

Platinum Coast Orchid Society

The Rhizome

May 2026

May President's Message

Well, it's finally here! Our 61st annual orchid show "Wild About Orchids". Lots of work but also lots of fun. Your fellow society members will now become your 'friends' and your knowledge of all things orchid will increase exponentially. It's a great time to be an orchid hobbyist!

Don't forget to mingle with the vendors. Be sure to ask them questions about their orchids like how to grow them, what media they use, are they easy or hard to grow, and what do you recommend? They are all very knowledgeable about their plants and you might be surprised at how different some of the answers might be, depending upon their nursery growing conditions. This will help you decide what approach to take for your particular backyard microcosm.

Also, don't be shy about helping our visitors with their questions. You should have on a PCOS shirt, show apron, or at least your name badge so you'll be easy to recognize. If you don't know the answer to their question, you will at least know the best way to find the answer and learn in the process.

Hopefully everyone will consider entering a plant for judging. Sometimes we don't have much blooming at the time of the show. Just one entry will give you a glimpse about registration, judging, and the fun/excitement when you win a trophy or ribbon. Competition can be healthy so don't be shy. It's just another way to learn about the orchids you are growing.

I hope to see everyone there with smiles on their faces. Enjoy the experience!

Laura



CALENDAR—SAVE THE DATES

Friday-Sunday, May 1-3.
PCOS Orchid Show.

Wednesday, May 13th, 6pm.
Board Meeting.

Wednesday, May 13th, 7pm.
General Meeting.

SUNSHINE

It is with great pleasure I can say Witha Lacuesta is recovering well since her knee replacement. Rehabilitation is coming along well. She is looking forward to the show in May.

Violet Smith was in a car crash while on her way to our April Meeting. She's now home from Holmes Hospital and recovering from her injuries with the help of her husband.

Please let me know if there is a PCOS Member that is recovering from surgery or illness or could use a little Sunshine. Please share info that the member is comfortable being shared.

You can call me or text me at 330-715-2874.

Thanks so much. Mary Ellen Jelen.

MAY SPEAKER

I want to introduce our May speaker Ms. Emily Jefferson. The topic of her lecture will be a presentation of Orchid Island's problems with the history of poaching of native orchids, and what is being done to prevent further damage along with the efforts to restore what has been lost.



She began her education in 2020 attending University of Central Florida in the Biology department. She held various positions including undergraduate learning assistant, zoology teaching assistant and tutor, and as a scientific illustrator. She earned her BS. in Ecology, Evolution and Conservation Biology in 2024. She is pursuing her PHD. in environmental studies at Florida International University in Miami under the guidance of Dr. Hong Liu.

In her spare time over the last couple of summers she worked with our club member Mark Walters at Orchid Trail Orchid Nursery.

For about a month last summer she interned at Koo Botanical Conservation Center and on Orchid Island in Taiwan. The photo below shows Emily performing some of her research on the Island.



Tom Dixon



Photos by Jennifer Starr.

Plant forum

April 8th



Photos by Jennifer Starr



MAY BIRTHDAYS

- JoAnn Amos
- Karen Andreas
- Erin Boden
- Phyllis Gautreaux
- Barbara Naylor
- Peter Pancoast
- Ruth Quillian
- Alan Sculley
- Michael Starr
- Barbara Venuto

MAY BIRTHDAY Jo Ann Amos

I am Jo Ann Amos aka "The Raffle Ticket Lady". I am the May Birthday Member.



I have been a member of PCOS for over 23 years. I love growing cattleyas and dendrobiums and have learned so much at our meetings and from the speakers we have. As an active member I have held different offices and volunteered for EVERY show.

The biggest BONUS through the years has been all the generous and sharing members of this society.

See you at the next meeting.



MEMBER PLANTS FOR SALE



Photos by Jennifer Starr



NICHE DEMONSTRATION

Karen Chandler showing Color Wheel.



Karen giving Niche talk.

Below left: Erin Boden and Mike Starr setting up Niche.

Below. Completed Niche close up.

Captions and photos by Jennifer Starr.



IT'S CATASETUM SEASON!

We've had Fred Clarke from Sunset Valley Orchids (SVO) speak at our society several times about growing catasetums. Did you know he sends out a monthly newsletter with lots of wonderful information on how to grow these interesting plants? Here's some of his tips for April-May catasetum care.

- Catasetums grow well in our area because they like a warm, wet summer followed by a dry, cooler winter.
- In the spring, they begin growing and developing a new root system that will support them for the whole season.
- It is important to repot catasetums in the spring. With the first signs of new growth the plants should still be dormant and dry. Repot while the old media is still dry.
- Fred recommends using AAA sphagnum moss from New Zealand. Dampen it so water does not drip when you squeeze it. Leave an air space beneath the moss and the bottom of the pot that will help with drainage.
- Once new growth appears, repotting will enable the new roots that begin 2-3 weeks later to grow directly into the new media. This will avoid damaging the new roots which can seriously limit the ability of the plant to grow and flourish.
- Most orchids do not like to be over potted so plan to under pot your catasetum. SVO likes to give new growth space for 2 years of growing.
- Wait to water the plants until the new roots are 3-6 inches long. Start by using a little water and gradually increase the amount and frequency to mimic the rainy season in nature.
- The best time to divide catasetums is when new growth begins. It is best to divide the plant into pieces no smaller than two or three pseudobulbs.

For more detailed information, check out Fred's website at sunsetvalleyorchids.com. Click on Mailing List to signup for his monthly newsletter.



INSTRUCTIONS
ON FILLING OUT
CLASSIFICATION
FORMS
FOR SHOW.



Photos by Jennifer Starr



American Orchid Society
Education. Conservation. Research.
Affiliated Society

UPCOMING SHOWS

Platinum Coast Orchid Society. "Wild About Orchids Show. May 1-3, Kiwanis Park, Merritt Island.

Volusia County Orchid Society. Mother's Day Orchid Show and Sale. May 9-10, 2026. Volusia County Fairgrounds. DeLand.

Central Florida Orchid Society. "Bewitched by Orchids" May 22-23, 2026. FL National Guard Armory. Orlando.

PCOS is an affiliate of the **American Orchid Society (AOS)**. There's an abundance of information on the AOS website. Please visit www.aos.org for articles, advice on growing orchids, and lots of free information.

Ask Margaret Croucher for an application if you're interested in joining.

For all current members, remember that your renewal notice will arrive in the Orchid Magazine prior to your month of renewal.

www.aos.org

FOR AOS MEMBERS: The AOS also has a presence on Facebook. There is a [group](#) with close to 65,000 members, and a [page](#). Each allows you to post photographs and ask questions about your orchids. The group is the most active of the two, and group members usually respond quickly to posts. The page is parallel to the AOS Instagram account. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/52597049839> <https://www.facebook.com/AmericanOrchidSociety>

Volusia County Orchid Show

PCOS will be setting up a display at the Volusia County Orchid Society's show which takes place on Mother's Day weekend. Our team can use extra help from our members. We need lots of blooming orchids, and one nice plant can make a big difference in overall quality of the display. We bring our own plants and borrow plants from other members too. Arranging and displaying orchids needs an artistic touch which I don't have, so other ideas are helpful.

Our PCOS display at Volusia last year won an AOS Award. Our display at the Central Florida Show in June was awarded a first-place ribbon among society displays. Competition is tough between Jacksonville, Gainesville, Central Florida and Volusia, and no matter how we place, the joy comes from being around like-minded orchid lovers and seeing the amazing flowers and displays at each show.

The show theme is "Orchids Under the Big Top". Our team always enjoys creating interesting props to recognize the theme, and we have received several "Best Theme" awards too.

Setup for Volusia will be Friday May 8th at 9:00 AM at the Hester Building at the Volusia County Fairgrounds. Takedown of the display is on Sunday May 10th at 4:00 PM. Mileage will be reimbursed for our team members. This is a great way to increase your knowledge of orchids, so please contact Margaret Croucher at mpcroucher@att.net if you are interested in participating or need additional information.

AMENDING PCOS BY-LAWS

The PCOS Board approved a proposed amendment to the by-laws allowing our annual elections to be voted by affirmation under specific conditions. This would, in essence, change voting from written ballot to voice approval. The proposed amendment is underlined and will be voted upon at our May 13, 2026 General Meeting. Please contact any Board member if you have a question about this amendment.

Article V: Organization

Section 4: Regular election of officers shall be in November of each year. At the regular August meeting, a Nominating Committee of three members shall be elected by the members at large. The nominating committee shall present a list of one candidate for each office at the regular September meeting, it having first been ascertained that the candidates are qualified and willing to serve if elected.

At the regular November meeting, nominations may be made from the floor in addition to the names presented by the Nominating Committee. The election shall be by ballot and a simple majority shall elect. If no additional nominations are made from the floor for an elected position and there is only one candidate for an elected position, the presiding officer may declare the candidate elected by affirmation.

The regular meeting in January shall be the annual meeting for installation of officers and for the reading of written reports of all officers and committee chairman for the closing year, at the discretion of the President.

Installation of officers shall be conducted, as appropriate, by an installing officer appointed by the President.



2026 PCOS OFFICERS

PRESIDENT Laura Blackmon

VICE PRESIDENT Tom Dixon

TREASURER Charis Gaines

SECRETARY Tammy Cheng

DIRECTORS

Lois Fletcher (2026)

Wanda Morales (2026)

Karen Chandler (2026-27)

Bruce Tatje (2026-27)

PAST PRESIDENT Margaret Croucher

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

PLANT FORUM

Ed Kidder

MEMBERSHIP

Margaret Smith

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Elizabeth Bishop

SUNSHINE

Mary Ellen Jellen

GREETERS

Margaret Smith & Jennifer Starr

AOS LIAISON

Margaret Croucher

RAFFLE

JoAnn Amos

PUBLICITY

Erin Boden

WEBMASTER

Bill Jelen

AUDIO

Scott Anderson

REFRESHMENTS

Mike Starr

SHOW CHAIRMAN

Carolyn Anderson

BE PART OF THE TEAM

PCOS Mailing Address:

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Merritt Island, FL 32954

Website: <https://PlatinumCoastOrchidSociety.org/>

FaceBook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/166627883901964>