



Eighteenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 3910



Introduced by
REPRESENTATIVE LOREN B. LEGARDA

**AN ACT
DECLARING THE WALING-WALING ORCHIDS AS SECOND NATIONAL
FLOWER OF THE PHILIPPINES IN ADDITION TO SAMPAGUITA**

Explanatory Note

Regarded as the "Queen of Philippine Orchids" and once worshipped by native Bagobos as a "*diwata*", the Waling-waling is considered one of the most beautiful orchid species endemic to the island of Mindanao, particularly in the tropical forest of Mount Apo, and in the provinces of Davao, South Cotabato, and Zamboanga del Sur.

First introduced to orchid enthusiasts in London back in 1882, its immense beauty and ornamental value has spread to countries like Singapore, Thailand, Hong Kong, and Hawaii making the cultivation of Waling-waling hybrids a highly lucrative business.

Given its popularity among orchid enthusiasts, it has become increasingly rare for the Waling-waling to be found in its natural habitat. It was not until the 1980s that modern technology finally succeeded in the mass production of the prized flower, thus highlighting its potential as export product of the Philippines.

On the other hand, Sampaguita also known as *Jasminum Sambac*, which was declared as the national flower of the Philippines in Proclamation No. 652, dated 01 February 1934 by the American Governor-General Frank Murphy, is also considered as one of the three national flowers of Indonesia, along with the Moon Orchid and Rafflesia.

According to Dr. Eduardo Quisumbing, a distinguished Filipino Botanist, and Dr. Vicente Saplala of the University of the Philippines – Los Baños, Sampaguita is not originally found in the Philippines, but is in fact native to other countries in Central Asia, while Waling-waling "is not only indigenous but also endemic to the country."

Aside from its endemicity and its economical viability, the characteristics of Waling-waling reflects the innate traits and national character of the Filipinos. The Waling-waling grows on tall hardwood trees and is never known as a parasite to its habitat,

which may symbolize the persistence of Filipinos to achieve their high aspirations without neglecting others along the way. Its capacity to adapt to its environment, may it be in the tropical weather of the Philippines to the wintry weather of foreign countries, symbolizes the resilience of Filipinos to withstand situations wherever they may be. Without abuse and destruction to its natural habitat, Waling-waling can live on its own. Such characteristic symbolizes the independence of the Filipino people to stand on its own skills and competence while co-existing harmoniously with other nations and other race.

While this bill continues to recognize the prominence of Sampaguita as the national flower of the country, as well as its value to the livelihood of many Filipinos, this proposed measure seeks to elevate Waling-waling and accord this floral species the same equal importance and significance as the country's second representative flower.

In view of the foregoing, the passage of the bill is earnestly sought.



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

1 **SECTION 1.** The Waling-waling orchid is hereby declared as another national flower,
2 together with Sampaguita, which was declared national flower of the Philippines in
3 Proclamation No. 652, dated 01 February 1943 by Governor-General Frank Murphy.

4 **Sec 2.** The Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources shall promulgate rules
5 and regulations that will protect, conserve, and propagate the Waling-waling orchid
6 together with Sampaguita.

7 **Sec. 3.** Executive Proclamation No. 652 and other laws, rules and regulations, or parts
8 thereof, inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

9 **Sec. 4.** This act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two
10 (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

11 Approved,