

Caladenia filamentosa.

Caladenia filamentosa? in the south west of Western Australia.

R.L. Heberle
Albany
Western Australia

The species was recorded from Port Dalrymple, Tasmania and named by Robert Brown in PRODRROMUS (1810). It was considered to be present in all states of Australia except the Northern Territory. In Western Australia the species had received varietal names of *Caladenia filamentosa* var. *caesarea* – *denticulata* – *dorrienii* – *filifera* – *tentaculata*, George A. (1991). These names were accepted by professionals and amateurs alike and were in common use by all. There was general acceptance of the species complex as being the most common, abundant and variable of all the Western Australian caladenias, having adapted to flourish over the ever changing climate, habitat and environmental influences, presenting a bewildering and seemingly infinite variety of form and colour, over this tremendous range from north of the Murchison River, south to Augusta and east to Israelite Bay (at least). This covers most of the South West Botanical Province (approximately thirteen million hectares).

Over this range the complex has a common structure of segments terminating in long filaments (hence the name *filamentosa*), incurved dorsal sepals, a more or less oval labellum boldly striped and a dentate margin, with two rows of fleshy flattened calli, angled downwards and terminating before the bend, the column is shortly winged with glands absent at the base. The species reflects most colours (with the exception of blue) that can be striped or veined by contrasting colours.

The photographs supporting these descriptions have been selected from just one small area (similar variations can be found throughout the growing areas elsewhere) based around Cranbrook and growing within a 20 km radius of it. They graphically illustrate the amazing variation. Where have they gone?

They certainly have disappeared from current literature and publications ... and I miss them!

The species have been generally accepted since 1910. Over recent times Clements, M.A. (1989) and Jones, D.L. (1998) – Hopper, S.D. and Brown A.P. (2001) do not recognise *C. filamentosa* as being present

in Western Australia. They have elevated the previous varieties to species rank, with agreements supporting each others taxonomy.

The publication of the book "Orchids of South-West Australia" by Hoffman, N. and Brown A. (1992) and the reprint in 1998 has further 'muddied' the waters. They prematurely and invalidly, in my opinion, published a series of manuscript names that were inferred as being published in Orchid Research notes No 3, A.O.F. This does not seem to have happened.

Was this debacle eventually rectified with the publication of Hopper and Brown (2001) where some forty 'species' previously included under the *C. filamentosa* complex were given species and sub-species names?

Does this mean that they no longer exist in Western Australia?

Jones, D.L. and Clements, M.A. et-al. (2001) presented a new classification that changed generas and included Hopper's and Brown's ex *C. filamentosa* under the new name '*Calonema*' (Szlachetko 2001a) and later, because of an oversight,

had to change the illegitimate genus to *Calonemorchis* (Szlachetko 2001b), where-in they accepted all of Hopper's and Brown's 'species' names. So after these tortuous and vexatious manipulations *C. filamentosa* has finally been put to rest in Western Australia.

It has been said that in nature there are no genera or species, only populations; not withstanding this *C. filamentosa* (defunct in WA) will continue to perpetuate the species as they have done for time immemorial. In season they show their beauty in great bounty and almost infinite variety throughout their former range even in Western Australia. Whilst taxonomists continually find new ways of naming them, these orchids grow on obliviously.

THE PHOTOGRAPHS.

As previously stated, the photographs with the exception of a few from Jerramungup have all come from near Cranbrook. The

multiple photographs come from one highly localised area and they depict some of the variation that is present and support the thrust of the paper.

Plate 1 West of Cranbrook.

Plate 2 East of Cranbrook.

Plate 3 West of Cranbrook on the Boyup Brook road.

Plate 4 Cranbrook townsite.

Plate 5 Tenterten – *C. filamentosa* var. *caesarea*, variants.

Plate 6 East of Cranbrook from Wansborough.

Plate 7 Jerramungup – *C. filamentosa* var *filifera* colour variants.

Plate 8 Close up to show labellum, calli striping, etc.

References:

GEORGE, ALEX (1972); Checklist of Orchidaceae of W.A., "Nuytsia" Bulletin of the Western Australian Herbarium.

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CLEMENTS, MARK and JONES, DAVID (2001); A New Classification of *Caladenia* R.Br. (Orchidaceae), The Orchadian, Vol. 13 No 9.

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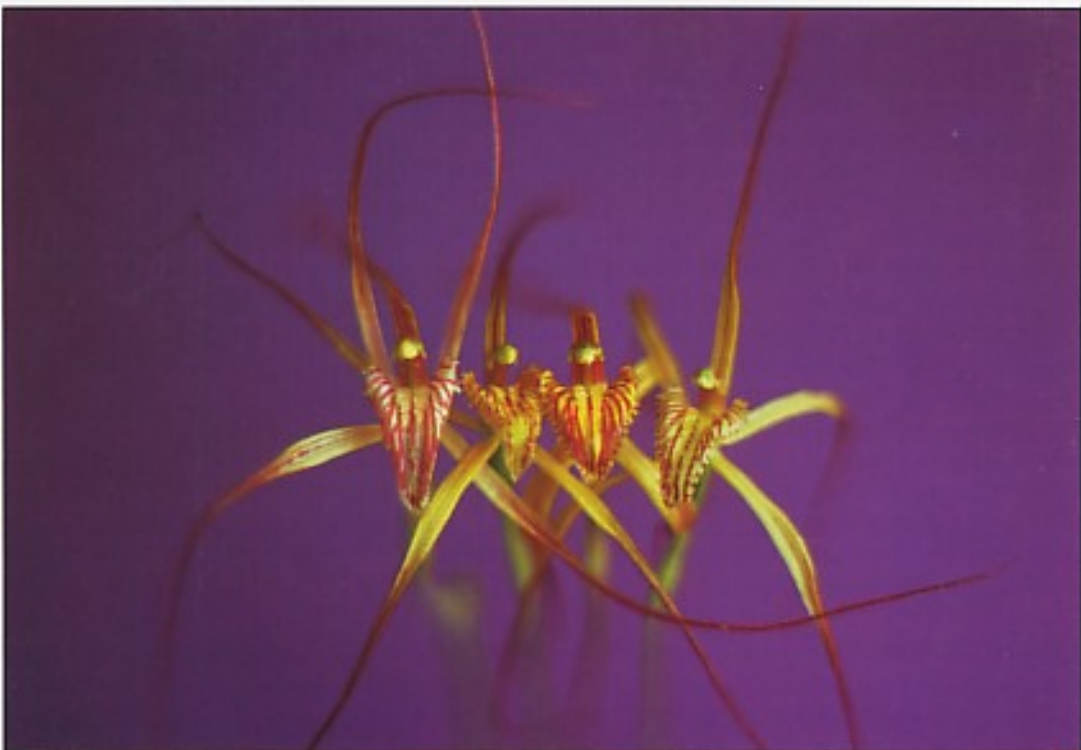


Plate 5 Tenterten - *C. filamentosa* var. *caesarea*, variants



Plate 6 East of Cranbrook from Wansborough



Plate 7 Jerramungup - *C. filamentosa* var. *filifera* colour variants



Plate 8 Close up to show labellum, calli striping, etc.

Photos R.L. Heberle