

# THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ORCHID BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE ORCHID SOCIETY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA  
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JANUARY 2023

The next meeting of the Orchid Society of Western Australia (Inc.) will be held at the home of **Ray and Peta Taylor, 8 Kent Road, Maida Vale, on Friday 27 January, 2023.** Arrive at 6 pm for 6:30 pm start, or arrive by about 5 pm to have a swim before the BBQ.

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**THIS MONTH'S MEETING**

BBQ AT THE HOME OF  
RAY AND PETA TAYLOR.  
SAUSAGES, RAFFLE, AND MORE!

**FEBRUARY MEETING DATES**

OSWA Committee: 7:30 pm Friday 3rd  
General Meeting: 7:30 pm Friday 24th

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## General News

### Birthdays:

January: 17th Ann Lam; 23rd Betty Saul; 25th Margaret Rathbone; 31st John Carless

February: 7th Jim Baylis; 11th Nancie Jones; 14th Laura Herd

Best wishes to anyone else celebrating Birthdays or Anniversaries. To any member on the sick list we wish you a speedy recovery & may you soon be well.

### New Members

Welcome to Eric and Arlene Pereira (Wellard), Annette Gelfi (Cottesloe), Jan Edmunds (Thornlie), and Alex and Maurice Cammack (Lesmurdie). We hope you have many rewarding years ahead with our Society.

### January General Meeting - Visit to the home of Ray and Peta Taylor - 27 January 2023

Ray and Peta Taylor have kindly offered to host us for our traditional home visit in January, which takes the place of our meeting at the Manning centre.

- Where: 8 Kent Road, Maida Vale 6057. Phone: 0415 772 369
- Arrive from about 6 pm, BBQ to start from around 6:30 pm
- Arrive from about 5 pm if you'd like a swim in the 11 metre pool (water temp ~ 30 °C)
- BBQ (sausages and chicken shaslicks) will be supplied.
- Bring a plant or small gift for the raffle. If everyone brings a plant, everyone will take a plant home.
- Bring your own drinks.
- Bring a salad or sweets to share.
- Bring a chair if you want to sit down...there are some, but not enough for everyone.
- If you did not indicate that you would be attending the Taylor's home visit at the December general meeting but you intend to go anyway, please let Harry know so that we can try and make sure we have enough meats.

### Possible Orchid Tour to Singapore, 15-20 August 2023

Bruce Larson has negotiated a package tour to Singapore this coming August. The tour coincides with the 14th Asia Pacific Orchid Conference (APOC) and Show in Singapore, and includes accommodation at the Parkroyal Hotel on Beach Road and visits to two large commercial nurseries. See the flyer at the end of this bulletin for further information. (If you've never been to Singapore, this tour would be an excellent start, and all the orchid tours I've joined have been great fun.) If interested in participating, please advise Bruce ([bruce@pegasusconsulting.org](mailto:bruce@pegasusconsulting.org)) before 27 January 2023.

### Western Australian Combined order from Orchid Species Plus (OSP)

Orchid Species Plus is a vendor specialising in species orchids, and is based in Victoria. Jane Tempest is placing a seedling order with OSP to be delivered in March 2023 and is happy to coordinate a group-order to enable others to get hold of rare species here in Western Australia. If you are interested in getting plants from OSP, Jane will receive them and arrange to either get them to you or you can pick them up from Carramar. Jane has humidified, heated grow spaces inside and is able to keep new arrivals happy for a few weeks. Jane can be contacted on 0435 076 761, and orders need to be placed by the end of February. The OSP seedling catalog is available here:

<https://orchidspeciesplus.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Seedlings-May-2022.pdf>

**GENERAL ORCHID CULTURE NOTES FOR BUNURU (APPROX FEBRUARY/MARCH)**

The Orchid Society of Western Australia would like to acknowledge that our meetings are held on the traditional lands of the Noongar people. Unlike the European calendar, the Noongar people describe the climate of West Australia's South West as having six seasons guided by what is happening and changing around us, rather than specific 'dates' on a calendar. This approach to describing Perth's climate is helpful for guiding our orchid related jobs for the year. Bunuru (approx. February/March) is the hottest time of the year, although those of us who live near the coast may benefit from afternoon sea breezes.

- ✓ Repotting should be complete by this time of year. Unless emergency circumstances require it, any further repotting should be delayed until late March when we are confident the worst of the hot weather has past. If 'emergency surgery' is required, try to avoid disturbing the root system as much as possible. Plants in older mix that probably should have been repotted sooner will benefit from application of dolomite lime to help balance the pH and prevent the decomposing media from becoming too acidic.
- ✓ With increasing temperatures, extra shade cloth may need to be applied. Be guided by the colour of your orchids leaves—plants in ideal light will have light green leaves. Leaves that turn yellow or red are receiving too much light, and plants with dark green leaves are producing more chlorophyll to compensate for insufficient light. Ensure any holes/gaps in shade cloth are addressed or plants are likely to be burnt.
- ✓ Most orchids will have new growths well under way by now, so keeping up the fertilizer regime is important. The 'weakly, weekly' approach is a good guide for liquid fertilizer, where 'weakly' usually means quarter to half strength. Slow release pellets can also be used, but some pellets release their contents in a temperature dependent manner and can 'dump' large amounts of fertilizer on hot days. For this reason, it's best not to just apply pellets to the surface of the mix where they receive sunlight, but tap the pot so they settle into the mix a little, and avoid placing them where they have the potential to burn a flush of new root tips. Avoid applying fertilizer during heatwaves as many orchids cannot use the nutrients in heat stress conditions.
- ✓ Remember that fertilizer application needs to go hand in hand with increased watering, especially for newly repotted orchids in a fresh, free draining mix that doesn't hold as much moisture as older mix. Remember to water orchids heavily—water should run through the bottom of the pot to flush out any excess salts. Try to grow plants like bromeliads and groundcovers under the orchids—these will absorb any excess fertilizer runoff, help create a frog friendly environment (insect patrol) and improve humidity in the growing space. Spraying under benches can also help raise humidity in the growing environment.
- ✓ If you have a variety of pot sizes, you will need to ensure that the smaller pots do not dry out too quickly. A simple solution is to double pot, so the final size pots are all the same. By this I mean placing the smaller pots into a larger pot which is filled with compost which encircles the smaller pot. This arrangement keeps the smaller pot (and the root system of the plant) cool, and slows the rate at which it dries out.
- ✓ With warmer weather, check your plants and the surrounding area for mealy bugs, ants and other bugs that may decide to move into the cooler conditions of a shade or glass house where greater moisture content is available. It is much easier to get rid of the pest when there are only a few, rather than let them multiply, which makes the task harder. Cockroaches, grasshoppers and caterpillars can also be a problem.

**CYMBIDIUM CULTURAL NOTES FOR BUNURU (APPROX FEBRUARY/MARCH)**

Summer is a time of year when there are not a lot of cymbidiums in flower here in Perth. Those that are in flower tend to be the starchy pendulous flower type. Some say these are an acquired taste, however they do break the monotony of nothing but green leaves.

Now that we are into the summer months, we can expect hot days and evenings, coupled with hot dry easterly winds. Don't allow the cymbidiums to dry out under any circumstances. The plants should be watered every day. If necessary (depending on the temperature during the day) I will hand water again

in the late afternoon. This also allows me to apply a very weak application of Neutrog's Strike Back for Orchids liquid fertilizer. If you don't have time to apply weak fertilizer frequently, consider using some slow release fertilizer, such as the pellet form of Strike Back. The new leads on your plants are in a rapid growth phase at this time, therefore regular and frequent fertilizing with high nitrogen fertilizer helps your plants grow sufficiently for some of them to flower this season, rather than next season. During summer some cymbidium growers like to water the shade house with a fine spray in the early evening. This is a good time to water as there is less water loss through evaporation, and it also helps to keep the evening temperature down. The initiation of new flower spikes occurs during cool nights, so cool night temperatures are vital if we want our cymbidiums to flower in the coming season.

The increase in water and humidity can sometimes cause or contribute to an increase in fungal problems such as bulb rot. If this occurs, remove the affected bulbs immediately. If you leave the rotten bulbs in the pot, the problem can spread to other bulbs and destroy the whole plant. Mancozeb Plus and or Fongarid can help control fungal problems.

Summer is also the time when Red Spider Mite and Two Spotted Mite will pose a threat to cymbidiums—they love hot dry conditions with little air movement. The actual mites are very small and hard to see without a good magnifying glass or microscope. Watch for evidence of mites on the underside of the leaves of your cymbidiums. It will look like a very fine spider's web all over the underside of the leaf, but it won't come off if you rub it. If it is at all possible, ensure the undersides of the leaves get thoroughly wet when you water your plants. It may be necessary to increase the space between pots to allow this to happen. There are lots of miticide sprays available. Most are 'kill on contact' sprays that need to be applied once to kill the adult mites, then again 10 days or so later to kill any newly hatched mites. It is imperative to read and follow the instructions on the pack, and follow all the safety precautions. Otherwise it won't just be the mites that are feeling crook.

#### **CATTLEYA CULTURAL NOTES FOR BUNURU (APPROX FEBRUARY/MARCH)**

Some hot weather has finally arrived. With the onset of hot dry conditions, examination of your plants will show the development of new growths which will elongate quickly. Increase shading if necessary and the use of fans to cool the growing area is called for. Because of the dryness, watering frequency will need to be increased as the mix dries out sooner. Correct watering will help with enlargement of the new growths. Damping down of the growing area by watering or misting beneath the benches will help with raising humidity.

At this time of the year, fertilising your plants can be undertaken if the temperatures are below 35 °C, but above this level, because of the slowing growth, it would be best to withhold the fertiliser until temperatures fall. A fertilizer programme will also be needed to provide sufficient nitrogen (N) for growth as well as potassium (K) for maturing those growths. Strike Back for Orchids liquid is a good all-round fertiliser to meet these requirements. The aim should be to produce big fat bulbs without inducing the appearance of further weak new growths. New growths should be watched and trained into an erect position before they mature off, so that when flowers appear, they are well displayed.

At this time, also start to look for flowering sheaths or buds appearing on mature, new growths. When spotted, move them into an area free of pests and away from water dripping on them. If moved, make sure the buds point in the same direction they were in before you moved them. Many autumn flowering plants will now be showing buds and sheaths so be on the lookout for them.

[http://www.orchidsocietywa.net.au/OSWA/Growing\\_Orchids\\_files/new%20Cattleya%20Culture%20Notes%20July%202022\\_1.pdf](http://www.orchidsocietywa.net.au/OSWA/Growing_Orchids_files/new%20Cattleya%20Culture%20Notes%20July%202022_1.pdf)

#### **PAPHIOPEDILUM CULTURAL NOTES FOR BUNURU (APPROX FEBRUARY/MARCH)**

These are the months when the weather can usually be expected to have some excessively hot days. At this time of the year I water 3 times a week, early in the morning, but may increase in heatwave conditions. Watering is highly dependent on the composition of your potting mix and its ability to retain moisture. For beginners, a test pot of just potting mix in the growing area is recommended, until you understand the water holding capacity of your mix. You can empty the pot at any stage to see what water has been retained. The mix should be just moist throughout the bottom half of the pot. Some

growers may recommend watering on hot evenings, but I avoid this for paphiopedilum orchids. Water left in the axil of the leaves at night only encourages rot and water borne disease. I find if the plants are watered heavily the next morning, they seem to thrive on the fact they have been forced to dry out somewhat overnight.

As the plants are still in active growth, keep a weak fertilizing programme going on a weekly or fortnightly basis, depending on your time constraints, with a 1/4 to 1/2 strength high nitrogen based fertilizer. This is in order to maximize the new growths before the flowering season. Ensure that you flush the mix with water between fertilizing, which will flush out any excess salts. It is equally important that plenty of fresh air, which is essential for the plants' health, is available in the glasshouse. Do not remove any extra shade that you may have installed over the summer months.

[http://www.orchidsocietywa.net.au/OSWA/Growing\\_Orchids\\_files/New%20Paph%20culture%20notes%20July%202022\\_1.pdf](http://www.orchidsocietywa.net.au/OSWA/Growing_Orchids_files/New%20Paph%20culture%20notes%20July%202022_1.pdf)

### The Orchid Society of WA (Inc.)

#### Minutes of the General Meeting held in the Manning Senior Citizens Activity Centre, Manning, on Friday 16 December 2022

**Welcome: 7:35 pm. Attendance and Apologies:** as per attendance register

**Minutes:** Moved Ray T, seconded Jenny M that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted. Carried.

**New member introductions:** Annette, Alex and Maurice, Eric and Arlene, Jan and from previous month John Cain, Bev Ruello, Laura Herd, Lydia Brazzale, Siew Kee.

**Correspondence:** 28/11 WA Horticultural council minutes; 1/12 from Bunnings re special orders account for the Orchard society?; 1/12 to/from registrar team re results; 1/12 to/from ISDW subcommittee re planning details; 4/12 to/from Ron Fauntelroy indicating may be able to speak to OSWA next year; 5/12 to/from Bunnings Claremont re presentation; 6/12 from Swimming Pool + Spa Association re: Outdoor Living Expo info; 9/12 from Lorna Dodd's daughter re glass house available; 14/12 from Murray re Neutrog has arrive.d

#### Business arising from correspondence

- Neutrog has arrived- please contact Murray (details in bulletin) to arrange pickup
  - If you are interested in Lorna Dodd's greenhouse let us know and we can put you in touch
- Moved Harry A, seconded Ray T that the business arising from correspondence be accepted. Carried.

**Reports:** nil

**Financial report:** Presented by Sheelagh Harman

**Business arising from the financial report:** nil

Moved Sheelagh H seconded Lynn B that the financial report be accepted. Carried.

#### General Business:

##### • Presentations

Congratulations to Paul Fraser—awarded a certificate of appreciation.

Congratulations to Helen Stretch—awarded a Badge of Special Recognition.

Congratulations to Barbara Burnett and Maxine Godbeer—awarded a life membership.

Congratulations to winners of Judges' Choice Awards: Courtney Rogasch (for November, April, July and August), Harry Ashton (for February and March), Helen Stretch (for December and May), Howard Tan (for June), Mal Davis (for September), Maxine Godbeer (for October).

More congratulations: to Courtney, awarded the Roy Brown Trophy (judges choice of the year) for his *Cattleya mossiae* with 81 points; Helen, awarded the Tom Dixon Trophy for Best Cymbidium for her *Cymbidium canaliculatum*; and Harry, awarded the George Marshall Trophy for most points in the Open section.

Congratulations to Enid Chelva, awarded the Vera Kennedy Trophy for most points in the Novice section.

- **ISODW 2023** – suggestion discussion – club voted for the theme to be “Yesterday Today and Tomorrow”.
- **New Grower Incentive Scene Participation** – new OSWA members are encouraged to bench plants at our monthly meetings. Members in the second, third and fourth year as OSWA members collect points from benching plants, and at the end of the year the grower in each year with the most ‘points’ will be awarded a quality, flowering sized plant from the OSWA stockpile.
- **Events calendar 2023** — TBA!

**Raffle:** Annette, Patricia, Dawn, Keng, Laura, Alan, Marian,

**Open popular vote:** Helen Stretch with *Oncidium phymatochilum*. Helen grows this in an antispiral pot, in an area of her shadehouse that has double shadecloth. Helen waters twice a week but provides additional misting on hot days. **Novice popular vote:** Dawn Fathers with *Encyclia* Bees' Knees. Dawn uses Strike Back for Orchids and Gogo Juice.

**Door Prize:** Richard G

Judges Choice *Oncidium phymatochilum*, Helen Stretch, 73 points

Best Cymbidium — none benched.

**Meeting Closed** at 9:08 pm, **Christmas Party** followed.

## MONTHLY PLANT COMPETITION (DECEMBER 2022)

## OPEN

1A	(2)	1	Helen Stretch	<i>Cattleya purpurata</i> 'Yugarama Red'
		2	Helen Stretch	<i>Cattleya purpurata</i> 'Alba'
1D	(1)	3	Harry Ashton	<i>Cattleya purpurata</i>
1F	(2)	1	Tara Peters	<i>Cattleya lobata</i> x <i>Cattleya purpurata</i>
		1	Helen Stretch	<i>Encyclia Hanbury</i> Unknown
3A	(1)	1	Ray Taylor	<i>Paphiopedilum victoria-regina</i>
3B	(3)	1	Howard Tan	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> Gloria Naugle ( <i>micranthum</i> x <i>rothschildianum</i> )
		2	Howard Tan	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> Bianka ( <i>moquetteanum</i> x <i>anitum</i> )
		3	Howard Tan	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> Wössner China Moon
3C	(1)	1	Ray Taylor	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> Yi-Ying Morning
3D	(1)	1	Howard Tan	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> Yang-Ji Diamond x <i>Paphiopedilum rothschildianum</i>
4D	(2)	1	Ray Taylor	<i>Dendrobium</i> Gloucester Charm 'Keith'
		2	Tara Peters	<i>Dendrobium</i> Frans Gem 'Green Jade'
5B	(1)	1	Tara Peters	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> Sogo
6A	(1)	1	Helen Stretch	<i>Oncidium phymatochilum</i>
6D	(2)	1	Ray Taylor	<i>Odontonia</i> Memoria Martin Orenstein 'Lulu'
		2	Ray Taylor	<i>Odontocidium</i> Parquet 'Uptown Girl'
7B	(1)	1	Harry Ashton	<i>Vanda</i> Cherry Blossom
8A	(1)	1	Harry Ashton	<i>Sarcochilus ceciliae</i>
11B	(2)	1	Ray Taylor	<i>Zygopabstia</i> Dragon Kitten 'Patches'
		2	Ray Taylor	<i>Coelogyne</i> Jannine Banks

## NOVICE

15A	(1)	1	Leo Waters	<i>Cattleya purpurata</i> (var. <i>flammea</i> x var. <i>rosada</i> 'Dark Hysinying')
15D	(2)	1	Lynn Brooks	<i>Cattleya</i> Pink Jaguar
		2	Lynn Brooks	<i>Cattleya</i> Unknown
15E	(2)	1	Enid Chelva	<i>Epidendrum</i> Unknown
		2	Enid Chelva	<i>Epidendrum</i> Unknown
15F	(2)	1	Dawn Fathers	<i>Encyclia</i> Bees' Knees
		1	Enid Chelva	<i>Laeliocattleya</i> Dellensis 'Violet Eloquence' (var <i>Shostinaria</i> ?)
19B	(1)	1	Nelia Farquharson	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> Unknown
19C	(2)	1	Lynn Brooks	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> Mini Unknown
		1	Nelia Farquharson	<i>Phalaenopsis</i> Unknown
20A	(2)	1	Keng Leow	<i>Oncidium</i> Unknown
		2	Keng Leow	<i>Oncidium</i> Unknown
24B	(1)	1	Lynn Brooks	<i>Lycaste aromatica</i>

**Judge's choice (Roy Brown Trophy):** *Oncidium phymatochilum* grown by Helen Stretch, 73 Points

**Best Cymbidium:** No cym's benched this month!

**Open popular vote:** *Oncidium phymatochilum* grown by Helen Stretch

**Novice popular vote:** *Encyclia Bees' Knees* grown by Dawn Fathers

**From the December General Meeting**

(Photos by Kirsty Bayliss)



**Open popular vote**

*Oncidium phymatochilum* grown by Helen Stretch



**Novice popular vote**

*Encyclia Bees' Knees* grown by Dawn Fathers



*Oncidium* unknown  
Grown by Keng Leow

(might be *Oncidium sphacelatum*?)



*Paphiopedilum* Wössner China Moon  
Grown by Howard Tan



*Cattleya* Pink Jaguar  
Grown by Lynn Brooks  
(It's easy to see what inspired the name of this beautiful orchid!)



*Paphiopedilum victoria-regina*  
Grown by Ray Taylor  
(Regina and Victoria are both cities in Canada, so I always think of this slipper orchid as a Canadian species, but it is actually native to rainforests in the Indonesian island of Sumatra.)



*Dendrobium* Fran's Gem 'Green Jade'  
Grown by Tara Peeters



*Phalaenopsis* Sogo  
Also grown by Tara Peeters



## Chatting with Artificial Intelligence (AI)

If you're interested in IT, you may be aware of a thing called ChatGPT. It's been in the news a lot since late last year, when it was first put online by its creators at OpenAI, a start-up company in Silicon Valley. Since 2019, Microsoft has invested US\$3 billion in OpenAI. The money was mostly needed to pay for the huge amount of computing power OpenAI needed to create ChatGPT. You can read more about OpenAI and Microsoft and their ChatGPT deal in a recent article from the New York Times (<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/12/technology/microsoft-openai-chatgpt.html>).

So what is ChatGPT? In modern jargon, ChatGPT is a chatbot—a computer program that simulates a conversation with human users. Up until now, chatbots have been, well, sort of dumb. Up until now, it has usually been pretty easy to tell whether a conversation you are having online is with a real person or a chatbot. ChatGPT is different, which is why it's causing a fuss. You can have a moderately decent conversation with ChatGPT. You type a question into its web page, and it makes a reasonable response. It isn't perfect, and sometimes its responses are just wrong, although when they are wrong it might not be obvious unless you know the correct answer yourself. According to a news story published on 25 January 2023 (<https://www.dailywire.com/news/chatgpt-passes-medical-license-exam-bar-exam-after-top-performance-on-wharton-mba-final>), ChatGPT has actually passed a medical license exam, a bar exam, and the MBA exam at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School (the school which the former US president attended). Australian universities have been forced to re-evaluate how they examine students and to reinstate pen-and-paper exams instead of online exams—you can read more about that in an article from ABC News (<https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2023-01-12/chatgpt-generative-ai-program-passes-us-medical-licensing-exams/101840938>).

Since I'm a bit of a geek and interested in IT, I experimented a bit with ChatGPT over the last week. It's easy and free at the moment—go to [chat.openai.com](https://chat.openai.com) if you want to try yourself. If you don't want to bother with setting up some sort of login to use ChatGPT but would be happy to experience it vicariously, below you can read excerpts of a conversation I had with ChatGPT on the morning of 13 January 2023. The bold text bits are my questions, the *italics are ChatGPT's responses*, and the bits in [square brackets] are my commentary.

### **Where is the orchid society of western australia based?**

*The Orchid Society of Western Australia is based in Perth, Western Australia.*  
[Pretty clever, ChatGPT understands capitalisation!]

### **Who is the president of the orchid society of western australia?**

*I'm sorry, but I do not have information on the current president of the Orchid Society of Western Australia as my training data only goes up to 2021 and the information is likely to change.*

### **Who was the president of the orchid society of western australia in 2020?**

*I am sorry, I don't have the information of the president of Orchid Society of Western Australia in 2020, My training data only goes up to 2021 and I don't have the updates on the information of the president of the Orchid Society of Western Australia.*  
[ChatGPT is a bit dumb here. Loses points for obviously not reading the OSWA Bulletin, like some members.]

### **How many species of orchids are there?**

*There are approximately 25,000-30,000 species of orchids that have been identified and described by scientists. However, it is estimated that there may be as many as 100,000-150,000 species of orchids in total, many of which have yet to be discovered and described. Orchids are found on every continent except Antarctica, and they are particularly diverse in tropical regions.*  
[Seems like a reasonable answer. The number I had in my head was 25,000 and Bing or Google searches lead to a Wikipedia page that says 28,000. So, ChatGPT can basically do a Bing or Google search.]

### **What is the rabbit orchid?**

*I'm not aware of a specific orchid species that goes by the name "rabbit orchid". Could you provide more information or context about what you are looking for? It could be that it is a common name for a specific orchid species.*

### **Its common name is the bunny orchid**

*I'm sorry, but I am not aware of any orchid species commonly known as the "bunny orchid." "Bunny orchid" doesn't seem to be a well-established common name for any orchid species. Could you please provide more information about the "bunny orchid" you are asking about, such as its scientific name or where it is found? This will help me to identify the orchid species you are asking about.*

**It is found in western australia**

*I'm sorry for the confusion, but there is no such thing as a "bunny orchid" or "rabbit orchid" that is found in Western Australia or in any other part of the world, as far as my knowledge cutoff goes. It is possible that you may be thinking of another type of plant, or that the name is a local colloquial term for a different species. I apologize if my previous answers were not helpful.*

**OK, thank you for trying.**

*You're welcome. If you have any other questions, feel free to ask.*

[Perhaps a bit obscure, but there are indeed orchids known as rabbit and bunny orchids. I'm a bit embarrassed of my questions here—after ChatGPT gave me these negative responses I did a bit of my own research and I now know that rabbit orchids and bunny orchids are not the same! I thought the conversational back-and-forth was interesting though.]

**Do you know about the flying duck orchid?**

*Yes, the flying duck orchid (*Caleana major*) is a species of orchid native to eastern and southern Australia. It is also known as the duck orchid or the large duck orchid. It is a terrestrial orchid that grows in damp, shady areas and is known for its unusual flower, which is shaped like a flying duck with a large, bright pink and purple labellum that is shaped like the head of a duck. The species is considered endangered in some states of Australia. It is a protected species in some states of Australia, and it is illegal to collect or remove the orchid from the wild without permission.*

**Can you write me a short article (1000 words) about the flying duck orchid, suitable for a lay audience?**

*The Flying Duck Orchid, also known as *Caleana major*, is a unique and beautiful species of orchid found in eastern and southern parts of Australia. This terrestrial orchid is known for its striking and unusual flower, which is shaped like a flying duck with a large, bright pink and purple labellum that looks like the head of a duck.*

*The Flying Duck Orchid grows in damp, shady areas and is a protected species in some states of Australia, it is illegal to collect or remove the orchid from the wild without permission. It is an herbaceous perennial plant that grows up to 40cm tall. The leaves are long and narrow, and the plant produces a single, large flower on a stem that rises above the leaves.*

*One of the most striking features of the Flying Duck Orchid is its flower, which is about 5cm long and 3cm wide. The petals and sepals are green and brown, and the labellum is a bright pink and purple, with a deep cleft in the middle that looks like the head of a duck. The labellum is also covered in fine, dark hairs that resemble the feathers of a duck. The overall shape of the flower is also interesting, as it's like a duck which is ready to take off.*

*The Flying Duck Orchid is a unique species in many ways, not just its appearance but also its reproduction. The orchid relies on a specific species of fungus, called mycorrhizae, to germinate its seed and grow. It also has a symbiotic relationship with a species of small native bee, which is the only insect known to be able to pollinate the orchid. The bee is attracted to the orchid's bright pink and purple labellum, which resembles the head of a duck. The bee crawls into the cleft of the labellum to collect nectar and pollen, transferring pollen from flower to flower as it moves around.*

*However, the Flying Duck Orchid is considered endangered in some states of Australia. The main threats to the species are habitat loss and degradation due to land clearing, mining, and grazing, as well as the collection of wild plants for horticulture. The orchid's small population size also makes it vulnerable to genetic problems and disease. Conservation efforts are underway to protect and restore habitats for the orchid, as well as to educate the public about the importance of protecting this unique species.*

*In conclusion, the Flying Duck Orchid is a unique and beautiful species of orchid found in eastern and southern parts of Australia. Its unusual flower, which is shaped like a flying duck and its unique reproduction method, make it an interesting and important species to protect. Its conservation is crucial to save the orchid from extinction.*

**Thank you!**

*You're welcome! I'm glad I could help. If you have any other questions, feel free to ask.*

[Wow! In case you were wondering, ChatGPT's article was only 459 words, not 1000, so it loses points on maths. The article itself seems pretty decent, but I haven't checked to see if it is actually correct and I know mycorrhizae is not a species of fungus. It would help if ChatGPT provided a bibliography for fact-checking.]

**Can you show me a picture of the flying duck orchid?**

*I apologize, but I am an AI language model and I do not have the capability to show images. However, you*

can easily find pictures of the flying duck orchid by doing an internet search. Simply search for "*Caleana major*" or "flying duck orchid" and you should be able to find many images of this beautiful orchid species.

### do you know about bunny orchids?

I apologize for any confusion, but there is no such thing as a "bunny orchid" or "rabbit orchid" that is found in Western Australia or in any other part of the world, as far as my knowledge cutoff goes. The common name could be a local colloquial term for a different species or a mistaken name for another plant.

[Thought I'd ask again, but ChatGPT still didn't know about bunny orchids. It was smart enough to know that I was asking about an orchid and not an "orchud", and it seemed to have remembered our earlier exchange about rabbit and bunny orchids and Western Australia. It might be a bit unfair to ask a chatbot built in San Francisco about rabbit and bunny orchids if those terms are indeed colloquialisms used just in Australia.

ChatGPT can not provide pictures, so humans will need to keep doing the bulletin for now, at least until ChatGPT learns how to deal with graphics. We might not need to wait for long though—there are already

numerous "Art Generators" that use artificial intelligence to create images. At right are two images made by the AI image generator by NightCafe

(<https://creator.nightcafe.studio>) when I asked it for pictures of "an orchid" and "a bunny orchid". The results are not really what I was expecting, but it took me less than two minutes to Bing search for AI art generators, find NightCafe, and receive the images, and NightCafe created each image in just a few seconds. Pretty amazing.



Since most of this article was generated by computer programs, I felt there needed to be a little more human input, so I did a little research of my own on the Flying Duck, Rabbit, and Bunny (below left, centre, and right, respectively) orchids. The **Flying Duck Orchid** (*Caleana major*) is native to the region extending from Queensland to Tasmania and South Australia. It was featured on an Australian postage stamp in 1986. The specimen shown here was photographed by Peter Woodard in Kuringai Chase National Park (NSW) ([commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=11926580](https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=11926580)). Actually, the orchid pictured is the Large Flying Duck Orchid—there is also a Small Flying Duck Orchid (*Caleana minor*). The **Rabbit Orchid** (*Leptoceras menziesii*) was one of the first orchids to be described from Western Australia, but it is found throughout southern Australia. The specimen shown here was photographed on Kangaroo Island by Ratabago ([commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=10887541](https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=10887541)). The **Crinkle-leaf Bunny Orchid** (*Eriochilus dilatatus* subspecies *undulatus*) shown here was photographed by John Tann at Talbot Road Reserve in Swan View, WA ([commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eriochilus\\_dilatatus\\_undulatus.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eriochilus_dilatatus_undulatus.jpg)). Most species of Bunny orchids are native to WA, but some are found in Queensland, NSW, SA, Tasmania, and Victoria. You can fact-check me if you want—my information came from Wikipedia.



## Expressions of Interest

This is a call to orchid society & club members interested in attending the 14<sup>th</sup> Asia Pacific Orchid Conference (APOC) & Show, in Singapore. The show is scheduled from 16-20<sup>th</sup> & the conference 15-19<sup>th</sup> August 2023.

The venue and other details are yet to be announced.



A group package has been negotiated with Travel World and it goes something like this,

- Return Singapore Airlines flights to Singapore as below
  - SQ 224 15 AUG PERSIN 0625 1145
  - SQ 215 20 AUG SINPER 1845 2355
- 5 nights at the 4\* Parkroyal Beach Road Hotel including buffet breakfast and internet
- Return Airport transfers
- Visit, in same day, by bus to 2 large commercial orchid nurseries (*Toh Garden & Woon Leng Nursery*).
- The price based on twin share is \$1627 per person.
- a deposit of \$350 per person will be required once the tour is confirmed & you wish to participate.

We are also looking at group prices to visit,

- Singapore Botanical Gardens including the Orchid Garden (recently revamped).
- And the Singapore Gardens by the Bay

**These are optional and will be an additional cost as will entry into the APOC show/conference.**

If you are interested in participating, please advise Bruce Larson at

[bruce@pegasusconsulting.org](mailto:bruce@pegasusconsulting.org) before 27<sup>th</sup> January 2023.