



THE SPECIES ORCHID SOCIETY OF WA INC.

<https://speciesorchidsocietywa.com>

Vol 38 No 3 August 2026

NEWSLETTER



Anne O'Callaghan Award July 2026
Cattleya percivaliana
Bruce

NEXT MEETING Tuesday 11 August

Contents

- 2. July minutes
- 4. Identification of species orchids
- 4. Program
- 6. Plants displayed.
- 7. Monthly sale plant

- 7. Notes from your Committee
- 8. The Origins, Evolution, Distribution and Identification of *Orchidaceae* (continued from July)
- 11. About us

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING

14 July 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 Ian. 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 Helen, seconded Lee-Anne. Carried.

Business Arising: Nil

Presentation

Carl Barry from Growth Technology was invited to talk to members tonight. Growth Technology produce several products in wide use by orchid growers including Rootzone, Ionic, Clonex, Orchid Focus and others.

Carl told members that the business was established with the root promoting Clonex product that was developed to replace the powder-based products in the market at that time. Their target market was hydroponic growers.

They have been in business formulating, manufacturing and distributing hydroponic nutrients for over 35yrs. This includes commercial 'crop-specific' nutrient formulations for growers worldwide and design formulations for hundreds of different crops.

Carl talked about the Focus range of products that have been developed to provide all the nutrients required for wide range of crops including orchids. Their products are sold by Hydroponic Solutions, Ezi-Gro Orchids and several retail nurseries.

Clive answered many questions from members including those related to poor growth and plant vitality and engaged with members on their use of Growth Technology products including Rootzone, Ionic, Orchid Focus, GT Silica. Some members reported significant improvement in their orchid's vitality and flowering as a result.

He also gave the society free sample bottles of Orchid Focus (all members were given a sample bottle) and 2 small bottles of Rootzone that will be used as raffle prizes

General Business:

Perth Orchid Fair

Ryan advised members that the planning committee will be meeting on Thursday 16 July to finalise planning for the 2026 POF.

He encouraged members to add their names to the roster that is at the meeting to help us stage this major orchid event.

Ryan reminded members that their volunteer hours are included in the profit distribution to participating societies. In this regard, it is important to ensure that you sign-on when attending the POF as a volunteer.

Ryan also advised members that with help and guidance from Michelle Lee, we are working on purchasing the perpetual trophy for the best species orchid judged at the Perth Orchid Fair. Lee-Anne is coordinating this.

He again reminded members that will have plants for the SOSWA display to let the secretary know by mid-late August.

Newsletter

Ken advised members that the July newsletter includes the first part of an article he has compiled on the origins, evolution, distribution and identification of *Orchidaceae*.

He hopes this information will be of value to members as it provides information of which many members might not be aware. Part two in to be published in August includes some photos.

Ken again asked members for any suggestions for topics for the newsletter.

Home Visits

The July home visit will be hosted by Ken & Chris at their home at The Vines at 10.00am on Sunday 26 July 2026.

12 members planning to attend raised their hands to indicate that they would.

Ryan advised that while we have some home visits planned for the remainder of 2026, we will need to start work on the 2027 program. If you would be willing to host a home visit, please let Lee-Anne or Ken know which month would be suitable. Home visits are usually held on the 4th Sunday of each month.

General Meeting Program

Ryan thanked Lee-Anne for arranging our presenter Clive and thanked Clive for his presentation and interaction with members.

He asked members if anyone would like to deliver a presentation or workshop or know of someone who would be of interest to members, please advise the Secretary.

We will be working on a program for 2027 meetings soon.

Anne O'Callaghan Cultural Award: Members voted for Bruce's *Cattleya percivaliana*

Maxine Godbeer Award: Nil

Name Badge: Siva

Raffle: Murray, Marian, Lee-Anne, Jordana, Ryan, Rod

Meeting closed: 9 30 pm

Identification of Species Orchids

Unfortunately, many orchid hobbyists have orchids where the name on the tag has washed off, or the name tag has been lost. It is often difficult if not impossible to correctly identify the orchid even if it is in flower as there are many photos of species orchids on internet web sites that are incorrect and/or misnamed. Also, there are many variants of some species orchids that can have different flower form or colour.

Fortunately, for several years Gary Yong Gee, an honorary member of the Species Orchid Society of WA from Queensland has been able to identify many unnamed orchids for us, or in some cases, advise that a plant displayed at our meeting is in fact a hybrid and provide the hybrid name. He provides this service to us at no charge as his way of supporting us,

The World Flora Online Plant List

As Editor for the Monthly newsletter, I check that the plants displayed are correctly identified to ensure that wherever possible, the information published is current. With advanced techniques now being applied to taxonomy including DNA sequencing (phylogeny), many species orchids have been reclassified by genus and species. While I know that these seemingly unnecessary changes are very frustrating to hobbyists many of whom continue to use the “old” name, I prefer to publish the currently accepted orchid names in our newsletter and on our webpages.

Originally, taxonomy referred to the classification of organisms on the basis of shared characteristics. If we think about the tools available to taxonomists in the past, orchids were principally identified and named for observable physical characteristics such as flower size and form and their natural habitat. The number of scientific tests available at the time for this purpose was limited.

For this information, I rely on the *World Flora Online (WFO) Plant List* that is a comprehensive and authoritative list of vascular plants (flowering plants, conifers, ferns and their allies) and bryophytes (mosses, hornworts and liverworts). It is maintained by the global taxonomic community as a free and open-access resource. The latest versions of the citable static list is generated on June 21st and December 21st of each year from the dynamic WFO Taxonomic Backbone.

The *WFO Plant List* provides the **accepted** scientific name for all taxa (families, genera, species, etc.), with links to all **synonyms** by which that taxon has been known, and the position of each in the classification. However, a name marked as **unplaced** is not in the classification. It may be awaiting assessment by taxonomic experts and/or the arrival of additional evidence. **Deprecated** records are names that are in our database, but should not be used. I rely on this list to verify the names of orchids displayed at our meetings.

2026 Programs

Meeting Presentations/Workshops

14 July 2026	GM
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 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

FORTH-COMING EVENTS

Home visits: 30 August 2026 Graham & Margaret Bowden, 8 Bedelia Way, Hamersley
27 September 2026 Terrestrial orchid visit Star Swamp

MARKETPLACE - FOR SALE/WANTED

President: Ryan Craig

Vice President: Lee-Anne Mair

Treasurer: Adrian José

Secretary: Ken Jones

210 Hermitage Drive, The Vines 6069.

Phone: 9296 1765

e-mail: kcjones@tpg.com.au

Editor: Ken Jones

Committee:

Murray Baker

Graham Bowden

Linda Gooding

Rod Halliday

Marion McFetridge

Paul Somers

Life Members

• Ian Bailey

• Graham & Margaret Bowden

• Chris Cabassi (dec'd)

• Barry Gardner (dec'd)

• Gordon Doherty (dec'd)

• Maxine Godbeer (dec'd)

• Ken & Chris Jones

• Adrian & Deanne José

• Joan (dec'd) & Ted (dec'd) Larson

• Trevor Pratt (dec'd)

• Victor Quinlan

• Neville Risbey (dec'd)

• Paul & Andrea Somers

• Noel (dec'd) & Eva Verweirder

• Tony (dec'd) & Mavis Watkinson

• Barry Winter (dec'd)

Quiet Achievers

• 2013 Ian Bailey

• 2014 Chris Cabassi (dec'd)

• 2015 Margaret Bowden

• 2016 Tom & Pat Jackson

Quiet Achievers

• 2017 Charly & Gerda Hartmann

• 2018 Paul Somers

• 2020 Adrian & Deanne José

• 2021 John Steele

• 2024 Graham Bowden

MEMBER PLANTS DISPLAYED

July 2026

Photography by Jordana

Graham & Margaret Bowden

Bonatea speciosa
Diuris brumalis

Diane Gilbert

Rhynchostylis gigantea

Ken & Chris Jones

Isochilus linearis
Laelia anceps
Laelia anceps virginalis
Oncidium hyphaematicum
Paphiopedilum fairrieianum
Paphiopedilum gratixianum
Pleurothallis phalangifera
Prosthechea cochleata

Adrian & Deanna José

Dendrobium amabile
Dendrobium tetragonum alba
Laelia anceps
Paphiopedilum fairrieianum
Paphiopedilum spicerianum
Paphiopedilum wardii album

Bruce Larson

Cattleya percivaliana
Prosthechea fragrans

Helen Stretch

Cattleya trianae coerulea
Laelia anceps
Laelia anceps veitchii

Siva Subramaniam

Aerangis biloba
Paphiopedilum villosum

Xaio Tan

Cymbidium tortisepalum



Aerangis biloba
Siva Subramaniam



Bonatea speciosa
Graham & Margaret Bowden



Cymbidium tortisepalum
Xiao Tan

MONTHLY PLANT

Cattleya percivaliana coerulea [Rchb.f] O'Brien 1883

Cost: \$15

Country of origin: Venezuela & Colombia

Difficulty: This *Cattleya* like others is suited to shadehouse conditions with high light

Description: Medium size *Cattleya* with large bluish tinged flowers with a striking labellum

Found in full sun near rivers, as a large sized, cool growing, largely lithophytic, but sometimes epiphytic species at 1,300 - 2,000m. The compressed green pseudobulbs carrying a single apical leaf.

This desirable species form flowers in summer through autumn on a terminal, to 25 cm few flowered, short lived, racemose inflorescence with a large, basal, green sheath carrying 2-4, musty scented flowers.



Photo source: <https://www.orchidweb.com/p/cattleya-percivaliana-coerulea-ondine-am-nosc>

In situ photo source: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/americanorchidsociety/posts/10160994628094840/>



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 Heaton. Rod Halliday 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.

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

How Long Have Orchids Been Present on Earth?

A recently published paper by Oregon State University professor emeritus of entomology George Poinar, Jr. refers to an orchid fossil trapped in Baltic amber that dates back some 45-55 million years shattering the previous record for an orchid fossil found in Dominican amber that was some 20-30 million years old.

The discovery was published in the Botanical Journal of the Linnean Society. The paper stated, “it was only a few years ago that we had any evidence of ancient orchids because prior to the recent discovery, there wasn't anything preserved in the fossil record”.

Orchids have their pollen in small sac-like structures called pollinia, which are attached by

supports to viscidia, or adhesive pads, that can stick to the various body parts of pollinating insects, including bees, beetles, flies and gnats.

Photo source:

<https://phys.org/news/2017-05-evidence-oldest-orchid-fossil.pdf>



The pollination unit is known as a pollinarium. In this study, a small female fungus gnat was carrying the pollinaria of an extinct species of orchid when it became trapped in amber more than 45 million years ago. The pollinaria was attached to the base of the gnat's hind leg. Amber preserves fossils so well that the researchers could identify a droplet of

congealed blood at the tip of the gnat's leg, which had been broken off shortly before it was entombed in amber.

It is believed that at that time, the continents hadn't yet drifted apart. These fossils show that orchids were well-established in the Eocene and it is likely that lineages extended back into the Cretaceous period. But until further fossils are discovered, these specimens establish a timeframe that can be used for future studies to determine the evolutionary history and phylogeny of the orchids.

While just how the orchid pollen ended up attached to the fungus gnat and entombed in amber from near the Baltic Sea is subject to speculation. But, as Poinar observed, orchids have evolved a surprisingly sophisticated system to draw in pollinating insects which may have led to the gnat's demise. The rewards offered by orchids to attract pollinators are primarily based on deception.

Orchids use colour, odour and the allure of nectar to draw in potential pollinating insects. Orchids will emit a scent that suggests to hungry insects the promise of food, but after entering the flower they will learn that the promise of nourishment was false. Female gnats may be attracted by a mushroom-like odour from orchids which attracts them as a place to lay their eggs because the decaying fungal tissue is a source of future nutrition. They might lay their eggs dooming their offspring to a likely death from a lack of food.

We also know that male insects can be attracted by the scent of female flies and actually attempt to copulate with a part of the orchid they think is a potential mate. This is the case for several Australian terrestrial orchids.

However, while the deception works in different ways, the orchid attracts pollinating insects which unwittingly gather pollen that becomes attached to their legs and other body parts, and is then passed on to the next orchid flower

The timeline published in the following webpage is of interest in answering some questions about the fascination with these flowering plants. While I only report the highlights, there is much more information published on this website.

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

Timeframe	
70 million years ago	<i>Over 76 million years ago</i> Harvard researchers studied the fossil remains of a bee trapped in amber. On its back was pollen from an orchid. The researchers estimated that the orchid had bloomed sometime between 76 to 84 million years ago.
2800-1500 BC	<i>The first use of orchids by humans</i> Records showing the first use of orchids in medicines and tonics in China and India. Dendrobium stems, dried and curled, were used in practices passed on through oral traditions and sacred verses.
600 BC	<i>Orchids in medicine</i> A surgeon's text, the seminal Sushruta Samhita, describes medicinal plants in India including the orchid <i>Orchis latifolia</i> for cough prevention.
551-479BC	<i>Confucius and the 'Lan'</i> Confucius compares lan, the Chinese word for orchid to the ideal man, chün-tzu. The great philosopher also refers to orchids as "king of fragrant plants."
496-465 BC	<i>Gardens for the Emperors.</i> Gardeners for the King of Yüeh gather wild Cymbidium orchids to plant in the imperial gardens. The Chinese are believed to be the first to raise orchids.
372-285 BC	<i>The Greeks call it Orchis</i> Theophrastus - Greek writer, philosopher and scientist who followed his master Aristotle as Head of the Peripatetic School at Athens described orchids in his "Enquiry into Plants".
50-233BC	<i>Orchids and fertility</i> Emperor Shi-Kotei following the advice of his physician, placed an orchid, believed to be <i>Cymbidium ensifolium</i> in the quarters of the Empress Yohki-Hi after some years of a childless marriage. The plant developed a spike of thirteen flowers, and the Empress conceived the first of thirteen fine "lan" sons.
890	<i>Orchids in Poetry</i> A poem by Korean philosopher Choi Chi-won is believed to be the first record of the flower in Korea.
1100	<i>Orchids on temple walls</i> Images of wild orchids are carved into the stone walls of temples in Cambodia, including Angkor Wat, one of the largest monuments in the world.
1519	<i>The Aztecs give Vanilla to the world</i> Cortez entered Mexico in 1519 looking for gold and the Aztecs gave him a vanilla flavoured cacao drink used by the great leader Montezuma to fortify himself.
1603-1867	<i>Only for the finest</i> Monks from China introduce orchids to Japan. Only elites such as nobles and samurai warriors raise <i>Neofinetia falcata</i> (known as <i>Vanda falcata</i>) orchids.
1753	<i>A plant classification system</i> Linnaeus, Carolus - (Carl von Linne') was a Swedish Botanist who devised the first authoritative system of classification in his "Species Plantarum". The first edition of "Species Plantarum" classified eight genera of orchids: <i>Cymbidium</i> ; <i>Cypripedium</i> ; <i>Epidendrum</i> ; <i>Limodorum</i> ; <i>Liparis</i> ; <i>Ophrys</i> ; <i>Habenaria</i> and <i>Serapias</i> .
1800	<i>Orchid Knowledge</i> At the end of the 18th century, over one hundred generic names of orchid species were known to science. These are listed in "The Generic Names of Orchid Species". It gives details in alphabetical order of all generic names of species from 1735 to November 2004.

1831-1836	<i>Darwin and the elusive Hawk moth</i> During voyages Darwin gathered information for his subsequent writings on evolution. He recognised multiple evolutionary mechanisms in the orchids and wrote "On the Various Contrivances by which "British and Foreign Orchids are Fertilised by Insects"
1851	<i>The biggest of all</i> <i>Grammatophyllum speciosum</i> : Described by Blume as the largest orchid known to science - based on a plant he collected near Buitenzorg, Java. Flowered for the first time in the U.K. by Loddiges the following year (1826). A plant of some two tons in weight was displayed at Crystal Palace.
1854-1856	<i>Here come the hybrids!</i> Possibly the most important year in the entire history of orchid cultivation - since it marked the introduction of man-made hybrids.
1856 - 1873	<i>Orchids in botany</i> A slipper orchid is among the native <i>Cypripedium</i> orchids illustrated in Japan's first major botanical work, a 20-volume collection by botanist Yokusai Linuma, found in the Garden's Rare Book Collection.
1870	<i>Orchid Fever</i> A single slipper orchid from India, <i>Cypripedium spicerianum</i> (now known as <i>Paphiopedilum spicerianum</i>), sells in London for what would be about \$142,126 today. At the time, the hunger in England for rare and exotic orchids was insatiable.
1893-1983	<i>Orchids in popular culture</i> Singapore's first orchid hybrid, the fuchsia-hued Vanda Miss Joaquim, is cultivated via cuttings around the world. Now known as Papilionanthe Miss Joaquim, this orchid has inspired songs, fashion and architecture.
1900	<i>The most diverse of all plants</i> By the end of the nineteenth century a further 1012 genera (species) had become known; within each were from a few to hundreds of specific epithets; in addition, some 1010 orchid hybrids were known to science, sixty-eight were Bi-generic and five were Tri-generic; the remainder consisted of a few Natural Hybrids and hybrids within genera.
1934	<i>Emergence of new hybrids</i> A <i>purple</i> Dendrobium hybrid is introduced in Thailand that proves to be easy to grow and divide. By 1979, Thailand is the world's leading producer and exporter of orchids.
1980	<i>Emergence of a new global market</i> Taiwan's state-run sugar company starts to grow orchids. As prices soar, the government ploughs up sugarcane fields and builds greenhouses for orchids.
1990	<i>Critically endangered species documented</i> In Northern Myanmar, an orchid team led by forester Kyaw Nyunt and orchidologist Saw Lwin document the habitat of the rare black orchid, <i>Paphiopedilum wardii</i> .
2006	<i>Orchid trade now worth billions</i> Taiwan produces 25 percent of the world's cultivated orchids and becomes a leader in the \$2 billion orchid industry.
2017	<i>Technology transfer - the seed lab DIY</i> Researchers at Kumamoto University, Japan, develop a kit that reportedly will allow people to grow a native <i>Gastrodia</i> orchid at home from seeds. (To raise an orchid from seed, you typically need special ingredients and equipment.)

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 11 August 2026