

# THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ORCHID BULLETIN

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

The next meeting of the Orchid Society of Western Australia (Inc.) will be held at the Manning Senior Citizens Activity Centre, Manning, on **Friday 23 June, 2023.**

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**THIS MONTH'S MEETING**

BRUCE LARSON

OPTIMISING FLOWERING POTENTIAL

**JULY MEETING DATES**

OSWA Committee: Friday 7th

General Meeting: Friday 28th

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## General News

### Birthdays:

June: 2nd Tom Seaman; 5th Michele Hay; 10th Val Dobrowolski; 17th Maggie Longmore; 18th Bev Ruello; 23rd Donna Cardinal

July: 1st Kevin Butler; 9th Stephanie Williamson

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.

### Vale Peter Masters

Peter Masters passed away on the morning of 5 June 2023. Peter was an active member of OSWA for many years but lately spent most of his time with South Eastern Orchid Society and with the Species Orchid Society of WA, where he was immediate past president and committee member. Peter had been unwell for some time now and his health deteriorated over the last 4-5 months. We have been asked to respect the family's privacy for now and limit phone calls and please not to drop into his Armadale home unannounced.

Peter had an impressive knowledge of orchids, especially species, and his large collection included hybrids and species orchids (many rare and difficult to grow) from all over the world. He was always happy to share his knowledge about orchids and orchid culture.

### Quality Plant Auctions

Quality plant auctions provide a convenient way for local orchid enthusiasts to buy and sell award-quality plants, preferably large specimens. Buyers and sellers do not need to be members of OSWA. To encourage growers to sell exceptional plants at our Quality Plant Auctions, no commissions are taken—all proceeds go to the seller. It will be helpful to contact Harry in advance when you intend to offer a plant for auction, and supply pictures and other

information (growing conditions, place of origin, how is it currently being grown etc.) that can be used to enthruse prospective buyers.

Courtney will put a beautiful *Laelia anceps* (pictured upper right) up for auction at our June meeting, and Rosemary is planning to offer her *Angraecum sesquipedale* (pictured lower right). For more info about *Angraecum sesquipedale*, see the article later in this Bulletin.

At our May meeting, Ray put *Fredclarkeara* (*Catasetum*) After Dark 'Sunset Valley Orchids' up for auction. Ray also entered one of these plants (picture at left) in the monthly plant competition and it was the favourite of the judges on the night. Indeed, the judges gave the plant a score of 79 points, in the range for an HCC award. Ray noted that the plant, like other *catasetums*, needs to be kept under cover when the leaves go yellow in winter, and kept dry until new shoots grow in the spring. The plant had a reserve price of \$100 and was passed in at auction. (Ray did not seem to wait very long for someone to place a bid before he closed the auction...perhaps he was having second thoughts about parting with this beautiful plant?!?!). Nevertheless, an astute member purchased the plant for \$100 after the meeting ended.



## Revitalising the Library

It is good to see the library in action again and being used by some new members. Thank you John for all your work to get the library back into order. There may be some redundant library books and periodicals appearing as raffle prizes or offered on the donations table in the coming months.

## New Members

Welcome to Jane (Carramar), Julie (Balcatta), Tommy (Beckenham), Tracy (Stirling), and Eileen (East Victoria Park). We hope you have many enjoyable and rewarding years ahead with our Society.

## ISODW Dinner—It's not too late to RSVP and make payment (\$50 per person)

The traditional ISODW dinner will be held on the Saturday night of the ISODW weekend (Saturday 5 August), at the Manning Senior Citizens Activity Centre. *As well as dinner, the evening will include special auctions and competitions!* The dinner menu includes beef, chicken and lamb spitroast and traditional gravy. As if that isn't enough, there will be vegetarian lasagna, sides of roast potatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, honey carrot, peas, corn, vegetarian fried rice, and glazed pumpkin. And there will be dessert! Sticky date pudding and Baileys cheesecake. All this for just \$50 per person! For catering purposes, the caterer needs to know numbers well in advance, so RSVP and make payment ASAP. There will be a sign-up sheet at the June meeting. The ISODW dinners are always very enjoyable, and are a great way to meet folks from other clubs in WA. Don't miss it!

## Sales Table at General Meetings

Some members have drawn attention to the fact that the sales box of pots and other items has not been seen at the sales table at monthly meetings since before the covid pandemic. Happily for the rest of us, Jacqui and Nantha have kindly volunteered to bring the sales box back to the sales table, filled with a selection of items from OSWA's stash of pots and stuff in the shed. Thank you Jacqui and Nantha!

## Garden City Plastics Pots Order

We are planning to make a bulk order of pots, and perhaps other items, from Garden City Plastics and so we need to know what members would like to purchase.

Garden City Plastics supplies a wide variety of pots suitable for orchids, as well as stakes, plant tags, and other bits and pieces, at very competitive prices. Unfortunately, they are wholesalers only, so (1) individuals cannot normally buy directly from them, and (2) they only sell pots in large packs of perhaps 100 or more. Please take a look at <https://www.gardencityplastics.com/> to see what sorts of pots and other items you might be interested in purchasing. Courtney and Harry will also bring examples of pots they find useful to the June general meeting for members to see up close. If enough members are interested in buying particular pot types and sizes, we will be able to make a bulk purchase.

## We need plants for the new member plant stockpile

One way we attract new members to our club is with an offer of three free orchids. Two of these free orchids come from our "new member plant stockpile". Courtney has been supplying plants for the stockpile for many years, but his idea of using free plants to attract new members has been very successful, so the stockpile is starting to run low. If anyone can donate some plants to the stockpile, please let Courtney know. Of course, plants for the stockpile should be healthy, free of pests and signs of disease, firmly established in their pot, and preferably at or near flowering size.

## When is our next meeting? (Rant of the month)

I have been asked this question a lot lately, which is very disheartening, because it makes me think that people don't read the bulletin—meeting dates are always printed on the front page of the bulletin. Also, this is a very bad question to ask, because it is usually asked when the meeting is imminent, which is also the time the bulletin is being produced (my time of greatest busy-ness and freaking out), so if I receive the question by email or text, it is likely to go unanswered, no offence intended. Whatever...

Generally, the monthly meetings are on the 4th Friday of the month. Sometimes they are on the last Friday of the month, but only when the last Friday of the month is the 4th Friday. If you show up on the

5th Friday of a month, most likely you will have arrived 7 days too late, because meetings are on the 4th Friday (not the 5th Friday). Never mind, many folks (including me) are easily confused and have made that mistake before, but only once. If in doubt, and you can't find a bulletin to check, you can always find meeting dates advertised at [www.orchidsocietywa.net.au](http://www.orchidsocietywa.net.au), and usually also on [facebook.com/orchidsWA](https://www.facebook.com/orchidsWA).

### There will be no Orchid Conference for Perth in 2024 or 2025

Unfortunately, it has not been possible to find a suitable venue for an orchid conference in Perth at a time suitable for peak orchid flowering season in either 2024 or 2025. The AOC conference that was to be held in Perth will now be held in northern NSW in 2025.

### Events calendar 2023

**Intersociety Display and Workshop:** 4-6 August, at Manning Community Centre.

**Kardinya Spring Show:** 30 August - 2 September, to be confirmed.

**Perth Orchid Fair:** 2-3 September (setup on Friday 1 September; at John Septimus Roe School).

**Potting Workshop:** Sunday 15 October, at MSCAC.

**Late Flowering Orchid Display:** Saturday 11 - Sunday 12 November, at MSCAC

**Bentley Pines Christmas Dinner:** Wednesday 8 November; *limited to 36 attendees*.

**Floraplant Nursery Visit:** date to be determined.

**December General Meeting:** Friday 8 December (two weeks earlier than usual, only date available).

### Cataloging Orchids (notes from the discussion at the May General Meeting)

#### Tags

- Tags should contain at least the name of the plant, including award information. For example, for a *Paphiopedilum insigne* that received an HCC award from the AOC, the tag should have "*Paphiopedilum insigne* HCC/AOC" written on it.
- Additional useful info on the tag could include: plant number (see below); dates of repotting, division, etc (usually on the back of the tag); and classes for monthly meetings and shows.
- *Paphiopedilum insigne* is a species paph, so its class for a Novice grower is 17A for monthly meeting and 454E for shows. If you include this info on the tag, your tag might now read "*Paphiopedilum insigne* HCC/AOS 17A / 454E".
- If a plant arose as a division taken from a larger plant in September 2017, was grown in a pot for a couple of years, and then moved into a larger pot ("potted on") in October 2019, the back of the plant tag might have "Div 9/2017" and "PO 10/2019" written on it. (This sort of info helps the grower remember when repotting is due.)
- Robust tags like the one pictured here can be purchased in boxes of 1000 from Garden City Plastics.
- Tags can be written on in pencil. Pencil can be erased using a normal pencil eraser, a piece of Perlite, or sandpaper.
- For those who would like a neater label that contains more info, stationery supply stores sell sheets of sticky labels that can be printed onto using a standard printer and then stuck onto the tag.
- Tags should be stuck in the pot with the plant. It is handy to use tags that have a small hole at one end (see the picture) so they can easily be tied onto a plant or mount if necessary.



#### Plant number

- It can be convenient to assign each plant a number. This number should be written on both the plant tag and the pot, so that if the tag gets knocked out of the pot and ends up on the shadehouse floor, it is easy to return it to the correct pot.

- A Chinagraph pencil (from an art supply store) or a white-out pen (like the stuff that used to be marketed as "Liquid Paper" back in the day) can be used to write on pots.
- Writing on tags and pots needs to be refreshed every few years before it is weathered away.

#### *Card Index or Notebook*

- In case a plant tag gets lost, it is good to have a written backup of the information on the plant tag, for example in a notebook or card index. The number on the pot can then be used to find the plant's entry in the notebook or card index.
- A notebook for cataloging orchids can be as simple as a notebook with columns ruled on each page. First column, tag/pot number; second column, plant name; third column...
- Additional info for the notebook/card index might include where the plant was purchased, date of purchase, purchase price, location of the plant in your various growing areas, cultural information (e.g., warm or cool growing? does it need a winter rest?), and other points of interest.

#### *Electronic Database*

- An electronic database can be used to complement or instead of a notebook/card index.
- A spreadsheet created using Google Docs, Microsoft Excel, Numbers etc can be customised to suit the growers needs and interests. As well as plant number and name, it can easily include, for example, flowering time, fertilizing needs, culture notes from the internet, sizes of successive growths, progress of divisions, provision to keep track of dead orchids, and an orchid wish list.
- A spreadsheet can include pictures as well as text, but including pictures can be tedious.
- Purpose-built cataloging apps such as "Orchid Collection" and "Orchid Album" are available relatively cheaply on app stores. Such apps may not be as customisable as a spreadsheet, but they may be easier to use for cataloging, especially for keeping photos.
- Electronic databases/cataloging apps have the advantage that they can easily travel with you (e.g., on a laptop, phone or tablet), and may also be made accessible online. In comparison, card indexes and notebooks can be bulky and not very portable.
- A card index/notebook has the advantage that it is simple to use and can be safely used at the potting bench. Electronic devices needed to maintain electronic databases may not fare well when used in places where they might be splashed with water, potting mix, fertilisers, etc.

It is best to figure out what orchid cataloging system you will use and start using it before your collection gets too large!

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### **GENERAL ORCHID CULTURE NOTES FOR MAKURU (JUNE/JULY)**

The Orchid Society of Western Australia meets on Noongar country, and would like to acknowledge the Noongar people as the traditional custodians of the land. Unlike the European calendar, the Noongar people describe the climate of Western Australia's South West as having six seasons. This approach to describing Perth's climate is helpful for guiding our orchid-related jobs for the year. Makuru (June/July) is the coldest and wettest Noongar season. Days are short, sunlight is often filtered by cloud cover, and stormy, wet, windy weather is frequent.

- ✓ Watering at this time of the year is best done in the morning, aiming to allow orchids to dry by nightfall. Try to plan watering for clear sunny days.
- ✓ Try to avoid overhead watering/sprinklers at this time of year. Watering by hand ensures control over where cold water goes (not onto flowers or into leaf axils, crowns, sheaths etc). During hand watering you can inspect your plants to identify any potential issues before it's too late.
- ✓ Use rainwater where possible — there's no shortage of it this time of year, orchids love it, and we all have a responsibility to be water-wise gardeners.
- ✓ Any additional shade cloth applied in summer should be removed by now — orchids love as much light as they can get this time of year.



- ✓ If you have a solid cover for your shade house, it should be on by now. Orchids that require a dry winter rest or reduced growth should be kept on the dry side, and given minimal (if any) fertilizer.
- ✓ Apply snail and slug pellets as these critters become more active during rainfall. The expensive, moisture resistant pellets are preferable because they do not disintegrate and go mouldy.
- ✓ Survey your orchid collection for any plants becoming too 'top heavy', that may require extra support to prevent them from toppling over in strong winds.
- ✓ Start thinking about what plants you will have in flower for the up coming Shows and meetings. How can you tidy up the plant, and protect the flowers, to ensure they look their best? A decorative pot, removal of dead leaves, trimming black leaf tips, and using oils or a little milk in water to gives foliage a glistening appearance make a big difference for plant presentation.
- ✓ Make sure you have a good supply of pots and orchid mix in preparation for the busy repotting season to come — it is better to have supplies and not need them, than need them and not have them.

For detailed notes are based on what to do with Cymbidiums, Cattleyas, and Paphiopedilums this month, see the May Bulletin. General info on particular types of orchids can always be found at [http://www.orchidsocietywa.net.au/OSWA/Growing\\_Orchids.html](http://www.orchidsocietywa.net.au/OSWA/Growing_Orchids.html).

### **Minutes of the General Meeting held in the Manning Senior Citizens Activity Centre, Friday, 26 May 2023**

**Welcome:** 7:33 pm. **Apologies and attendance:** as per register

**Minute's silence:** Trevor Burnett. Funeral arrangements were announced.

**Minutes:** Moved seconded that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted. Carried. Lynn/Keng

**Presentations/demos:** Discussion on cataloging orchids—Murray, Lynn, Courtney, Nantha.

**New member introductions:**

- Julie, Tommy and Eileen (who joined on the night) were welcomed. Other new members: Tracy, Jane. (New membership applications to be processed at the next committee meeting in early June.)

**Correspondence:** deferred to June meeting

**Reports:**

- **Autumn Show (Lina).** A big thank you to everyone who helped out. Proceedings were a bit clunky since it was our first time at that venue, but worked out very well nonetheless. Plant sales: members \$2505; OSWA \$175.
- We have an extra large raffle, and to say thank you to helpers at the show have written out raffle tickets for everyone on the roster.
- Feedback: Ray noted that new member Julie won champion novice, champion paph, and others. The shopping centre was happy! The Centre manager said she had more centres we could do shows at ---> to follow up?
- We felt advertising was not very good. In future we will need more tables for setting up to relieve crowding.
- Members were reminded that if putting a plant up for judging, a member must have owned the plant for 6 months, it needs to be well rooted so it doesn't fall over, etc. If the plant has been owned for less than 6 months, it will be for the display only.
- Don't water the same day as show.
- **Koi Society Show** -- OSWA did not attend this year (Cym Club did attend, Helen said it was a good event, lots of interest from the public.)

**Financial report:** Presented by Sheelagh. Moved seconded that the financial report be accepted. Sheelagh/Ray

**General Business:**

- **Quality Plant Auctions** – Please be reminded that if you have a high quality plant you would like considered for auction at an OSWA meeting, please let the secretary know prior to the meeting so it can be fit into the agenda. This ensures we have an appropriate number of plants and know who they belong to. Given OSWA does not take a commission on these sales we would also prefer if payment was arranged directly between the seller and buyer - we will remind people of this arrangement at the time of auctioning.
- Ray's plant Fredclarkeara (Catasetum) After Dark 'Sunset Valley Orchids' was put up for auction, with a reserve price of \$100. Passed in at auction, but purchased by an astute member for \$100 after the meeting ended.
- **Garden City Plastics Order-** club looking at placing an order. Feel free to have a look at the website and if you would like to bulk order something, let Harry know (their stock is subject to having adequate numbers of orders so no guarantees that they will actually have stock!). Ray noted that plastic flower stakes can be bought inexpensively in quantity (by the thousand) and on-sold in smaller batches to members.
- **ISODW 2023** – the winning theme is "Yesterday Today and Tomorrow" – this meeting is the LAST OPPORTUNITY to RSVP and pay for the dinner (spitroast meats, salads and sweets- \$50pp)
- **Library** is being revitalised by John Cain. Redundant books being given away on donations table or for raffle.

**Open popular vote:** Helen: Miltoniopsis Rene Komoda 'Pacific Clouds'.

**Novice popular vote:** Marian: Cattleya unknown.

**Floral Art:** Tara

**Door Prize:** Richard Gordon

**Judges Choice:** Fredclarkera (Catasetum) After Dark 'Sunset Valley Orchids', 79 points (Ray Taylor)

**Best Cymbidium:** Cymbidium erythrostylum, 70 points (Helen Stretch)

**Raffle:** Julie, Tara, Betty, Marian, Courtney, Dawn, Nantha, Maggie, John, Tommy.

**Volunteers for next GM.** Kitchen: Julia, Marion and Karina, Maggie; Door: Keng and Julie

**Plant discussions:** *Bulbophyllum rothschildianum* (Ray), *Cymbidium erythrostylum* (Helen), *Brassavola* (now *Rhynchovola*) Jimminey Cricket (Ray).

**Meeting Closed** at 9:30 pm

### MONTHLY PLANT COMPETITION (May, 2023)

#### OPEN

1B	(1)	1	Valerie Cooper	<i>Brassolaeliocattleya</i> Kum Ma Nee Tong
1C	(1)	1	Tara Peeters	<i>Cattleya</i> Burana Charm
1F	(2)	1	Ray Taylor	<i>Rhynchovola</i> Jimminey Cricket 'Super Bug'
		2	Courtney Rogasch	<i>Cattleya intermedia</i> var. <i>amethystine</i> x <i>Brassolaelia</i> Morning Glory 4N
2A	(1)	1	Helen Stretch	<i>Cymbidium erythrostylum</i>
3A	(3)	1	Ray Taylor	<i>Paphiopedilum insigne</i> var. <i>sanderae</i>
		2	Howard Tan	<i>Paphiopedilum henryanum</i>
		3	Howard Tan	<i>Paphiopedilum gratixianum</i>
3D	(1)	1	Howard Tan	<i>Paphiopedilum</i> Taiwan x <i>Paphiopedilum adductum</i>
6D	(2)	1	Helen Stretch	<i>Miltoniopsis</i> Rene Komoda 'Pacific Clouds'
		2	Ray Taylor	<i>Brassada</i> Orange Delight 'Hilo Sunrise'
8A	(3)	1	Courtney Rogasch	<i>Dendrobium bigibbum</i> 'CC2'
		2	Courtney Rogasch	<i>Dendrobium bigibbum</i> 'Alba'
		3	Courtney Rogasch	<i>Dendrobium bigibbum</i> 'CC3'
10B	(1)	1	Ray Taylor	<i>Bulbophyllum rothschildianum</i>
11B	(3)	1	Ray Taylor	<i>Fredclarkera</i> After Dark 'Sunset Valley Orchids'
		2	Ray Taylor	<i>Galeopetalum</i> (Giant x Artur Elle) 'Old Port'
		3	Courtney Rogasch	<i>Zygoneria</i> Adelaide Oval

#### NOVICE

15B	(2)	1	Marian McFetridge	<i>Cattleya</i> Unknown
		2	Enid Chelva	<i>Rhyncholaeliocattleya</i> Donna Kimura 'Robinson Heights'
15C	(3)	1	Jacqui Bateman	<i>Cattleya</i> Unknown
		2	Katia Stefanova	<i>Rhyncholaeliocattleya</i> Portage Glacier
		3	Jacqui Bateman	<i>Cattleya</i> Unknown
15D	(1)	1	Alan Rowe	<i>Cattleya</i> Unknown
15F	(1)	1	Dawn Fathers	<i>Cattleya</i> Portia x <i>Cattleya labiata</i> var. <i>coerulea</i>
17A	(1)	2	Katia Stefanova	<i>Paphiopedilum insigne</i>
24B	(3)	1	Jacqui Bateman	<i>Zygopetalum mackayi</i>
		2	Marian McFetridge	<i>Zygopetalum mackayi</i>
		3	Alan Rowe	<i>Zygopetalum mackayi</i>

**Judges' choice (Roy Brown Trophy):** *Fredclarkeara* After Dark 'Sunset Valley Orchids' grown by Ray Taylor, 79 Points

**Best cymbidium (Tom Dixon Trophy):** *Cymbidium erythrostylum* grown by Helen Stretch, 70 Points

**Open popular vote:** *Miltoniopsis Rene Komoda* 'Pacific Clouds' grown by Helen Stretch

**Novice popular vote:** *Cattleya* Unknown grown by Marian McFetridge

**Floral Art popular vote:** Arrangement by Tara Peeters

### From the May General Meeting

**Novice popular vote:** *Cattleya* unknown (at right), grown by Marian. Marian received this orchid as a piece from Edna Burgess at a workshop at SEOS six or seven years ago. It has been repotted at least every 2nd year since then and flowers every year. It grows under 50% shade cloth out in the rain except while in flower, and is fertilised weekly during summer with Manutec at half strength. Some members commented that this impressive specimen plant would have won at our Autumn Show if it had been entered there!



**Open popular vote:** *Miltoniopsis* Rene Komoda 'Pacific Clouds' (at left), grown by Helen. This orchid usually flowers in November. It needs lots of humidity in quite a cool spot, and is growing in a double shadecloth area. The double shadecloth gives the plant not only protection from too much sun, but also from heavy rains—rain becomes misty as it goes through the double shadecloth.

**Floral Art** (picture at right), by Tara. Tara had a cattleya that would not have been judged because it had a deformed flower, so she decided to use the flowers for floral art instead. The work contains about half of Tara's flowers in bloom at the moment, harvested from the garden by her kids.



*Bulbophyllum rothschildianum* (at left). Ray finds that this orchid doesn't do well in sphagnum moss, which stays too wet (roots rot) or gets dry and hydrophobic (i.e., doesn't absorb water, so plant dries out). Ray uses a 2:1:1:1 mix of bark, gravel, perlite, and charcoal. He notes that bulbos do well in shallow pots, but need humidity, so they can grow well just above a pond, for example. This one grows high in a glasshouse under white shadecloth, so it benefits from insulation and a heater in winter, and high humidity. Ray mists with a hose in the morning to maintain humidity. In nature, where bulbos are typically found in rainforests, they would typically receive morning sun until about 10 am, but after that would be shaded by tree foliage. Ray fertilises from a 200 L tank once or twice a week using a 400 ppm fertiliser solution, or daily using a 100 ppm solution, in rainwater. He cannot use bore water or scheme water

because these contain too high salt levels (450 ppm and 350 ppm respectively in his area). The medium holds the salt strongly even with flushing, and so he needs to soak the plant in a bucket of fresh water to remove salts from time to time. (Salt kills roots quickly.) Unlike Kirsty and well-known bulbo enthusiast Charly, Ray does not use warm water on his bulbos! Ray finds it is OK to water at around 10 am, so that foliage is dry by nightfall, but if water is allowed to lie in leaf axils and on new growths for too long, or fungal problems will occur.

*Cymbidium erythrostylum* (see picture on top of next page). This plant is one of the first cymys to flower in Helen's collection, and it came from Courtney. Helen noted that this year's flowering is one of its best so far. Helen grows



the orchid in a cooler more shady area than most of her cymms, and noted that it did not do so well when exposed to more heat higher up in the shadehouse. It is shaded by two layers of shade cloth over the summer. Courtney commented that the species is from Vietnam and the flowers of this specimen are of a very good shape, as if plant has been line bred. Helen is growing the plant in bark, and uses Strikeback pellets as its main fertiliser, supplemented with calcium and magnesium (as dolomite lime, a spoonful just sprinkled on the bark once or twice a year). Dolomite helps bring partly rotted, acidic bark back to a more neutral form. The orchid also receives occasional foliar feeding, with whatever is in the cupboard...Strikeback Liquid, Gogo Juice, Polyfeed high K...

*Brassavola* (now *Rhynchovola*) Jimminey Cricket (at left). This orchid is a primary hybrid (i.e., a hybrid of two species; *Brassavola nodosa* x *Rhyncholaelia digbyana*). Ray noted that it is night fragrant and that the flowers open slowly—on



this plant the flowers have been opening over about two weeks. Ray is growing it in a shadehouse under Solarweave to keep rain off, but it still experiences the cold. Coming into flower, it is important to have the plant under cover to keep water off, because water sitting on the flowers will cause black spots (botrytis) and attract slugs, cockroaches, etc. Ray recommends that if you see a *Brassavola*, buy it! They flower well, and their flowers have unusual shapes and outstanding perfumes. The flowers are typically night fragrant, glow-in-the-dark-type pale green and white colours (fragrant to attract moth pollinators, white so the moths can see the flowers in the dark). Enid nabbed the last *Brassavola* off the sales table, much to Murray's frustration.

### ***Angraecum sesquipedale***

This orchid is one of my favourites. Sadly, I don't own one (yet). It is native to Madagascar. The plant that Rosemary plans to put up for auction this month has two flower spikes ready to open, and several growths. *Angraecum sesquipedale* plants can easily be divided, so, after flowering, Rosemary's plant can be divided into several smaller plants, or allowed to continue to become a large specimen. A few years ago Ian Duncan's magnificent specimen-sized *Angraecum sesquipedale* won Grand Champion at OSWA and SEOS Shows, and an HCC award from the AOC. I know that plant must have attracted a good price at its silent auction last year because my bid of \$301 was unsuccessful.

The flowers of *Angraecum sesquipedale* are impressive: large, white with pale green parts, and strongly perfumed at night to attract pollinating hawk moths. This orchid features in the development of the theory of evolution. Charles Darwin suggested that *Angraecum sesquipedale* and its pollinator provide one of the most striking examples of how plants and their pollinators can influence each others' evolution. In this case, the orchid evolved an incredibly long "nectar spur", a long tubular extension of the flower that holds nectar. The moth that pollinates the flowers has a long tongue that it pokes down the tube so it can suck up the nectar. Because the tube is long, the moth is forced to rub its face in the flower as it reaches for the nectar, and in doing so it gets coated with pollen and transfers pollen from a previous encounter with another flower, so pollination is achieved. In response to the difficulty of reaching the nectar (the moth's major food source) the moth evolved a longer and longer tongue over time. But if the moth had a long tongue it could reach the nectar without touching the pollen, so the orchid had to evolve a longer and longer spur to force the moth to pollinate it, and so on and so on.

This coevolutionary process of orchid and moth influencing each



other reciprocally has been taken to the extreme in *Angraecum sesquipedale*—its nectar spurs can be as long as 28 cm! When Darwin proposed this scenario, only the orchid had been discovered. He thought such an impressive spur must have evolved through coevolution with a pollinator, and therefore there must exist a moth in Madagascar having an equally impressively long tongue. Everyone thought he must be crazy until a full 40 years later, when the hawk moth *Xanthopan morgani praedicta* (so named because of Darwin's prediction) was discovered in Madagascar. It has a tongue that averages a full 25 cm in length.



Text based on an article written by Kimiora Ward: <http://faculty.washington.edu/jrw/110/darorch.htm>

Photo of the hawkmoth by Nesnad: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Xanthopan\\_morganii\\_praedicta\\_Sep\\_16\\_2021\\_03-58PM.jpeg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Xanthopan_morganii_praedicta_Sep_16_2021_03-58PM.jpeg)

Photo of the flower showing the nectar spur was taken by sunoochi:

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Angraecum\\_sesquipedale\\_Thouars,\\_Hist.\\_Orchid.\\_66\\_%281822%29\\_%2845523703575%29.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Angraecum_sesquipedale_Thouars,_Hist._Orchid._66_%281822%29_%2845523703575%29.jpg)

For a video showing the moth unfurling its tongue to get nectar from the flower, see:

<https://whyevolutionistrue.com/2011/12/12/darwins-orchid-film-of-the-missing-pollinator/>

### Results of the OSWA Autumn Show, Flinders Square, May 2023.

Best Cymbidium	<i>Cymbidium</i> Osborne (72.8 points)	Helen Stretch
Best Laeliinae Alliance	<i>Brassavola</i> Little Stars	Ellie Lim
Best Paphiopedilum	<i>Paphiopedilum spicerianum</i> ('Darch' x 'My Best')	Julie Jayatilaka
Best Oncidinae	<i>Oncidium</i> Sharry Baby 'Taida'	Murray and Arni Baker
Best Vandeae	no entries	
Best Phalaenopsis	<i>Doritaenopsis</i> Mount Lip	Ellie Lim
Best Any Other Genera	<i>Zygoneria</i> Freestyle Meadows	Courtney Rogasch
Best Dendrobium excl. Aust Native	<i>Dendrobium</i> (Burana Charming x Madam Vipa)	Ellie Lim
Best Australian Native Species	<i>Dendrobium bigibbum</i>	Helen Stretch
Best Australian Native Hybrid	No entries	
Best Australian Native	<i>Dendrobium bigibbum</i>	Helen Stretch
Grand Champion	<i>Dendrobium</i> (Burana Charming x Madam Vipa)	Ellie Lim
Reserve Champion	<i>Doritaenopsis</i> Mount Lip	Ellie Lim
Best Specimen	<i>Dendrobium</i> (Burana Charming x Madam Vipa)	Ellie Lim
Best Seedling	<i>Oeceoclades maculata</i>	Julie Jayatilaka
Best Species	<i>Paphiopedilum spicerianum</i> ('Darch' x 'My Best')	Julie Jayatilaka
Best Novice Entry	<i>Paphiopedilum spicerianum</i> ('Darch' x 'My Best')	Julie Jayatilaka
Best Floral Entry	no entries	