SPOKANE ORCHID SOCIETY
Since 1987

Oct. 2026



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President's Thoughts

Looks like it's time to bring in those outside orchids (except some Cymbidiums) and other plants prior to the first freeze; I'll be doing this too over the next few days. My shade cloths will be coming down and stored for the winter. Much to do!

The **Annual Auction** at my home was a fun event! There weren't as many orchids as we have had in the past, but the bidding and excitement of getting new orchids were just as great as past times. Participation was really good, except, I did not see as many newer members as I expected. For future events like this, members and friends are always invited, and you do not need to donate orchids if you have none. Many of you missed out on beautiful additions to your collections at a very reasonable price. Most went for $15-$25. Also, just about all who were there agreed liking this venue and having the auction during the day: more time to complete the auction, to view the one being sold, and discuss the care of that orchid purchased. We will look into this for next year. Overall, VERY SUCCESSFUL!

Additionally, we will be covering **'Dividing Orchids'** at the October meeting. You, who have orchids to divide, should be doing this soon in sale preparation for April's Orchid Show.

Michael from **Mizu Mori** will be at the November meeting with orchids and companion plants for sale. He specializes in Jewel orchids and was a vendor at last year's show. It will be a treat for all!

We still need volunteers for Treasurer, Co-secretary, and Member-at-Large.

See you Wednesday, October 14th.

Jim

SOS 2026 Calendar of Events

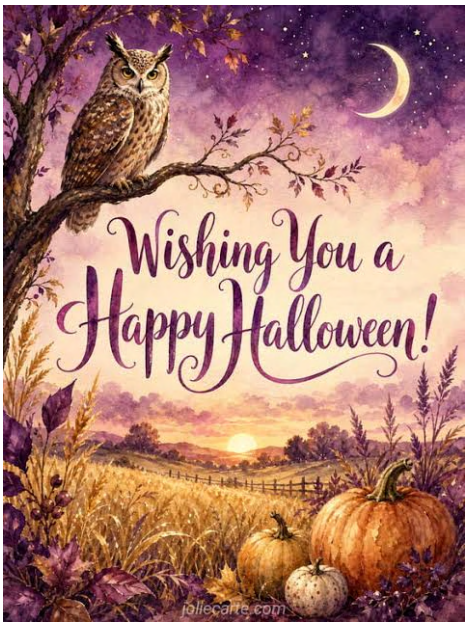
Date	Event	Time/Location
Wednesday, October 14, 2026	SOS General Meeting Refreshments: Ken Scott & Scott Rettenmund	5:30 PM Social time 6:00 PM Meeting start Manito Park Mtg. Room
Wednesday, November 11, 2026	SOS General Meeting & Board Elections Refreshemnts: Linda Drummond & Erin Nelson	5:30 pm Social Time 6:00 PM Meeting start Manito Park Mtg. Room

October & November 2026 Events

The October meeting will include a Presentation/Demonstration about how to divide orchids. Now would be a good time to think about making some divisions and getting them established in order to sell them at the April Orchid Show.

The November meeting will include a presentation by Michael Meechan of Mizu Mori, a company that specializes in terrarium plants, including jewel orchids.

We will also have an election at the November meeting to elect a new Treasurer, Co-Secretary and a “member at large” on the board to fill Ernie’s vacant position.



The SOS Christmas Party has been *tentatively* scheduled for Saturday, December 5th at the home of Kathy & Chris O’Neill.

Thanks for Hosting!

AOS CORNER with Harvey

For all of you who like to take pictures of your orchids, and those of you going to Ecuador to find orchids, there will be a seminar put on by AOS titled, “How to Take Orchid Photography” by Award Winning Photographer Wes Newton. He will share photography tips, techniques, and insights from his collection of over 2,400 AOS photographs. It will take place on Tuesday, October 13, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. PDT. Go to the AOS website for more information.

The live version of the October Greenhouse Chat has already happened, but you can see a recording of it by going to the AOS.org website. Watching the recording is nice because one can fast forward or skip through sections that are of no interest. All, including those who are not AOS members, can access this event.

AOS has recently updated the website section called “Seasonal Orchid Care” by adding a section titled “Orchid Cultural Calendar”. This section includes seasonal advice for orchid care based on the region you are in. This web page and the new documents are available to all, including those who are not AOS Members.

Tidbit: When trimming old stalks, stems, or leaves near the center of an orchid plant, keep the scissors or nipper closed as you push it into the center. Only open the cutter when you have reached the item to be cut. That way, you will not include a living leaf or stem in the cutter and inadvertently cut it off as you cut the dead stem. It’s really a bummer when you happen to snip a spike you have waited all year to grow.

Harvey

(Pictured below is a *Paphiopedilum* Gratrixianum (Lynn X Margaux HCC/AOS from Harvey’s Greenhouse)



Announcement

It’s now official - the 2027 Spokane Orchid Society Orchid Show will be held on:

April 10-11, 2027

Wth set-up day on April 9th at the Spokane Community College Lair

Orchid Tips and Information for New Growers

Cool Growing Orchids are Cool, but Can You Grow Them?

Source: Waldor Orchids

Several SOS members attended the September 13th Open House at Ernaldo's greenhouse. Thank you Ernaldo for opening up your greenhouse to Orchid Society members who have been curious about how you successfully specialize in growing cool to cold temperature orchids. If you missed this event, here is a photo of Ernaldo's greenhouse that is customized for cool-growers and some information from Waldor Orchids about how to grow cold temperature species.



Cool-growing orchids are a rewarding group of plants for growers who can maintain lower temperatures and high humidity. These orchids, native to cloud forests and cooler regions, require specific care to thrive.Cool-growing orchids are a favorite for enthusiasts who enjoy a bit of a chill in the air. These orchids, thriving in temperatures ranging from 50–70°F, include stunning varieties like **Masdevallias**, **Odontoglossums**, **Cymbidiums**, and **Paphiopedilums**. Known for their unique forms and vibrant blooms, these plants bring diversity to any collection.

Types of Cool-Growing Orchids:

Masdevallias: Compact orchids with striking triangular flowers, perfect for terrariums.
Odontoglossums: Featuring intricate patterns and rich colors, they add elegance to any orchid setup.
Cymbidiums: Known for long flower spikes, they bloom during fall and winter.
Paphiopedilums: With their slipper-shaped flowers, these orchids offer exotic beauty.

1. Light Requirements

Cool-growing orchids prefer bright, but filtered or indirect light. Direct sunlight can scorch their leaves, so east-facing windows or shaded greenhouses are ideal. Masdevallias and Odontoglossums, for example, thrive in low to medium light, while Cymbidiums and some Paphiopedilums need brighter conditions.

Tip: Use shade covers to filter sunlight or grow lights if natural light is too bright.

2. Temperature

These orchids thrive in temperatures ranging from 50–70°F (10–21°C). Many benefit from a noticeable temperature drop at night to encourage blooming. For example:

Masdevallias: Prefer consistent cool temperatures.
Cymbidiums: Require cooler nights, especially during the fall, to trigger flowering.

Tip: Place plants outdoors in cooler weather (but avoid frost) to mimic their natural environment.

Note: Ernaldo uses a home-made swamp cooler to keep his greenhouse below 75 degrees in the summer months and only heats his greenhouse to the mid-fifties in the winter months. Also notice the woodchips piled around the outside of the greenhouse in the photo on page 4, which help keep the greenhouse cool in summer and help to hold heat in winter. There is a photo of his home-made swamp cooler on page 6.



Swamp Cooler along the back wall of Ernaldo's cool temperature greenhouse is pictured on the left.

3. Watering

Cool-growing orchids prefer consistent moisture but need well-draining media to avoid waterlogged roots. Water frequency depends on the season:

- Water more frequently during active growth.
- Reduce watering during dormancy or cooler months.

Tip: Use rainwater or distilled water, as many cool-growing orchids are sensitive to hard water and salts.

4. Humidity

Humidity levels of 50–70% are critical. In dry climates, increase humidity by:

- Using a humidifier.
- Placing orchids on a humidity tray filled with pebbles and water.
- Grouping plants together to create a microclimate.

Tip: Ensure good airflow to prevent fungal infections.

5. POTTING MEDIA AND REPOTTING

Cool-growers need an open, airy medium like bark, sphagnum moss, or a mix of both. Repot every 1–2 years or when the medium begins to break down.

Masdevallias: Do well with added sphagnum moss for moisture retention.
Cymbidiums: Benefit from a mix of bark, perlite, and charcoal.

6. Fertilizing
Use a balanced orchid fertilizer (20-20-20 or similar) diluted to half strength. Feed every two weeks during the growing season and reduce feeding during dormancy.

For Cymbidiums: Switch to a bloom-boosting fertilizer (high in phosphorus and potassium) as spikes form.
Tip: Flush the medium monthly with plain water to remove salt buildup.

7. Pests and Diseases
Watch for pests like mealybugs, spider mites, and aphids. Treat infestations early with insecticidal soap or neem oil. Prevent fungal issues by:

Avoiding overhead watering.
Ensuring good airflow.
Tip: Regularly clean leaves and remove dead material from pots.

8. Blooming and Dormancy
Some cool-growers, like Cymbidiums, require a seasonal dormancy period with reduced watering and feeding. Others, like Masdevallias, bloom continuously with proper care.

Tip: Mimic seasonal changes in light and temperature to encourage blooms.

Cool-growing orchids, while requiring specific conditions, reward growers with exquisite blooms and unique foliage.



Dracula lotax



Bipinnula montana

Orchid Show & Tell



Paphiopedilum spicerianum
Grower: Suzanne Sawyer



Maxillaria schunkeana
Grower: Suzanne Sawyer



Perreira Tong Tan Keng Yam *& Ascda.*
Ladda Gold (top)
Grower: Mem Weisbeck



Bulbophyllum Lion King
Grower: Mem Weisbeck

Orchid Show & Tell



Phal. KV Beauty
Grower: Mem Weisbeck



Paphiopedilum henryanum
Grower: Mem Weisbeck



Brassavola Jairek Treasure
'Kakapo Bird"
Grower: Mem Weisbeck



Brassavola hybrid (NOID)
Grower: Mem Weisbeck



We held the annual SOS Orchid Auction at Jim's place on October 3rd. Thank you Jim for hosting this event in your shop and for providing this photo of our Auctioneer in action. Thank you to everyone who donated orchids to make this fundraiser a success.

Erin was a great auctioneer and Stevie assisted by showing orchid flower photos on her phone and Michele was an orchid delivery elf. Everybody liked this venue as it provided a lot of space and we were not rushed. Let Jim and the Board Members know if you prefer this format as we might make this happen every year.



Orchid of the Month

Dracula vampira

This seemed like a good species for the October newsletter, as Halloween falls in October and this orchid looks like it is in a Halloween costume. It grows in the cloud forests of Ecuador, where several SOS members will be visiting in October. Maybe we will see some truly wild *Dracula* species while in Ecuador.

The genus *Dracula* means “little dragon” which comes from the long, fang-like tips on the flower petals.



Dracula vampira is a cool to cold growing species that needs high humidity that mimics the cloud forests of the high montains of Ecuador. It is an epiphyte that is usually found near the base of trees near the leaf litter. It prefers daytime temperatures no warmer that the mid 70’s and likes a night time temperature in the low to mid 50”s. The difference in day and night temperatures will help to induce blooming.

This species grows best in very low light levels that is close to full shade. Any sunlight must be highly filtered and disperesed as direct sun will scorch the leaves. They grow best in hanging baskets that contain a mix of small bark, small charcoal and some chopped up sphagnum to hold moisture.



Provide weekly/weakly fertilizer and ample water during the summer months and during active growth. Slightly reduce water and fertilizer in the winter, but do not give this species a dry rest, as they need constant moisture.

They can bloom at any time of the year and produce a fairly large flower relative to the size of the plant. The flowers produce an earthy fragrance that mimics rotting mushrooms. The fragrance attracts gnats and fruit flies which are the primary pollinators.

Dracula orchids are also called monkey-face orchids.

Orchid Trivia & Fun Facts

Who is the Pollinator of the Mysterious Ghost Orchid?

Source: Audubon.org





In 2019, Mac Stone and Peter Houlihan were in a treetop in Audubon's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary hoping to take a history-making photograph. They got it. It just wasn't the photo they expected.

Stone and Houlihan had hoped to take the very first photo of a giant sphinx moth pollinating the rare and endangered ghost orchid – something scientists have long suspected happens, but something that has never been photographed. Instead, the two National Geographic explorers got a picture of a fig sphinx moth (*Pachylia ficus)* doing the pollinating. And they also photographed the giant sphinx moth (*Cocytius antaeus*) visiting the ghost orchid (*Dendrophylax lindenii*) to feed, but not necessarily functioning as a pollinator.

During the same summer, just east of Corkscrew, photographer Carlton Ward Jr. was undertaking a parallel effort in the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge. His photographs also produced evidence of various moth species visiting and pollinating ghost orchids.

It's now time to update the longstanding hypothesis that only the giant sphinx moth could pollinate the ghost. Moths with shorter tongues can function as pollinators, and may actually be more effective and reliable than the long-tongued giant sphinx.