



AUGUST 2026

Welcome to the AOS Corner, your monthly newsletter for Representatives, Presidents, and Newsletter Editors. It is hard to believe we are stepping into the final five months of the year! The dog days of August are upon us—and no holidays to celebrate! We'll be winding up the summer months soon and it seems impossible that we are now fully entrenched in the last half of 2026. Hopefully our orchid collections are thriving despite the record-breaking heat! Please make sure to take many hydration and cooling breaks when working on your babies!

MESSAGE FROM THE AFFILIATED SOCIETIES COMMITTEE CHAIR

Have a question about our Committee? Want to get Involved with the AOS? Please send me an email at arod@aos.org and you are also welcome to join us at our next virtual meeting on August 13, 2026 @ 8 P.M. (Eastern Time) – Thank you for your time and support to the AOS!

Webinars - Coming Attractions!

REGISTRATION IS EASY www.aos.org/webinars
Cannot make it on the scheduled date and time? No need to worry.
Register now and view on your time schedule.
Send Your Greenhouse Chat Questions and Photos to: greenhousechat@aos.org
Greenhouse Chat webinars are recorded and summarized by topic for future viewing.

When	July 09, 2026 Thursday 8:30 pm EDT	SUMMER BREAK Review the Full Index of Recorded Webinars on the AOS Website	In Search Of Webinar Presenters
Topic	<i>FREE Live</i> Greenhouse Chat Orchid Q & A Answers to your questions about all things orchid. <i>Send in your Photos and Questions by July 07</i>	Filter by Members Only or All Viewers Select From Title - Choose Culture, Virtual Events, Judging, Pests and Diseases, Greenhouse Chats and More. Click Register or Watch Now.	Future Webinars You are invited to share your orchid knowledge with an enthusiastic audience of thousands. We can show you how. <i>Contact webinar organizer for details. greenhousechat@aos.org</i>
Presenter	Ron McHatton AOS Chief Education and Science Officer	The Experts Orchid Growers, Orchid Judges, Biologists, Scientists <i>and More.</i> Offering Culture Tips and Education.	Expert Growers, Hobby Growers, AOS Judges, Scientists, Biologists and YOU!



Webinar announcements are posted on the AOS website,
on Facebook and Instagram,
and in the AOS Corner of your Affiliated Society's newsletter.

Use the
WEBINAR
Display
Filter

MESSAGE FROM THE AMERICAN ORCHID SOCIETY PRESIDENT

Welcome, I keep talking about judging and awards, because a big part of what you see in Orchids magazine—especially in the annual April issue—is the direct result of what happens at affiliated society shows, monthly judging center judging, and even outreach judging.

One thing most of us can agree on is that the beauty of the orchids displayed in the magazine is exactly why we open it as soon as it arrives. If you read it online, you get a head start—but for those of us who are old school enough to want to hold something in our hands, that first flip through still feels special.

Every April issue also gives us a moment to celebrate the plants that received the Special Award in each category for the year covered by that issue. For example, the April 2026 edition showcases the winners from 2024.

If you're new to orchids, the Special Awards are endowed and named in honor of people who were special in the orchid world. I didn't have the pleasure of meeting Herbert Hager, but I know the genus *Phalaenopsis* was near and dear to his heart, because it's his name that graces the Special Award for *Phalaenopsis*. I chose to mention it because a *Phalaenopsis* is often the "gateway orchid" into the orchid-growing mania that affects—or at least charms—many of us judges. There are currently 25 endowed Special Awards for specific species, or hybrids, or intergeneric hybrids. I encourage you to re-read the April 2026 issue to learn about all of the Awards.

One of those awards, the Merritt W. Huntington Award—given for the most outstanding flower awarded a First Class Certificate (FCC)—can only recognize one flower. Well in 2025 there were 116 FCC awards. Carol Klonowski's article on the 2025 FCC winners in the April 2026 magazine, "Pointed Praise," highlights and includes pictures of all 116 FCC winners.

Another thing you might not realize is how long it takes for that recognition—and the award photos—to make it into the magazine. The April 2026 issue recognizes plants awarded in 2024. Part of the reason for the lag is that it takes time to enter all the awards, and then each Judging Center votes to select its best candidate for each Special Award category. Some categories have many choices, which makes the decision especially challenging, while other categories may have fewer plants grown, shown, and awarded. Often, a specific Judging Center has a particularly beneficial climate or particularly strong growers for a certain type of orchid. When fewer than about 15 plants are awarded in a Special Award category each year, all the plants in that category are added to the candidate pool so that judges around the country can see and vote on a variety of flowers.

There are two rounds in the selection process. In the first round, each Judging Center makes its selection from all its awards for that year and sends it to Laura Newton for compilation. Laura is the Director of Awards and Special Projects, she is integral to the Special Award process. In the second round, after the Special Award categories are populated by Laura, each active

judge—whether emeritus, senior, accredited, associate, or student—votes on each Special Award.

Once the votes are tallied, the results are presented each April, along with a picture of the winning orchid and a brief description that includes the award, the exhibitor, where the award was granted, and, of course, the photographer—Nile Dusdieker is the author of the 2026 article featuring all of the 2024 Special Award winners.

There are also awards especially for the grower. These are granted to the person who grew a plant that was awarded a CCM (Certificate of Cultural Merit) or a CCE (Certificate of Cultural Excellence). The “trick” to this kind of award is that the plant itself has to be as spectacular as the flowers—it’s not enough to have beautiful blooms. This is truly one of the highest honors one can receive.

If you see a plant with a tag that has AM/CCM/AOS, that means it has both a quality award and a cultural award. When you spot a plant on the vendor bench at a show, or at your society auction, with multiple awards shown on the tag snag it. It’s a great plant to acquire—because it should grow really well. Happy growing!

KEEP YOUR SOCIETY INFO CURRENT ONLINE...

Please visit our webpage with your Society Member # and Login to Update Contacts, Meeting and Show Dates

If you have any issues accessing your Society Member page or need help accessing, please send an email to grahamramsey.aos@gmail.com

LOOKING FOR AOS MEMBER VOICES...

PLEASE SHARE WITH YOUR SOCIETY MEMBERS

The AOS would be grateful if you would take 3-4 minutes of your time to let us know what you’re most interested in as part of your AOS membership.

Click [here](#) to take a brief survey.



ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE WAY TO GROW OUR ORCHIDS

BY JILL BLAKE SMITH

Last month we included an article about growing orchids in cork coozies and if you've decided to try this growing method, we wish you good luck and humbly request that you give us a report on how it's working for you! Although we all grow our orchids in pots, baskets, or on mounts, there are alternative ways to grow and display our beauties. These unusual and sometimes experimental methods make it more interesting and yes, fun!

There are Wardian Cases, attributed to Nathaniel Ward back in the 1800's, which were decorative and often ornate glass enclosed containers used for both displays and transporting plants. These cases eventually morphed into what we generally refer to today as terrariums. Terrariums can be open at the top or completely closed. Flowering plants like succulents and orchids can grow surrounded by mosses and ferns to replicate a tropical environment.



One of our top orchid growers in the Fort Lauderdale Orchid Society is Vicki Hallock and she loves “all things tiny!” She, herself, is small in stature and she loves to grow little bitty orchids. In the past few years as she looked into growing in terrariums and creating stunning designs with suitable plants, she discovered the concept of the biOrb. BiOrbs are a special type of pricey terrarium with all the bells and whistles— a 360 degree covered terrarium with automated humidity, a mister, LED lighting and adjustable air flow created by tiny fans. As her minute orchids bloom on a fence behind her home, she moves them into one of her several biOrbs, perfectly placed to complete the tropical design. Vicki also prefers to choose species orchids of the genera Lepanthes, Grosourdyia, Schoenorchis, Specklinia, Platystele. With her extreme patience and good tweezers, she might also incorporate miniature ornamental figurines, a park bench, a bunny during the Easter season, a Santa at Christmas, a tiny sun dial—Vicki even has a diminutive dragon as well as an alligator! Pieces of bark or wood with ferns and moss also give an outdoorsy feel to the display. These small touches add an air of whimsy to the beautiful mini rain forest she has created in the biOrb. Vicki's work is most appreciated by our AOS judges! Her terrariums have won five Artistic Certificates as well as Best in Show at the Flamingo Gardens Orchid Society Show.

BiOrbs are becoming more and more popular, especially with folks who prefer to grow indoors and with those who enjoy “minis.” But keep in mind, patience and creativity are musts. If you seem to be in a growing rut with the same old same old, maybe it's time to give your attention to something different! Try a biOrb!



SHARE YOUR IDEAS & STORIES

YOUR GREAT IDEAS

Has your Society created ways to keep your members engaged and having them coming back for more? Do you have a fun fact you would like us to share? We would like to hear from you.

YOUR BLUNDERS

Do you have a recurring problem? Share your mishaps as well! Your lessons can help others avoid similar mistakes. Please email us your stories to arod@aos.org. If you wish your story to remain anonymous, we will be more than happy to keep it so.

AFFILIATED SOCIETIES COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Affiliated Societies Committee is looking for team members. Help us continue to build relationships and resources for all the American Orchid Society Affiliates. Please send an email to arod@aos.org if you are interested in joining us virtually at our August 13, 2026 Meeting @ 8 P.M (Eastern Time).

THANK YOU FOR READING!

Please remember to include the Affiliated Societies Committee (affiliated_societies@aos.org) to your newsletter distribution. We would like to know what you are doing. Help us help everyone by sending us your great ideas, recurring problems and your blunders; we all need that little inspiration in our orchid journey. If you have something to share, or there is something you would like to read about, please let us hear from you.

The AOS Corner is for society representatives and newsletter editors. Orchid societies are welcome to reproduce the AOS Corner completely, or in part, in their society publications. We encourage use of [the AOS website](#) by all members.

VISIT US ON FACEBOOK @

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/AffiliatedSocietiesOfTheAOS>