

An Affiliate of the American Orchid Society

Fort Lauderdale Orchid Society

The purpose of the Society is to stimulate interest, provide education, support conservation, and enable the exchange of information among those interested in all aspects of orchid culture.



Loving orchids since 1951

Volume 76

Issue 8

August 2026

FLOS.org

Presidents Message - FLOS 75th Birthday with Bingo and Orchids



FLOS sure knows how to make July fun — apparently, we spell it BINGO! Our second annual FLOS Summer Bingo and Potluck was exactly what we needed on a warm, sultry

by validating winning cards, while Tony Millett and Joan Connors shared helpful insights about the orchids on display (and tolerated a few playful jabs from your occasionally unruly Bingo Caller — Yours Truly!).

This evening also marked the kickoff of



FLOS' 75th Anniversary year. Our very first meeting took place on June 6, 1951 at the home of Mr. and Mrs. James A. Bloom. To celebrate, Justine Vishnesky surprised us with a 75th Birthday Cake that added even more cheer to the night. Looks like this two year tradition is shaping up to be a keeper.

In a moment that felt straight out of a movie, FLOS member Ryan Strouss shared an album from Mr. and Mrs. Bloom at the end of the event — complete with historic items, including our inaugural newsletter from March 1956. The timing couldn't have been more perfect. Thank you, Ryan! These materials will soon be added to an expanded archives section on flos.org. If you have any historical FLOS documents, photos, or fun facts, please reach out to me at lenemory@gmail.com. I'm very much hoping to build a rich, meaningful archive for our Society.

And don't forget that our October Auction is just a little over two months away. 2026 is flying by. As mentioned in July, please continue grooming and preparing plants from your collections for donation. These member grown plants are always the most treasured and sought after items each year. Thank you for helping make our Annual Orchid Auction such a success.

— **LEN EMORY**
FLOS President

Bredren Orchids - Present "Broughtonia and their relatives"



Phillip and Liz will be our featured speakers at our August 10th meeting. Bredren Orchids is a family-owned nursery in Central

Florida specializing in novelty Phalaenopsis, Broughtonia species, and unique orchid hybrids. Senior Judge, grew up in Jamaica working alongside his father, renowned orchid breeder Claude Hamilton, before earning degrees in Environmental Horticulture from the University of Florida. Together, Phillip and Liz have built Bredren Orchids into one of Florida's premier specialty orchid nurseries, known for exceptional plants and decades of growing and breeding expertise. During the presentation, Phillip will discuss the species behind today's breeding trends, growing requirements, and what makes Broughtonia orchids so rewarding.

Phillip and Liz are offering pre-orders and you can save 10% on your purchase www.bredrenorchids.com.

Pre-order online for event pickup to access a larger plant selection and avoid shipping costs. Inventory is updated regularly, so order early and check back often. Select the correct event pickup option at checkout. Use code **SOUTHFLORIDA2026** for 10% off pre-orders placed by **midnight August 8**. Discount applies to pre-orders only and cannot be combined with other offers.

— **MARY JO FRICK**
Programs

INSIDE: Growing Orchids with Olivier, Keiki graduation Pg. 2; Support "Orchid Odyssey" Pg. 3; 10 Amazing Orchid Facts Pg. 4; Holiday Party Pg. 5; Visit to Finca Dracula 6-7; Orchid events Pg. 8; Visit to Naples Pg. 9



Try Something Different

As seen on the Youtube channel
"Orchid House Fort Lauderdale"

Growing Orchids With Olivier

I am going to start a series "Try Something Different" which will feature one or two species or genera that you may not have heard of but that are worth trying.

My first pick seemed obvious to me:
Renanthera



Renanthera philippinensis

That was probably my first mad crush of the orchid world. Renantheras belong to the Vanda alliance and have this profusion of scarlet red flowers that is simply astounding. Nobody will fail to notice a Renanthera in bloom. Their only shortcoming: they have no fragrance.

Good news: they are not hard to find. Less good news: the most famous species are really big plants. So, it is best to buy a hybrid with more compact species in the background if space is an issue. *Renanthera storiei* and *Ren. coccinea* are enormous plants but if you add *Ren. philippinensis* in the background, they become more manageable. *Ren. Kalsom* (*philippinensis* x *storiei*) is a common hybrid that is a great pick. *Ren. Brookie Chandler* (*R. storiei* x *Ren. monachica*) is another great pick.

If your hybrid contains *Ren. monachica* and *Ren. citrina* (which is yellow), those 2 species are much smaller and require less light. So, a hybrid with these should be a great pick. *Ren. imshootiana* is small but also grows cooler.

In terms of care, like a Vanda it needs high light, but even more so if you have the 2 large species in the background. They need to be watered daily and fertilized generously throughout the summer. Practically all Renantheras should work for South Florida (except *imshootiana* as a species)

Caularthron bicornutum



Caularthron bicornutum

Caularthron bicornutum used to be called *Diacrium bicornutum* but I don't think you will encounter that name on modern tags anymore.

This is not common in cultivation but can be found in the trade. It is a delightful flower that belongs in the Cattleya alliance and is grown pretty much the

same way as a Cattleya. It needs plenty of light. In nature the back bulbs hollow out and ants take residence but, in my experience, if you give it plenty of water in cultivation, the back bulbs remain plump.

The spike can be up to 20" tall and the flowers open sequentially with new flowers appearing at the top and the spike continues to grow. The spike is upright and does not need staking. The flowers are delicate and beautiful and have a citrusy fragrance. They bloom once a year in late winter or early spring. The blooming spurt usually lasts 2 months or more. I grow mine mounted and it needs watering every day except in winter when days are colder (below 75F). If potted, you need to water it plenty except over the winter when it must dry out between watering.

Olivier Turina became a FLOS member in 2014 and a board member in 2020. Send your growing questions to OlivierFTL@gmail.com.



Join us at our next FLOS meeting as we celebrate the accomplishments of our Keiki's! Our Keiki Club Graduation recognizes the hard work, curiosity, and growing orchid knowledge of our Keiki members. Come help us congratulate this year's graduates and encourage the the future of FLOS!

— **KAREN FLEISHER**
Keiki Chair

Support "Orchid Odyssey" - Our 67th Annual Orchid Show and Sale

Help us make this our biggest show yet

The countdown is on! On **January 8–10, 2027**, the **Fort Lauderdale Orchid Society** will present "**Orchid Odyssey**", our **67th Annual Orchid Show & Sale**, at the beautiful **Fort Lauderdale War Memorial Auditorium**. **We need every member to help make this year's show our most successful ever.**

Recognized as one of the nation's premier juried orchid shows, Orchid Odyssey will transform the War Memorial into a spectacular celebration of orchids, featuring breathtaking exhibits, world-class growers, educational opportunities, and thousands of extraordinary orchids available for purchase. Whether you're searching for your first orchid or your next award-winning specimen, you'll find an incredible selection from dozens of outstanding vendors.

Visitors can look forward to:

- Stunning orchid displays created by professional growers and orchid societies
- Thousands of orchids representing every major genus and growing style
- Free educational presentations for beginners and experienced growers alike
- Orchid supplies, books, artwork, gifts, and specialty items
- American Orchid Society judging
- Hourly prize drawings
- Food and refreshments available throughout the weekend

As FLOS's largest annual fundraiser, Orchid Odyssey directly supports our educational programs, conservation efforts, monthly meetings, library, community outreach, and the many activities our members enjoy throughout the year.

FLOS needs you

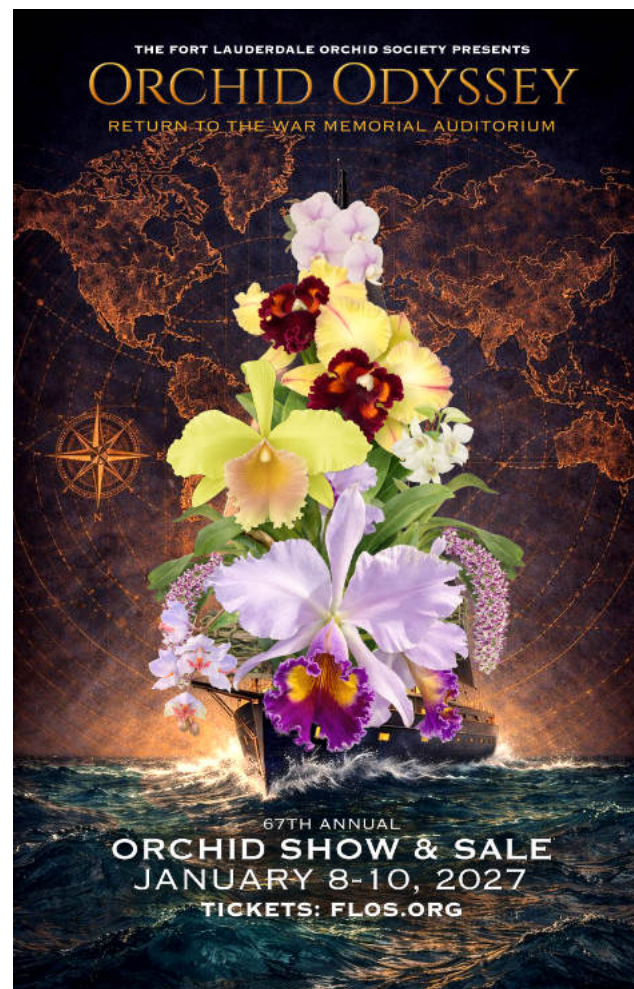
The success of our show depends on our members. Here's how you can make a difference:

- Share our event with friends, family, neighbors, and coworkers.
- Follow and share FLOS social media posts as they become available.
- Display show postcards and flyers at local businesses and community bulletin boards.
- Volunteer before, during, or after the show.
- Invite someone who has never attended an orchid show to experience the magic.

Together, we can introduce thousands of visitors to the fascinating world of orchids while showcasing the passion, knowledge, and hospitality that make the Fort Lauderdale Orchid Society so special.

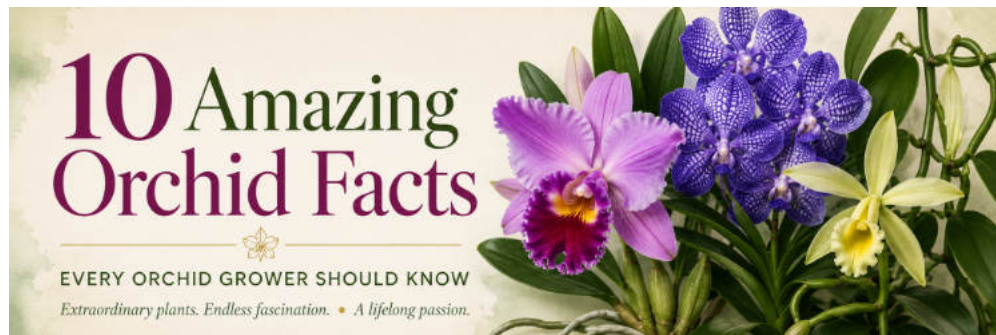
Mark your calendars now for **January 8–10, 2027**, and join us as we embark on an unforgettable **Orchid Odyssey!**

For show updates, tickets, volunteer opportunities, and additional information, visit the Fort Lauderdale Orchid Society show page: [FLOS Orchid Odyssey Show Information](https://www.flos.org)



Artwork by Gretchen Denton





Whether you've just purchased your first Phalaenopsis from a local garden center or you've been collecting orchids for decades, there's always something new to learn about the world's most extraordinary plant family. Here are ten fascinating facts that might surprise even experienced growers.

1. Orchids Are One of the Largest Plant Families on Earth

With nearly 30,000 naturally occurring species, orchids are one of the largest families of flowering plants. Add in the hundreds of thousands of registered hybrids created by breeders, and it's easy to see why there's truly an orchid for every collector. Scientists continue to discover new species in tropical forests around the world.

2. Orchids Grow Almost Everywhere

From the cloud forests in the mountains of Panama to the swamps of Florida, orchids have adapted to an incredible variety of environments. Native orchids can be found on every continent except Antarctica. Here in Florida alone, more than 100 native orchid species grow naturally in our forests and wetlands.

3. Most Orchids Don't Grow in Soil

Many of the orchids we grow, including Phalaenopsis, Cattleya, Vanda, and Dendrobium are epiphytes. In nature they grow attached to tree branches, using their roots to anchor themselves while collecting moisture and nutrients from rain, humid air, and decomposing organic matter. That's why orchid bark works much better than regular potting soil.

4. Orchid Seeds Are Almost Weightless

Orchid seeds are so tiny they look like dust. Unlike most plant seeds, they contain almost no stored food, relying instead on beneficial fungi to help them germinate. A single orchid seed pod can produce millions of seeds, increasing the chances that at least a few will find the perfect conditions to grow.

5. Orchid Flowers Perform a Twist Before They Bloom

As an orchid flower develops, it actually rotates about 180 degrees before opening. This twist places the specialized lower petal called the lip or labellum on the bottom, creating the perfect landing platform for pollinators. It's one of the many remarkable adaptations that make orchids unique.

6. Those Aerial Roots Are Supposed to Be There

If your Phalaenopsis has roots wandering outside the pot, don't panic! Aerial roots are completely natural. Covered with a spongy tissue called velamen, they absorb moisture directly from the air and can even photosynthesize. They're a sign of a healthy orchid, not a plant that needs a bigger pot.

7. Some Orchids Are Nature's Best Tricksters

Not every orchid rewards its pollinators with nectar. Some species have evolved elaborate deceptions, producing flowers that resemble female insects in appearance and even scent to lure males into attempting to mate with the flower. During the process, the insect unknowingly pollinates the orchid. Charles Darwin was fascinated by these remarkable evolutionary strategies.

8. Your Vanilla Extract Comes from an Orchid

The world's favorite flavoring comes from Vanilla planifolia, a climbing orchid native to Mexico and Central America. Vanilla is the only orchid grown as a major commercial crop, and every vanilla bean begins as an orchid flower that must be pollinated before producing its familiar seed pod.

9. Orchids Can Live for Decades

Many orchids outlive their owners. Given proper care, orchids can bloom year after year for decades. Some specimens passed down through families have been thriving for over 50 years. The flowers may fade, but the plant itself is far from finished, most orchids simply enter a resting period before producing another spectacular display.

10. Orchid Growing Is a Worldwide Passion

From neighborhood orchid societies like ours to major international shows, orchid enthusiasts span the globe. Breeders continually introduce exciting new hybrids while conservationists work to protect endangered wild species. Whether you're growing one orchid on a windowsill or maintaining a greenhouse full of rare species, you're part of a worldwide community united by a love of these remarkable plants.

Did You Know? The orchid family is so diverse that its members range from tiny flowers smaller than a dime to spectacular blooms nearly a foot across. They thrive in rainforests, mountains, deserts, swamps, and even South Florida backyards, proof that orchids are far more adaptable and resilient than their delicate appearance suggests.

Source: Adapted for the Fort Lauderdale Orchid Society from "10 Things You Didn't Know About Orchids," by Olivia Drake, Royal Horticultural Society, originally published July 12, 2023.

Submitted by
– **JOAN CONNORS**
Past President



Orchids in the Mist

A visit to Finca Dracula

EXPLORING PANAMA'S CLOUD FOREST ORCHID PARADISE

High in the mountains of Tierras Altas, Chiriquí, Panama, where cool temperatures and constant mist create ideal growing conditions, is home to one of the world's most extraordinary orchid destinations: Finca Dracula. Nestled 2,200 meters (7,200 feet) above sea level alongside the Chiriquí Grande River, this remarkable estate is home to thousands of rare and endemic orchids found nowhere else on Earth.

The story of Finca Dracula began in 1969, when Andrew Maduro purchased the remote property. At the time, a small Swiss-German house stood on the site, accessible only by horseback. Over the following decades, Mr. Maduro transformed the once-barren mountainside into a thriving botanical paradise. In 1984, he founded Finca Dracula, creating a sanctuary dedicated to preserving and cultivating some of the world's rarest cloud forest orchids.

Today, the collection boasts an astonishing 112 of the 120 known species of Dracula orchids, making it one of the most important orchid collections anywhere in the world.

I chose to spend my birthday immersed in this magical place, surrounded by orchids that many people will never have the opportunity to see in person. Our visit took us through nine spectacular gardens, a guided tour of the orchid collection, and lunch featuring ingredients grown on the property itself.

As we entered through the gate and followed the winding path toward the main building, we were greeted by walls covered in cool-growing Miltoniopsis, the beloved pansy orchids whose vibrant blooms seemed perfectly at home in the mountain air.

Before beginning our tour, we selected our lunch from the café menu, which was included with our tour package. Soon afterward, our guide arrived, and we stepped into a world unlike any other.



Katelyn Rigby and Gretchen Denton pose in front of a wall of Miltoniopsis orchids at Finca Dracula.

Among the first orchids we encountered was Anguloa clowesii, whose golden flowers release a fragrance surprisingly reminiscent of root beer. Throughout the gardens, spectacular species and hybrids appeared around every corner, each one adapted to the cool, humid environment of Panama's cloud forests.

One particularly fascinating plant was a Phragmipedium species whose remarkable pollination strategy relies on



Phragmipedium humboldtii

spiders. The flower's impossibly long petals continue to elongate even after the bloom opens, creating a pathway that allows spiders to climb into the flower and inadvertently transfer pollen.



Stanhopea oculata

The collection also included breathtaking specimens of Stanhopea tigrina, whose intricate spotted flowers and dramatic forms have made them favorites among orchid enthusiasts worldwide.

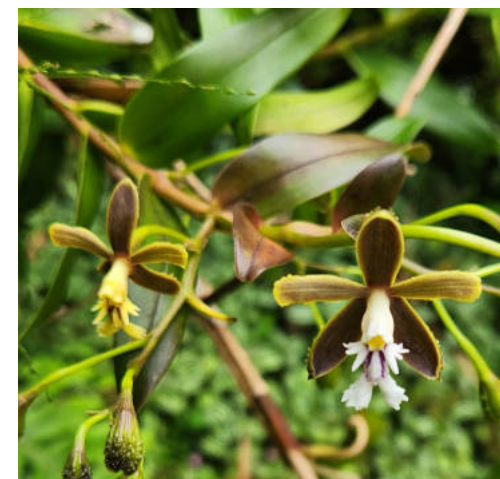
After our guided tour, we paused for lunch at the Dracula Café. Surrounded by hummingbirds darting among the gardens, I enjoyed a falafel wrap while Katelyn chose the aptly named "Van Helsing" burger. One of the highlights of the meal was learning that many of the ingredients had been grown right on the estate an extension of Finca Dracula's commitment to sustainability and stewardship.

Curious about how such a vast collection of orchids is maintained, I asked our hosts what treatments they routinely apply to the plants. Their answer surprised me: "None," they replied.

The orchids thrive simply because they are growing in the environment to which they are naturally adapted.

The cool temperatures, frequent mist, excellent air circulation, and rich biodiversity create a balanced

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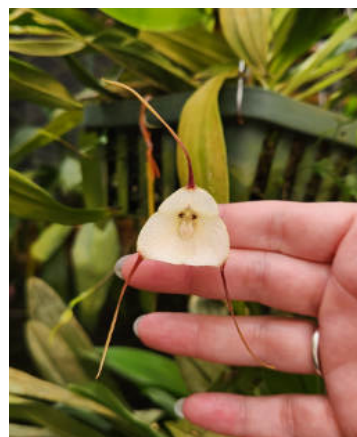


Epidendrum exasperatum



Dracula gorgona

Variations of the orchid genus Dracula



Dracula rezeckiana



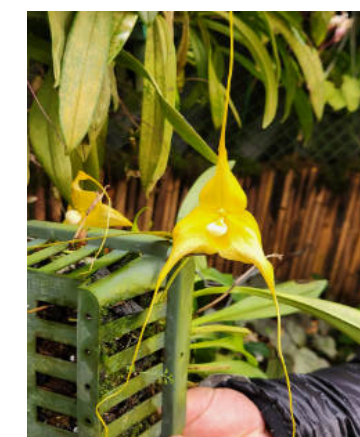
Dracula vampira



Dracula simia



Dracula bella



Masdevallia Haneczka



Prosthechea prismatocarpa



Scaphosepalum beluosum



Lipanthes fimbriata

Lets get ready to ramble!

The Fort Lauderdale Orchid Society is planning an autumn overnight ramble to visit orchid growers. September 26th-27th. Additional details will be announced soon. If you are interested please contact Grace Boston, who is organizing this amazing trip. graceboston2010@gmail.com



Proposed Itinerary

Time	Place
8 AM - Sept 26	Pickup at Catholic Health Services in Lauderdale Lakes
Noon - Sept 26	Arrive at Palmers Orchids in Bradenton Florida Orchid House in Mayakka City
6 PM Sept 26	Homewood Suites by Hilton Sarasota/Lakewood Ranch
9 AM - Sept 27	Adam's Orchids in Sarasota SunLand Orchids in Fort Myers
	The Garden Place in Fort Myers
6 PM - Sept 27	Return to Catholic Health Services in Lauderdale Lakes

AOS Corner



Featured This Month

The *Dendrobium* series by Jim Cootes continues this month with Part 20: *Dendrobium* section *Aporum*. This curious group of species is considered to be a separate genus, *Aporum*, by some taxonomists but

is currently accepted by Plants of the World Online

June AOS Magazine

as a section of an expanded genus *Dendrobium*. Regardless of where you put this group, these plants, with their unusual imbricated foliage, deserve a bigger presence in our collections. This month also concludes the series on *Cattleya violacea* Hybrids by Juraj Kojš with a lavishly illustrated survey of the hybrids of the 21st century.



FLOS offers many opportunities to get involved and make new friends by having fun networking with members and acquiring knowledge in the culture of orchids at the same time.

We can always use volunteers to help setting up meetings, assist with refreshments, and support Society events. We can always use extra hands. Please contact Roger Triplett if you would like to volunteer at r.triplett22@gmail.com



Orchid Society of the Palm Beaches and Mounts Botanical Garden
Presents:

Speakers Day 2026: The Great Orchid Extravaganza

Saturday August 8th, 2026 9:00AM-5:00PM
Mounts Botanical Garden West Palm Beach, FL.

Six Vendors and Five Educational Talks:

- Barefoot Orchids
- Lady Vanda Orchids
- Winterhaven Orchids
- Odom's Orchids
- Florida Suncost Orchids
- Green Barn Orchid Supplies

Orchid Exhibit and AOS Judging
Auctions
\$50 Members of OSPB, Mounts Botanical Garden and other Orchid Societies*
\$70 General Public

Includes Catered Lunch, Full Garden Admission and Premier Parking
Registration Closes on Saturday, August 1st 2026
To Register, visit the Mounts Botanical Garden Webpage

***Proof of Membership or/and Badge Required on Day of Event**



Finca Dracula Continued from pg 7

ecosystem where chemical interventions are largely unnecessary.

Finca Dracula is far more than an orchid collection; it is a living conservation project, preserving species that are increasingly threatened in the wild. For orchid lovers, it offers a rare glimpse into the extraordinary diversity of cloud forest orchids and serves as a reminder that sometimes the best way to grow an orchid is simply to understand where it comes from.

For me, spending my birthday among the Draculas, Anguloa, Phragmipediums, and Stanhopeas was an unforgettable experience, and one that reinforced just how magical the orchid world can be. For information on visiting Finca Dracula you can contact Gretchen at gretchen3d@yahoo.com.

– GRETCHEN DENTON
Newsletter Editor

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Fort Lauderdale Orchid Society
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Fort Lauderdale, FL 33338
www.flos.org

Meeting Info

- 2nd Monday of each month.
- Time 7:30 - 9:30 PM
- Location

Christ Lutheran Church Social Hall,
1955 East Oakland Park Blvd.
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33306
[Google Map](#)

FLOS Officers

President - Len Emory
1st Vice President - Mary Jo Frick (Programs)
2nd Vice President - Rich Ackerman (Membership Chair)
Recording Secretary - Doreen Christensen
Corresponding Secretary - Justine Vishnesky
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Social Media - Gretchen Denton
Plant Raffle Table - Francisco Lambert and Paul Gebrian
Webmaster - Luanne Betz

For a full list of FLOS Committees and Bios go to our website - [Committees List](#)



Our members brought an amazing spread of food for our July Potluck and Orchid Bingo night.