETTER



Anne O'Callaghan Award June 2026
Paphiopedilum purpuratum
Siva

NEXT MEETING Tuesday 14 July

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MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING

9 June 2026 7.35 pm

Present: 17 members as per register.

Apologies: 10 as per register.

Visitors: Nil

New members: Nil

Minutes: Summary of minutes of May meeting tabled for members. Acceptance of minutes moved Jordana, seconded Siva. Carried

Business Arising: Nil

Financial Report: Adrian presented the financial report. The balance at bank on 31 May was \$5,580.15. and \$78.40 on the Debit Card. Acceptance of financial report moved Adrian, seconded Helen. Carried

Business Arising: Nil.

Correspondence:

Inwards:

- Committee - draft GM and AGM agenda and draft GM and AGM minutes, NFP self-review matters and timing..
- Jordana – photos from GM
- SpacetoCo – Venue booking information, request for updated Insurance Certificate.
- Paul – newsletters and photos uploaded to One Drive for website.
- Bruce, Lee-Anne, Diane re Peter Bernhardt presentation.
- GCA – insurance cover note for period 30 April 2026 - 30 April 2027.

Outwards:

- Committee - draft committee meeting agenda and minutes, draft AGM and May GM agenda and minutes.
 - Adrian and Paul – communications from SpacetoCo re venue bookings.
 - Paul – newsletter and photos to be uploaded to One Drive for website.
 - Bruce, Lee-Anne, Diane re Peter Bernhardt presentation.
 - Members – newsletters to members
 - GCA insurance renewal and certificate, insurance cover note submitted to SpacetoCo
- Correspondence report moved Arnold, seconded Helen. Carried.

Business Arising: Nil

General Business:

Newsletter

Lee-Anne advised members that the June newsletter included the last of four short articles by Graham on Orchids of The Southwest including lots of photos of current and past members looking at terrestrial orchids in-situ from 2003, and thanked Graham and Margaret for their work.

Lee-Anne noted that newsletter editor is always looking for suggestions or matters to be included in the newsletter and encouraged members to provide feedback or articles to the editor.

Home Visits

Lee-Anne advised that the June home visit will be hosted by Bruce and Kaye at their home at Dianella at 10.00am on Sunday 21 June 2026, and asked for a show of hands from those members who are planning to attend.

Bruce advised that this might not be possible as he recalled that he and Kaye had another commitment on that day. Ken to follow up and advise members about the date.

2026 Program

Lee-Anne asked members to consider delivering a presentation or workshop, or if they know of someone who would be of interest to members to present to our members at a meeting, to let the Secretary know so that he could follow up and set a date.

Perth Orchid Fair

Lee-Anne as our committee member updated members on this event. The planning committee met on Thursday 14 May to continue planning the 2026 POF and will meet again on 16 July.

We have interest from some commercial vendors who are likely to attend and perhaps Robinson Orchids from Queensland who might also do a couple of presentations to attendees

Lee-Anne asked members intending to put plants in the SOSWA display to please let the secretary know by mid-late August so that he can do the name cards.

Plant Inventory

Lee-Anne reminded members that we are always looking for more monthly sale plants and raffle prizes. If you have a spare 15-20 plants of a species that you would be happy to sell to us or know someone who might have spare plants, please let a committee member know.

Anne O'Callaghan Cultural Award: Members voted for Siva's *Paphiopedilum purpuratum*

Maxine Godbeer Award: Nil

Name Badge: Siva

Raffle: No raffle.

Meeting closed: 8.45 pm

FORTH-COMING EVENTS

Home visits: 26 July 2026	Ken & Chris, The Vines
16 August 2026	Graham & Margaret, Hamersley

MARKETPLACE - FOR SALE/WANTED

2026 Programs

Meeting Presentations/Workshops

14 July 2026	GM Carl Barry, Growth Technology
11 August 2026	GM
8 September 2026	GM Norm, Australian epiphytes
13 October 2026	GM – Bruce deflasking
10 November 2026	GM
8 December 2026	GM & Christmas Party

Home Visits

Sunday 26 July 2026, 10.00am	Ken & Chris Jones, The Vines
Sunday 16 August 2026, 10.00am	Graham & Margaret Bowden, Hamersly
Sunday 27 September 2026, 10.00am	terrestrial orchid visit, Star Swamp
Sunday 25 October 2026, 10.00am	Norm Stockton, Riverton
Sunday 22 November 2026, 10.00am	Bruce & Kaye Larson, Dianella

NOTES FROM YOUR COMMITTEE

Monthly Sale Plants

We continue to explore options to acquire species orchid seedlings for sale to members at reasonable prices, and have made contact with local growers including Margaret. Rod is experiencing some success with deflasking and will probably have some species that he could sell us later this year. If any members have up to 20 plants of any species that they would be prepared to sell to us, please advise a committee member.

Annual Membership

Our financial year ends 28 February each year. The current membership fee is \$20 for an individual member and \$30 for a family membership. You can pay the Treasurer at a meeting, or transfer payment by EFT to the Society's account at Bendigo Bank, BSB 633-000, account 122491988 plus surname.

President: Ryan

Vice President: Lee-Anne

Treasurer: Adrian

Secretary: Ken

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Editor: Ken Jones

Committee:

Murray

Graham

Linda

Rod

Marion

Life Members

Ian

Graham & Margaret

Chris Cabassi (dec'd.)

Barry Gardner (dec'd)

Gordon Doherty (dec'd)

Maxine Godbeer (dec'd)

Ken & Chris

Adrian & Deanne

Joan (dec'd) & Ted (dec'd) Larson

Trevor Pratt (dec'd)

Victor

Neville Risbey (dec'd)

Paul & Andrea

Noel (dec'd) & Eva

Tony (dec'd) & Mavis

Barry Winter (dec'd)

Quiet Achievers

2013 Ian

2014 Chris Cabassi (dec'd)

2015 Margaret

2016 Tom & Pat

2017 Charly & Gerda

2018 Paul

2020 Adrian & Deanne

2021 John

2024 Graham

MEMBER PLANTS DISPLAYED

June 2026

Graham & Margaret

Laelia anceps
Pterostylis aff nana
Pterostylis vittata

Ken & Chris

Catasetum maculatum
Cattleya maxima
Cattleya percivaliana
Laelia anceps var. *chamberlainianum*
Laelia anceps fma *virginalis*
Paphiopedilum fairrieianum
Paphiopedilum gratrixianum
Zelexoa onusta

Adrian & Deanna

Dendrobium goldschmidtianum
Epidendrum ciliare
Laelia gouldiana
Laelia rubescens
Paphiopedilum gratrixianum
Prosthechea boothiana

Bruce

Gomesa crispa
Laelia anceps

Siva

Coelogyne velutina
Paphiopedilum purpuratum
Paphiopedilum spicerianum
Paphiopedilum wardii

Xaio

Cattleya labiata
Cymbidium sinense



Laelia anceps fma virginalis
 Ken & Chris



Gomesa crispa
 Bruce



Cattleya labiata
 Xiao

MONTHLY PLANT

Rhynchostylis gigantea [Lindley] Ridley 1896 **Cost: \$25**

Country of origin: Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, China, Borneo, the Philippines

Difficulty: This *Vanda* relative like other Vandaceous species warm-hot growing and will need winter protection. They require ample bright light and even watering and fertilizer throughout the year.

Description: Medium size monopodial vandaceous epiphyte with either white or pink citrus scented flowers.

Photo source:
https://orchid.farm/products/rhy-pink-blooming-size?srltid=AfmBOorITXs3BUUhvXckIPpqUb_6xw1JohoVJ9II3B4SgyG5zPtLVWr



This species is found in semi-deciduous and deciduous dry lowland forests and savannah-like woodlands at sea-level to 700m. It is a medium sized monopodial epiphyte with a stout stem carrying imbricating, linear, thick, channelled leaves. It flowers in autumn and winter on a densely many flowered up to 35cm inflorescence..



In situ photo source: <https://es.pinterest.com/pin/271834527482509402/>

The Origins, Evolution, Distribution and Identification of *Orchidaceae*

Summary

This article will use published research into the origins, evolution, distribution and identification of plant species in the family *Orchidaceae*. For some time, it was assumed that these flowering plants originated in the Gondwana land mass (of which Australia is part), but more recent evidence shows that they evolved 85-90 million years ago in the northern hemisphere supercontinent Laurasia.

Speciation, that is how a plant becomes a species that reproduces in the same form is one of the attributes of all plants and those in the family *Orchidaceae*. Their speciation time is relatively short when compared to other families such as *Cycadophyta* (Cycads), so it means that new species are still being identified even in mature and well-known habitats.

Orchids evolve to attract their pollinator, and a future section of this article will highlight some of the ways and means that they use to be pollinated and produce seed. This will also discuss the reproductive process and the role of mycorrhizal fungus in in-situ orchid seed germination.

Origins of the Genus *Orchidaceae*

As members of the Species Orchid Society of WA, I assume that most members are familiar with the terms species orchids and hybrid orchids. In this article, I will identify the differences between species and hybrid orchids, provide information about the variations in orchid genera, complimented by commentary on the origin, evolution and ongoing changes in genus and species orchid identification and nomenclature.

My interest was stimulated by reading an article in the journal *New Phytologist* published by Royal Botanic Gardens Kew titled “When orchids ruled the Earth: Earlier studies show the orchid family emerged in northern hemisphere and thrived alongside dinosaurs for 20 million years.”

This study by scientists at the Royal Botanic Gardens (RBG), Kew, along with partners in Latin America, Asia and Australia identified a family tree of orchids tracing origins to the northern hemisphere some 85 million years ago. Not only did the research for this article identify the complex and fascinating evolutionary history of the family *Orchidaceae*, but the authors also hoped that it would assist in identifying opportunities for orchid conservation as flowering plants in this family and many others are under threat from habitat loss, human population and industry expansion and increasing pollution. Unfortunately, it seems that orchids are becoming extinct at an alarming rate when compared to the time it took them to speciate (about 5 million years). The study suggests that they are unlikely to escape extinction in human timescales, even without an accurate records of the total number of orchid species that are now deemed extinct, as such records have only been collected for a limited time.

The family *Orchidaceae* is one of the evolutionary marvels within the plant world. These flowering plants are found on every continent except the Antarctic and in virtually every habitat including lands north of the Arctic Circle. Furthermore, they are also incredibly diverse with an estimated 29,500 species worldwide, a number that is nearly three times greater than the worldwide number of bird species.

Fossil records indicate that orchids most likely emerged about 85-90 million years or more ago. While previously thought to have emerged on the supercontinent Gondwana (that is in what is present-day Australia), more recent studies suggest that their common ancestor may have originated in the northern hemisphere on the supercontinent Laurasia, before spreading out further into the world.

RBG Kew's scientists arrived at this conclusion after assembling the most densely sampled orchid tree of life ever produced. This family tree includes nearly 40 per cent of all the accepted orchid genera and about seven per cent of the known species diversity. It was reconstructed by merging DNA sequence data obtained across the orchid family. High throughput gene capture data produced at RBG Kew as part of the Plant and Fungal Tree of Life project was combined with previously published DNA sequences of many orchid species. These DNA 'barcoding' sequences reflect decades of effort to establish family relationships between the various branches of the orchid evolutionary tree. Taken together with geographical distribution information, this wealth of data yielded a new orchid “tree of life” that also shows how orchid species diversity is distributed globally.

Threats to the survival of orchids

Orchids are one of the most species-rich flowering plant families (rivalled only by the daisy family, *Asteraceae*) but also are one of the most threatened. The threats to orchids include deforestation, illegal trade, and climate change. As reported in RBG Kew's State of the World's Plants and Fungi 2023 report, 45 per cent of the world's known plants are estimated to be at risk of extinction, and this figure is even higher within the orchid family, with an estimated 56 per cent of species under threat.

One of the ways to help conserve orchids is to have better understanding of patterns of speciation – the evolutionary process by which populations develop into distinct species. In this case, it can reveal which ecosystems have above-average levels of orchid diversity as well as the highest evolutionary potential to host new orchid diversity.

Dr Oscar Pérez who worked on this research project says: "Our study is the first in revealing, at a global scale, which ecological regions have both the highest orchid evolutionary potential and species richness. That is, ecological regions that in very recent timescales (i.e., the last 2-3 million years) have served as the cradle of unprecedented speciation that resulted in the accumulation of remarkably high levels of orchid species diversity. We think that such areas could have the "carrying capacity" to harbour even more diversity in the immediate future, for as long as their native ecological regions are protected".

Prof. Alexandre Antonelli the senior author of the study, says: "Orchids are not only extraordinary jewels of nature, they also hold untold mysteries about life on earth and how species evolve, adapt and move. Safeguarding their future is critical for protecting the complex interactions they play in ecosystems and making sure those stories can one day be unveiled by scientists".

Reference <https://www.kew.org/about-us/press-media/orchids-dinosaurs>

What is different about orchids?

Most flowers are actinomorphic, meaning they have radial symmetry. Orchids are, with a few exceptions, zygomorphic or have bi-lateral symmetry. Also, all orchids have three sepals (although in some it may only look like two because the two lateral sepals are fused) and three petals; however, one of the petals has been modified into a labellum or lip. The size, shape, and colour of an orchid's sepals, petals, and lip are determined by the specific pollinator the orchid is trying to attract; and these pollinators can be as small as fungus gnat or as large as a bat.

Orchids can be propagated asexually or sexually. Asexual methods include vegetative propagation, back bulb cultivation, or simply dividing a large sympodial orchid. For sexual propagation, orchids have a structure, called a column, that has the stigma and anther fused as a single unit. A "cap" covers the pollina in the anther to help prevent self-pollination.

Additionally, orchid pollen is not a loose, powdery substance like many other flowers such as lilies, it is contained in tiny sacs that sit on top of little sticks. Once an orchid is pollinated, it will produce a seed capsule which contains up to tens of thousands of "naked" seeds that do not have any endosperm. Endosperm is a crucial tissue found in the seeds of most angiosperms, or flowering plants. It plays a fundamental role in the reproductive process by providing the necessary nourishment and energy to the developing embryo during germination. The tissue itself is specialised, designed to store vital nutrients that support the growth of the embryo as it transitions into a seedling.

For these seeds to germinate, they must land in a location that has the correct environmental conditions and available mycorrhizal fungus. The fungus is necessary to supply the nutrients for the germinating embryos.

The timeline published in the following webpage is of interest.

Reference <https://www.orchidcambodia.com/history-of-orchids.html>.

Continued in August

ABOUT US

Monthly Meetings

Monthly meetings held on the second Tuesday of each month at Wilson Community Hall, Braibrise St, Wilson commencing 7.30 pm. Usually, the short formal meeting is followed by plant descriptions given by members. Supper follows to allow members time to socialise and discuss orchids. All visitors are very welcome

Membership Fees

Family \$30 pa. For first year only, new family members will need to purchase two name badges.

Single \$20.00 pa. For first year only, new members will need to purchase a name badge.

Name Badges

Badges come in two versions - pin fastening \$14.00 or magnet fastening \$16.00 [*Please indicate preference*]

New members who don't live in Perth will not require name badges, therefore membership cost will be at the renewal fee only.

Monthly Home Visit

On the weekend following the fourth Tuesday of each month (generally on the Sunday morning), when we can find a host, a home visit is held at a member's home. This gives members an opportunity to enjoy the fellowship that our mutual interest provides, and to see how others go about growing their orchids.

Raffle

The Society conducts a raffle each meeting and at home visits as a means of generating funds. If you have spare species orchids that you wish to sell to the Society for raffles, please advise a committee member.

Monthly Plant Display

Given that the prime objective of the Society is to promote the cultivation of species orchids, only species or natural hybrids are acceptable for display.

Since we all may be uncertain about the identification of a plant from time to time, we encourage members to bring plants along about which they are unsure since someone

may be able to identify them. There is no competition nor restriction on flower count, quality or length of ownership. We want members to be able to see species plants in flower.

So even if your flowers are a bit past their best, bring them in as others may not have seen that species in flower.

Plant Sales

The Society provides an opportunity table for members to sell surplus plants and equipment, and for the Society to sell product from time to time.

Plant Purchases

The Society endeavours to obtain a different species seedling for sale at each meeting, usually costing between \$15.00 and \$20.00. The Society makes a small profit on these sales which is invested in benefits to members. As it is always difficult to get new or different species, should members have 20 or more plants of one species which they feel might be suitable as a monthly plant, please contact a Committee member.

Management

In accordance with the Rules, the Annual General meeting is held in May each year at which time the office-bearers and committee are elected.

The majority of Committee members serve two year terms.

If unclaimed, return to
The Editor
210 Hermitage Drive, The Vines WA 6069

Next meeting Tuesday 14 July 2026