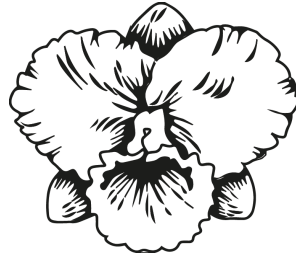


THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ORCHID BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE ORCHID SOCIETY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA
FOUNDED 1946. A MEMBER OF THE AUSTRALIAN ORCHID COUNCIL.

VOLUME 60 No 12



DECEMBER 2020

The next meeting of the Orchid Society of Western Australia (Inc.) will be held at the Manning Senior Citizens Activity Centre, Manning, on Friday 11 December (yes, that's the 2nd Sunday of the month!), commencing at 7:30 pm.

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THIS MONTH'S MEETING

TROPHY PRESENTATIONS AND
CHRISTMAS PARTY

JANUARY MEETING DATES

OSWA Committee: no meeting!

General Meeting: 6:00 pm Friday 22nd
(BBQ at the Burnett Residence,
arrive by 6 pm for dinner at 6:30 pm)

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We acknowledge assistance from Lotterywest for the printing of this Bulletin

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Notice about General Meetings

Please keep in mind the following special arrangements that we have implemented in order to keep our members safe.

- (1) **Please do not attend if you are unwell**, or have had respiratory symptoms (including coughing, sneezing, or fever) in the 2 weeks prior to the meeting.
- (2) **Please observe physical distancing restrictions.** The centre has space to have 70 people attend the meeting, so we should be able to accommodate everyone! Seating will be arranged to comply with physical distancing restrictions.
- (3) **Suppers will be returning, so donations of snacks will be most welcome!**
- (4) There will be no sales table, but orders for bark, pots etc. can be made using the order form that will be available at general meetings. See details later in the bulletin.
- (5) **Hand sanitizer will available at the entry** — please use it before entering the meeting.
- (6) You do not need to physically sign the attendance register but **please ensure you have your attendance recorded on entry.**
- (7) **Please bring exact change** for the \$1 entry (yes, we are still required to collect it for the venue's insurance purposes) and also bring exact change if you would like to buy raffle tickets. We will not be handling cash to provide change.

We would still love members to bring their plants to display for the monthly plant competition, but please do not crowd around tables.

Birthdays

December: 6th Val Seaman; 22nd Howard Tan; 23rd Cheryl Compagnone; 27th Maxine Godbeer

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

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 Patricia Lefante (Armadale). We hope you have many rewarding years ahead with our Society.

New members are eligible to receive three free orchids. If you are a new member, you should receive a letter about how to receive your free orchids. If you have not received your letter, contact Courtney at a meeting or on 0407 049 717.

OSWA Christmas Party — at the December General Meeting, Friday 11 December.

Our Christmas Party will be held as part of our December General Meeting, which will be on **this Friday, 11 December**. Please bring a plate to share, and BYO drinks. Everyone who attends should also bring a plant or wrapped present (less than \$10) so that we can have a "Secret Santa" with enough gifts for everyone to go home with something. If you bring a wrapped present that is gender-specific, please label it as male or female as appropriate.

January Meeting - BBQ! Sausages! Everyone-gets-a-plant Raffle! And more!

OSWA's January meeting will be a BBQ at the home of Trevor & Barbara Burnett, 33 Salisbury Road, Beechboro 6063. Arrive from 6:00 pm onwards. Sausages and meat for the BBQ will be supplied. BYO drinks and a plate of salad or sweets to share. Please bring a plant or small gift to donate for our traditional January raffle. If everyone brings something for the raffle, then everyone will go home with a raffle prize. This event is always very enjoyable, so mark the date (22 January 2020).

Belated thanks.

Thank you to all members who helped with the Late Flowering Orchid Display last month. The display was a big success for the three clubs involved and already we are making plans for this event next year.

Thank you also to Peta and Ray Taylor for hosting a home visit in November. Ray and Peta are always gracious hosts. Ray has a superb setup for orchid growing orchids and we are fortunate that he so generously shares his orchid growing secrets.

Club Plants — *Laelia purpurata*

There are few club plants left, so members who have not bought one need to do so this Friday's general meeting. The plants are *Laelia purpurata*, of an American breeding line, obtained from Barrita Orchids. \$5 per plant, one per membership. The flowers should be semi-alba; white with purple-pink throat. They should look a bit like the *Laelia purpurata* that Harry brought to the November meeting (see page 6).

The AGM is approaching...

Our AGM is in February. Please consider nominating for a position. Nominations should be placed by 26 January 2020 (one month before the AGM). Nominations for the position of treasurer will be joyfully received. Nomination forms are included at the end of this bulletin and will be available at the December and January general meetings. Being involved in the Committee is a great way to help OSWA and get to know more about OSWA and the WA orchid community. Being a committee member is not an onerous job...just attend 11 meetings a year...and contribute your enthusiasm and ideas to the betterment of our club and our activities. You don't have to be an expert orchid grower to be on the committee (some current committee members are not!).

Membership Subscriptions are now due.

\$26 double, \$21 single. For your convenience OSWA accepts payment by direct deposit (preferred method), cheque, or cash (paid at a general meeting). Direct deposit can be made via electronic banking or at any Westpac branch. *If possible, please use direct deposit or cheque, to lessen stress and chaos at the general meetings.*

For direct deposit to OSWA's account:

Account name - Orchid Society of Western Australia Inc.
Bank - Westpac Bank, Booragoon, WA
BSB - 036069 Account Number - 457265
Reference - please use your name, to help us identify your payment.

For payment by cheque:

Make cheques payable to The Orchid Society of WA Inc. and bring them to a general meeting or post them to OSWA, 58 Gladstone Rd, Leeming 6149.

CATTLEYA CULTURAL NOTES (DECEMBER/JANUARY) - based on notes from Henry Eaton.

When the summer weather eventually arrives and persists for more than two days at a time, be ready to cope with spells of hot days (over 35 °C) that will undoubtedly occur. These very hot spells will lead to some retarding of growth while they last. To counter these effects, we need to increase the shading if necessary, to about 70%, and maintain an adequate water supply to the plants. This is one time of the year when watering your plants in the evening may be more helpful than during the day, as this will cool the place down and will increase the 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. Because of the dryness and high temperatures, it would be wiser to avoid repotting and so forth unless we experience a cool spell. The only justification for repotting is if the plant being stressed by being in a decaying mix, as shown by shrivelling of the pseudo bulbs and limpness of the

leaves.

Also be on the lookout for plants that could be sunburnt because of gaps in the shade cloth. These, at first, may show reddening of the leaves. Try to attain a state where the leaves on the plants are not dark green but a yellow/green, which indicates adequate exposure to light.

PAPHIOPEDILUM CULTURAL NOTES (DECEMBER/JANUARY) by Trevor Burnett.

We will certainly get some hot weather that may be extended over several days, so we need to monitor the conditions and adjust our watering programme accordingly. Ensure the plants have sufficient shade to prevent any burning, as a setback at this stage will definitely affect our flowering season. If you have a mix of pot sizes you will need to ensure that the smaller pots do not dry out completely before watering.

Paphiopedilum development should still be fully in progress with the new growths coming to maturity, ready for the flowering season ahead.

Checklist for this month:

- (a) keep good air movement;
- (b) in the glass house, misting will assist with maintaining humidity;
- (c) weekly fertilizing can continue;
- (d) do not crowd your plants;
- (e) check for pests and treat if necessary;
- (f) keep the growing area clear of dying leaves or other decaying material;
- (g) increase watering to 3 times a week or more often if plants have dried out;
- (h) check all plants to see if there are any signs of stress;
- (i) water in the early morning before the sun is too high.

CYMBIDIUM CULTURAL NOTES (DECEMBER/JANUARY) - based on notes from Roy Brown.

The new seasons leads are well underway now and during the next couple of months the growth will be rapid. Keep your fertilising programs going, either weekly or fortnightly, whichever you prefer. This helps to increase growth and so makes bigger leaf and bulb development, which in turn, will give better flowering next year.

Don't grow your plants under too heavy shade conditions. I recommend that you grow them under 50% shade cloth for flowering size plants. For young seedlings, perhaps a little more shade would suit them better. Allow ample space between pots, don't crowd them all together. Too much shade and overcrowding are probably why some plants don't flower. Overcrowding can also lead to other problems due to restricted air movement, such as fungal outbreaks.

Normally December is too late for dividing and repotting, due to the stress the summer heat will cause to the plants. This year spring has been quite cool, but the summer heat seems to have finally arrived, so any plants that have not been attended to will be better left until next autumn. However, you can always pot on, that is, repot the plant into a larger pot without disturbing the roots. This can be done at any time of the year and won't cause the plant any setback at all.

Always keep a neat and tidy house, free from weeds and dead leaves, and you should have a house free from insect pests.

The Orchid Society of WA (Inc.) - Minutes of the General Meeting held in the Manning Senior Citizens Activity Centre, Manning, on Friday 27 November 2020

Welcome: 7:29 pm

Minutes: Moved L Brooks, seconded J Bateman that the Minutes of the September 2020 meeting be accepted. Carried.

Business arising:

- Raffle prizes from previous meetings. September: Enid Chelva, Richard Gordon, V Cooper, Nataliya, Howard Tan, Richard Gordon. October: Keng, Nataliya, Courtney

Moved M Rathbone, seconded L Brooks that the business arising has been dealt with. Carried.

New Members: Katia, Don and Loraine, Dahlia. Patricia to be approved at next committee meeting

Correspondence:

- 23/10- GCA re: privacy and security breach, and annual report, and bulletins
- 25/10- request to buy bark, replied indicating we have limited supply that will be prioritized for members
- 26/10- Glenn from MAC requesting OSWA secretary becomes a personal member
- 29/10- Maxine from OJPWA re: show judging requirements
- 2/11- emailed Norm asking if he would like to present to OSWA on Aussie natives orchids
- 3/11- received email from Mundaring Garden Club asking if we will present on orchids at 10am at 10am on October 5. C Rogasch volunteered and asked to be reminded closer to the date
- 3/11- received email from Malcolm asking for advice on orchid repotting
- 11/11- received email from OWA re: proposals for consideration- see general business
- 15/11- emailed Vic Park Markets re: interest in having an OSWA stall- happy to have us free of charge any time- will look at making garden themed markets to make it more worth our while!
- 15/11- emailed Cat re: meat suggestions for January BBQ
- 15/11- emailed Charly confirming presentation on greenhouse automation – confirmed
- 15/11- emailed Perth Garden Festival confirming our booking for 2021
- 15/11- emailed Koi Society asking to confirm out attendance at the Koi Show- no date set yet
- 20/11- received information on AOC Show 2021 (September 1st -5th)

Moved Arnold, seconded Ray Taylor that the correspondence be accepted. Carried.

Reports:

- **Late flowering orchid display** – big thank you to all our members who helped make it possible. I have written out a raffle ticket for everyone whose name was on the roster as a small thank you for your support.
- **Ray Taylor home visit** – Thanks Ray for having us at your recent home visit! This was a very educational visit where Ray showed us how he grows and repots his plants.

Financial report: Moved K Bayliss seconded J Bateman that the financial report be accepted. Carried.

General Business:

- **Christmas function-** we will be having a Christmas function at our December meeting. Please bring a plate to share. We will also be doing a Secret Santa so please bring a plant or wrapped gift to the value of \$10
- **New Neutrog ordering process-** Neutrog is moving to an online ordering system- if you want to take advantage of the OSWA discounts for their products, we need your permission to provide your email address to Neutrog. Please note that if you have not done this you will not be able to place orders for Neutrog products.
- **OWA correspondence** – motion to 1) appoint OWA to run the Spring Show, at a more expensive event (OSWA have not participated in this event in the past) and 2) abolish the Intersociety Display and Workshop, and replace by a biannual regional/remote event run with support from metro clubs– how would members like us to vote? OSWA membership unanimously expressed satisfaction with the Intersociety Display and Workshop and for it to continue, in 2021 by SEOS and beyond. In regards to the Spring Show, H Ashton moved, J Bateman seconded that we abstain from voting on appointment of OWA to run the Spring Show, the timing and venue. Carried.

Event calendar for 2020

- 1) Trevor and Barbara Home visit (January meeting- meat provided by OSWA, please bring a salad and sweet to share) – 22nd January 2021, 6pm start (confirmed)
 - 2) Perth Garden Festival (confirmed) – discounted tickets available NOW
 - 3) Koi Society Show
 - 4) Flora Plant nursery visit
 - 5) Intersociety Display and Workshop (confirmed)
 - 6) OSWA Spring Show
 - 7) Late Flowering Orchid Display (hopefully with ANOS and COCWA)
 - 8) Christmas dinner at Bentley Pines
 - 9) +/- Manning/Vic Park markets when weather permits?
- **Committee and treasurer role-** we have lost some committee members over the last year and require new members to help run the society- please consider joining at our AGM! In particular, we need a new treasurer.
 - **Orchiata Bark order** – has arrived. Those who have placed orders with Kirsty, please arrange a time with Harry, Kirsty or Lina to collect your bark from the shed (we can bring small quantities to the next few meetings)

Presentations: Tara Peters gave the main presentation, on growing sarcochilus orchids!

Charly Hartmann presented on *Bulbophyllum kubahensis*.

Raffle: Calvin Hisco, Tara Peters, Yen x 2, Margaret Rathbone x 2, Alan x 2, Peter, Richard Gordon.

Popular vote.

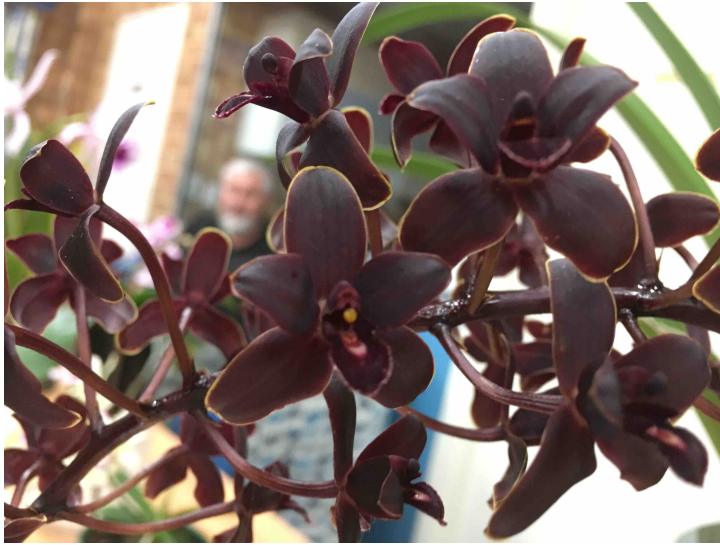
Open: *Phragmipedium Grande* 'Chinaman'

Novice: *Cymbidium Little Black Sambo*

Door Prize: Val Seaman.

Meeting Closed at 9:56 pm

From the November General Meeting...



Betty Saul won the Novice Popular Vote with *Cymbidium* Helen Bannerman (above). This orchid was formerly known as *Cymbidium* Little Black Sambo.

Howard Tan won the Open Popular Vote with *Phragmipedium* Grande 'Chinaman' (right). *Phragmipedium* Grande was registered with the RHS in 1881!

Our guest Charly Hartmann presented his *Bulbophyllum kubahense* 'Josephine' (below, photo supplied by Charly). Charly believes his flowering of this orchid is the first time this species has been flowered in Australia. Charly hopes to have some plants of *Bulbophyllum kubahense* (but not 'Josephine') for sale when he will be our guest speaker in March 2021.



Flowers on our *Laelia purpurata* club plants should look a bit like Harry Ashton's *Laelia purpurata* var. *violetta* (below), perhaps with paler petals.



25/NOV/2020

***Cymbidium* Helen Bannerman**

Cymbidium Little Black Sambo is a primary hybrid of *Cymbidium madidum* and *Cymbidium canaliculatum*, two of the three Australian native cymbidiums. The first time I heard the name "Little Black Sambo" was about 10 years ago when I was a trainee judge—part of our training included learning about the three Australian native cymbidiums (the third is *Cymbidium suave*) and the various primary hybrids that arise from them. *Cymbidium* Little Black Sambo was registered with the Royal Horticultural Society by a Mrs B.P. Cooper in 1996. Mrs Cooper presumably chose the name because the flowers are impressively dark in colour. Nevertheless, "Little Black Sambo" is something of a racial slur. I can remember during primary school in the late 60s and early 70s hearing "Sambo" being used as a racial slur. Many members will remember the British TV comedy series *Love Thy Neighbour*, popular in the 1970s. In that series, Englishman Eddie Booth referred to his West Indian neighbour Bill Reynolds as "Sambo" (and Bill referred to Eddie as "honky"). So, when I first heard the name "Little Black Sambo" I was surprised and intrigued that an orchid could have such a culturally-insensitive name. I've never known this orchid by any other name, and I'm guessing most members haven't either, so I did a bit of investigating...

Whenever I am curious about the ancestry of an orchid, or the name of an orchid, or have the name of an orchid but want to check its spelling, I consult the orchid register in the Royal Horticultural Society's horticultural database (<http://apps.rhs.org.uk/horticulturaldatabase/orchidregister/orchidregister.asp>). If you know the name of an orchid, you can do what is called a "grex search" the RHS database. A grex search for *Cymbidium* Little Black Sambo gives no results. Apparently the word "Sambo" is not the problem. A grex search just for "Sambo" returns several hits, including *Cymbidium* Rio Sambo, *Cymbidium* Son of Sambo (everyone's a comedian), *Oncidium* Sambo, *Rhyncholaeliocattleya* Sambo, and *Phalaenopsis* Tetrasambo (just in case one racial slur is not enough). If you know the parents of an orchid, you can do a "parentage search" of the RHS database, taking care to list the parents correctly as seed or pollen parents. A parentage search listing *Cymbidium canaliculatum* as the seed parent and *Cymbidium madidum* as the pollen parent returns two results—*Cymbidium* x *leai*, which is the natural hybrid (the one that occurs in nature without any human intervention) and *Cymbidium* Helen Bannerman. Under the entry for *Cymbidium* Helen Bannerman, *Cymbidium* Little Black Sambo is listed as a synonym. Huh.

It turns out that Helen Bannerman wrote and illustrated a children's book entitled "The Story of Little Black Sambo", which she published in 1899. The book was very popular for much of the 20th century, and some members may have read it during their childhood. The story was apparently written by Bannerman as a gift for her two young daughters. A year later, Bannerman published a story about a little girl, "The Story of Little Black Mingo", which might have been a gift to her son James (her second son Robert was not born until 1902), but I digress.

"The Story of Little Black Sambo" is set in India, the country where Bannerman was living at the time and where she spent more than 30 years as the wife of an officer of the Indian Medical Service. In the story, Sambo is a little boy who is accosted by four tigers. To avoid being eaten by the tigers, Sambo gives the tigers his clothes. The tigers fight over the clothes so much that in all their running around, they turn into a puddle of ghee, so Sambo gets his clothes back, and his mother, Black Mumbo, uses the ghee to make pancakes. When "The Story of Little Black Sambo" was published, critics noted that it presented one of the first black heroes in children's literature, at a time when dark-skinned people were often depicted as simple and uncivilised. It is hard to imagine that Bannerman, who spent 30 years living in India and wrote children's stories inspired by her experiences, had any malicious intent. Nevertheless, over the decades, attitudes changed, and "The Story of Little Black Sambo" fell out of favour.

Part of the problem was that the story's popularity resulted in many counterfeit versions being produced. While Bannerman's original version apparently had quite simple illustrations that depicted Sambo as a Tamil or Southern Indian child, various counterfeit versions used illustrations based on racial stereotypes that were hurtful to black children. I have not seen the illustrations in Bannerman's original version, but Project Gutenberg (see the OSWA Bulletin from May 2020 for more info) has early US versions of some of Bannerman's books. Some of the illustrations in those versions could be perceived as negative racial stereotypes, but who knows what the illustrators were thinking when they were creating the illustrations more than a century ago?

An edition of "The Story of Little Black Sambo", beautifully illustrated by Violet LaMont, was published in 1961. Despite the illustrations being inoffensive (to me, at least), the title remained as the original. An American illustrator, Fred Marcellino, noted that the story itself contained no racist overtones, and in 1996 produced his own re-illustrated version. This version was entitled "The Story of Little Babaji", and although the hero's name was changed, the rest of the text was the same. In 2004, a version was published as "The Boy and the Tigers", by Little Golden Books, and in this version the hero was named Little Rajani. Still, "The Story of Little Black Sambo" remains controversial and deeply offensive to many. Some believe that the story contributed to the word "Sambo" being used as a racial slur.

The September 2011 issue of *The Orchid Review* contains an article that talks about what can happen when the name of an orchid causes offence. Naming of orchids follows the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature.

The code recommends a cultivar (or grex) should not be given a name that might cause offence. Furthermore, the code indicates that if a name might cause undue offence, an application for the name to be rejected may be made to the International Commission for the Nomenclature of Cultivated Plants. The article in *The Orchid Review* immediately proceeds to tell a story about *Cymbidium* Little Black Sambo. The article notes that in 1966, when *Cymbidium* Little Black Sambo was registered with the RHS, there was much civil unrest in the USA relating to desegregation and race riots. The article also notes that the registrant of *Cymbidium* Little Black Sambo was a wealthy southern orchid grower, and that an official of the American Orchid Society said "Taking all this into consideration, the name was probably chosen with at least a modicum of racism." In 2007, a plant of *Cymbidium* Little Black Sambo received an AOS award. For some time afterwards, officials of the AOS were heckled at lectures and other orchid events, and the RHS received angry letters demanding that the name Little Black Sambo be changed. From the article in *The Orchid Review*, it appears that despite the outrage, nothing was done about the name at the time, but I'm guessing that the controversy surrounding "The Story of Little Black Sambo" is the reason why *Cymbidium* Little Black Sambo is now buried in the RHS database. I think it is a nice touch, though, that the orchid has been given the name *Cymbidium* Helen Bannerman instead.

If you were paying attention earlier you might remember the RHS search for "Sambo" returned *Cymbidium* Son of Sambo as one of the results. The name implies that this orchid might be derived from ~~*Cymbidium* Little Black Sambo~~ *Cymbidium* Helen Bannerman, and indeed it is! *Cymbidium* Son of Sambo is a hybrid of *Cymbidium* Helen Bannerman (seed parent) and *Cymbidium canaliculatum* (pollen parent), and was registered in 2012 by Western Orchids, of Blackwood, South Australia. Many members will know the proprietor, Kevin Western, and may even have bought orchids from Kevin when he visited Perth to be a vendor at orchid shows over the years.

If you've found this article interesting, you can find further information on the internet, including the sources upon which this article is based:

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/about-the-rhs/pdfs/publications/the-orchid-review/2011/september/sense-and-insensitivity.pdf>

<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/author/605> (Books by Helen Bannerman)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Story_of_Little_Black_Sambo

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helen_Bannerman

THE ORCHID SOCIETY OF WA (INC)

I hereby nominate

for the position of.....

Nominator.....

Secunder.....

I hereby accept nomination & declare that I have not breached any of the 4 conditions (listed below) under the New Act

Signed.....

Date.....

Under the New Law a person is excluded from being on the Committee if they:

1. Are bankrupt or their affairs are under insolvency laws;
2. Have been convicted of an indictable offence in relation to the formation or management of a body corporate in the last 5 years;
3. Have been convicted of an offence involving fraud or dishonesty, punishable by at least 3 months imprisonment in the last 5 years;
4. Have been convicted of an offence under the Act, where a person has allowed an association to operate while insolvent in the past 5 years.

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