

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Seventeenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1561

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
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Introduced by Hon. Mylene J. Garcia-Albano

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to declare the Walingwaling as the National Flower of the Philippines, to replace the Sampaguita.

The Sampaguita was designated as the Philippines' National Flower by virtue of Executive Proclamation No. 652 issued by Gov. Gen. Frank Murphy on February 1, 1934.

According to Dr. Eduardo Quisumbing, National Museum Director and Dr. Vicente Saplala, a professor of the UP Los Banos, the sampaguita is a native of India and Arabia while the Walingwaling "is not only indigenous but endemic to the Philippines".

The Walingwaling plant, which is the best orchid variety in the country, is scientifically known as *Vanda Sanderiana* and used to abound in the tropical forest of Mount Apo, Province of Davao, and Zamboanga del Sur. The orchid is touted as the queen of Philippine flowers and is worshipped as "diwata" by the native Bagobos.

Aside from having its origin in the Philippines, the Walingwaling flower is truly symbolic of the Filipino traits and characteristics.

The Walingwaling plant grow on tall diptherocarps but is never known to be a parasite. It lives on treetops reaching for the light of the sun.

This majestic plant perched atop a tall tree enjoying the elements of the earth symbolize the high aspirations of the Filipino. The Walingwaling is never choosy in its growing environs. It is known to thrive in the lowlands of Southern Tagalog, the cool climes of Los Banos, Laguna and even the cold wintry weather of America, subsisting on the lights of a fluorescent bulb. Such quality can be a symbol of resiliency of the Filipinos. Moreover, the plant could live without support. It does not shy away from symbiotic relationships with the diptherocarps. Such characteristics are symbolic of Filipino independence. As a proud Filipino race, we enjoy our independence but we also live harmoniously and peacefully with other nations.

The ornamental value of Walingwaling is of national and international popularity. It was in 1982 when Frederick Sander of London introduced the Walingwaling to the orchid enthusiasts and lovers in London. It was also propagated by orchid lobbyist and commercial orchid growers in other countries particularly Singapore, Thailand, Hongkong and Hawaii. Since then, the Walingwaling hybrids have been one of the world's multibillion dollar orchid and cutflower industry. This is symbolic of the adaptability of the Filipinos.

If Walingwaling shall be saved, protected, regulated and its industry developed, it could be the single biggest dollar earner for the country and would contribute to the economic growth of the Filipinos.

For these reasons, the Walingwaling should be the Philippines' National Flower, hence, this Bill, approval of which is earnestly recommended.



MYLENE J. GARCIA-ALBANO

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**AN ACT
DECLARING THE WALINGWALING AS THE NATIONAL
FLOWER OF THE PHILIPPINES**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. The Walingwaling orchid is hereby declared the National Flower of the Philippines.

SEC. 2. The Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources shall promulgate rules and regulations that will govern the acquisition, care and disposal of, and to protect, conserve and propagate the Walingwaling.

SEC. 3. Executive Proclamation No. 652 and laws, decrees, rules and regulations, or parts thereof, inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved,