



Spokane Orchid Society Newsletter

March 2026

Board Members:

- * President: Jim Pearce
- * Vice President: Erin Nelson
- * Secretary : Savannah Brommer & Edwin Weber
- * Treasurer: Jo E. Cook
- * Show Chairperson: Linda Drummond
- * AOS Representative: Harvey Singleton
- * Newsletter Editor: Suzanne Sawyer
- * Member at Large: Donna Foreman
- * Member at Large: Ernie Smith

Committee Chairs:

- * Librarian: Scott Rettenmund
- * Refreshments: Jeanne McKinnie

Email:

Email: sosorchidsociety@gmail.com

Newsletter:

spokane.orchid.newsletter@gmail.com

President's Thoughts

IT'S SHOWTIME! & our meetings start at 6:00 pm

Hopefully many of you have already identified those orchids which may be "show ready" IN LESS THAN 1 WEEK! All of you should have received the registration package and have begun filling it out. If not LET ME KNOW, and I will send one to you ASAP. Send questions to me or bring them to the meeting on March 11. Please pay annual dues if not already done.

The meeting will be all about the show. I won't mind if there are only a few, or no, Snow 'n Tell orchids, as you are holding them for the show. You can begin bringing orchids to the show as early as 11am on Friday, March 13th. If for some reason you are not able to get your orchids to the college on Friday, bring them to the meeting, with your completed registration, and I will get them there. If you still have difficulty, call me. If you have a decorative pot that you want to use, put your name on the bottom and your orchid in it. If not, just put your name on the bottom of the orchid pot.

This is our time to shine and show others how well we grow our orchids in Spokane and the surrounding areas. If you have an orchid in bloom, I want it in the show, If you believe that it's questionable, bring it Friday or to the meeting. and together, we will make a determination of its acceptance.

Jim

PS: If you feel ill when we have our monthly meetings, please stay home as a courtesy to others.

SOS March 2026 Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Time/Location
March 11, 2026	* Orchid Society General Meeting Refreshments: Ernie Smith & Penny G.	5:30 PM: Social Time 6:00 PM: Meeting starts Manito Park Meeting Room * Need to leave Bldg. by 8 PM
March 13, 2026	Set-up for SOS Orchid Show at Spokane Community College	Need Volunteers from 10 am until early evening at the SCC Lair
March 14 -15, 2026	Spokane Orchid Society Orchid Show!	Spokane Community College Student Lair Bldg.

* Manito Park now requires us to be cleaned up and out of the building by 8 PM sharp.

Orchid Show News From Linda

Less than a week until our show! I'm hoping you all have great plants to enter and some good plants to sell at the Society Marketplace table.

There are a few spots left for volunteers. Please email me if you have a preference or sign up at the meeting on Wednesday.

We are setting up early this year starting at 10 am. The society will pay for your parking. Easiest is to go online and register your car or we will provide change for the meter.

Lunch will be served on Friday. We decided to have a picnic since we will be surrounded by beautiful flowers. Plan on having fried chicken and lots of camaraderie.

See you at the meeting Wednesday, March 11th.

Linda

AOS CORNER with Harvey

There are few things more related to the American Orchid Society than orchid growers presenting their orchids at an orchid show. With our SOS Show coming up soon, we need to be prepared to make the most of it, particularly as we present and sell our orchids at the Member Table. Much was said in the February AOS Corner about understanding the perspective of the potential customer. Please go back and review that information.

Most people underprice their plants. Plus, we often don't recognize the amount of inflation that has happened over the past year. Prices on-line seem to mostly run from \$20 to \$100, plus shipping of \$10 to \$25. Then, when you receive a plant you ordered, you realize how small the plant really is and that it will be one to several years before the plant will be blooming size. The message is to not underprice your plants at the Member Table. If they don't sell the first day, with your permission we can always have a 10%, 20%, 30% or whatever special, and people love getting specials. There are any number of enticements we can do to help a sale. For example, last year I gave some people a small back-bulb plant if they bought a primary plant.

There are some mechanics that need to be followed at the Member Table so transactions can go smoothly - and for you to receive your money.

1. All plants must be priced in full dollar amounts, like \$21, \$46, etc. A plant priced at an uneven dollar, like \$14.95, will be sold at \$14.
2. Spokane Orchid Society receives 15% of all sales, regardless of whether the sale is a plant, media, accessories, or other.
3. Every plant must have 2 tags. You may want to add an additional tag or paper print-out that can be put under the pot that tells about the plant, growing information, etc.
4. One tag is to be stuck to the pot with the sell price and your initials. Adding your initials to this sticker helps reduce errors if there is any mixup during payment. It stays with the plant on the pot with the customer after the sale. We will provide stickers for you at the Show.
5. The second tag is a stick, stuck into the plant media. It must have your first name and last initial, the sell price, and the plant name. We will provide wooden sticks that you can write on. This stick goes to the payment station with the plant and is a record of the sale so you get paid. Every effort, and I mean every effort, will be made to make sure that money for plants sold goes to the right person. When you pick up your plants after the Show, you may want to have a list of the plants you brought and note which ones are gone. During the weeks after the Show everything will be tallied. People will receive their money for plants sold at the April SOS meeting.

(Continued on the next page)

AOS Corner with Harvey Continued

6. Last year members reserved plants before the Show by putting them under the Member Table and paid later. That did not work well at all. There were lots of plants, no-one knew who reserved them, there were issues with payment, and they got mixed up with inventory that was in reserve. This year, if you want to buy a plant before the Show opens, set it aside with Jo or Annette, pay for it when the till opens, and move the plant to the Plant Hotel. If you didn't bring any money, borrow from someone else. It's too easy for there to be mistakes if the cashiers have to deal with all sorts of exceptions.

9. Plants without flower pictures or blooms do not sell very well or at all. Include flower pictures with your plants if you possibly can. If you don't have pictures you have taken, print them from the internet. Add whatever information you can. The salesperson at the Member Table may not know your plant. The more information you provide, the better chance you have that your plant will sell. Culture information and difficulty or ease of growing the plant are key issues in customer's minds. Personalized information about a plant helps create buyer interest and increases sales. For example: "This plant is a split from a plant I received 10 years ago on Valentine's Day; I just love it; It blooms reliably every year; The flowers have a wonderful fragrance; I just repotted it, so you won't have to do repotting for 2 years; Etc.; Etc." Think about what would cause you to want to buy the plant. Be honest. Tell the good and the bad.

10. There will be several of us at the Member Table to help you during set-up and the Show. We want you to be as successful as possible.

11. Have a Great Show.

Enjoy the Excitement. Grow Well.

Harvey

Important Information

The SOS Orchid Show Committee has decided to allow the following plants to be sold at the SOS member's sale table during the 2026 Orchid Show:

Monstera, Pinguiculas (butterworts), Cactus/Succulents and Cactus Orchids, Hoyas and Air Plants and of course - ORCHIDS!

Orchid Tips and Information for New Growers

Preparing to Show Orchids

by Marilyn H. S. Light, AOS Magazine Contributor

We all likely remember when we first saw orchids in a handsome display at a show. This could have been the first time we saw corsage orchids (Cattleyas) presented as part of a living plant! It was possibly at a show that we became inspired to become orchid growers and to someday proudly show what we had bloomed. We may not have realised it then, but a lot of preparation goes into showing orchids. In order to achieve the very best, an exhibitor must choose healthy stock, grow it well, care for the developing flowers and transport all safely to the show.

Exhibitors have a variety of goals in mind when they show an orchid. Some wish to proudly show their very first orchid whose blooming event thankfully coincided with the local show date. Maybe they will win a ribbon and maybe not, but they will have succeeded in blooming what they once only dreamed of. Rosettes, ribbons, and maybe an AOS award are a definite lure for some exhibitors while others simply wish to assist their club by supplying additional plants for a larger exhibit. In larger displays, flaws are likely not seen by the casual observer but in smaller exhibits or when a plant is on the judging table, flaws are much more apparent. Despite the pretty flowers, yellowed or spotted leaves stand out in stark contrast which can be a turn off to the viewer. It is therefore in the best interest of the exhibitor to groom plants before the show.



Preparing the Orchid for Exhibit

The process of showing orchids begins long before the show date. Protect potential show plants from conditions that damage foliage and new growths. Most orchids keep their leaves for several years or even longer. A spot of sunburn or too little water can produce effects such as accordion-pleated foliage in *Miltonia* or an unsightly brown papery patch on a *Cattleya* leaf. Leaves can be cleaned by dipping a soft cloth in milk and wiping gently.

Divide and repot orchids in their season, but well before a show so that they will be secure in their containers. While it is normal for some orchids to develop aerial roots outside of their containers, this can present a problem when transporting and staging exhibits. Exposed roots can become damaged during transport. An orchid will likely recover from superficial damage such as broken leaf tips and sunburn, but the telltale signs will persist and could render the plant unsuitable for display if the foliage has been too badly damaged.

Control pests, water and fertilize with care, avoid spraying with hard water or products that leave an unsightly residue. Crown rot not only puts a plant at risk and damages its appearance but it also reduces the flowering capacity for a minimum of one season. A variety of fungi can mar foliage. Plants grown too hot or too cold, too wet or under too humid conditions and without adequate ventilation can develop unsightly foliage.

Bud drop or bud blast is a maddening habit of some *Dendrobium* and *Phalaenopsis* plants. A sharp change in temperature and humidity is suggested as the cause, but you may not be able to stop bud blast from happening, when exhibiting some orchids. Water and or mist orchids while they are on exhibit if possible and try to avoid temperature extremes in the exhibit area. Also avoid placing orchids near heat or AC vents in your car while transporting orchids to the show and avoid heat and AC vents while exhibiting.



Pictured on the left is a Phalaenopsis orchid with a yellow flower bud, which was caused by bud blast.

This flower bud will likely dry up and fall off before opening.

Orchid Pests and Diseases

Pests and diseases have no business at a show, but that does not mean that they will not be present. We all have a duty to ensure that our plants are not a source of problems for other exhibitors. Greenhouse growers are encouraged to check especially yellow flowers and new succulent growths for aphids before bringing the plants to the show. While a blast of water or even soapy water will remove most, some nymphs may linger. Flower thrips, and a nasty hermaphroditic thrips that affects Paphs and other orchids, *Heliothrips haemorrhoidalis*, can spread to other plants at a show. Since the latter are hermaphrodites, only one is needed to start a destructive infestation that is challenging to eliminate. Adult thrips will hide in potting media while juveniles will feed in groups on the leaves and inflorescence bracts of *Paphiopedilum*, *Phragmipedium*, and *Disa*. They seem to prefer feeding on the flowers of the *Cattleya* alliance. Control pests well before the show otherwise leave the monsters at home.

Transporting Your Orchids to the Show

Transport Planning is critical to success. Suitable boxes, packing, helping hands and a vehicle are all part of successful transport. When selecting plants which might be in flower at show time, consider how they can be packed and how those containers can fit in your vehicle. It is not unknown for someone to rent a van to transport an especially large or tall specimen. Consider the effect of too much heat from the sun or car heater, the chance of sunburn, freezing because of proximity to an uninsulated wall or chill because of the air conditioning. Take no chances with a precious cargo that you have worked hard to acquire. Park in the shade. Cover plants in boxes with a lightweight cloth to mask the sun's rays. I use a picnic cooler to transport tiny pleurothallids in cool, humid comfort. We cannot always have the ideal weather for transporting orchids to a show but cool cloudy weather is probably safest.

At the Orchid Show

Have on hand: show schedule, paper towels, spray bottle and water, tweezers, scissors, extra stakes, tags and clips and rubbing alcohol for last minute pest removal. If you are planning to purchase orchids at the show, you should bring extra boxes. Unpack carefully, check that any stakes are still secure. Also check to make sure no tags have fallen out of pots or slid down into the pot while transporting. All orchids must have a tag that identifies the species name or the name of the hybrid. Groom again if needed and re-stakes any flowers that may have shifted during transport.

Now you can enjoy the Orchid Show!

Orchid of the Month

Stanhopea assidensis/Assidensis



Is this a species or a hybrid? Turns out that is a tricky question, as this orchid is a registered hybrid, but it has also been known to occur naturally in the wild.

Stanhopea assidensis is a cross of *Stan. tigrina* and *Stan. wardii* - two species that occur in Central America and South America where they both bloom at about the same time of the year.

Originally registered in 1922, this is one of the oldest recorded *Stanhopea* hybrids.



The pendant flowers occur in a yellow form and a creamy white form. The yellow form has purple spots and the creamy form has maroon spots. Both have very fragrant flowers that have the scent of sweet vanilla.

Commonly called bucket orchids, the flowers are pollinated by bees that become trapped inside the bucket and have difficulty escaping. The only way out forces the bees to rub against the pollin, which is then transferred to the next flower.

I have two of these and bloomed the first one last summer. The flowers only last a few days, but the fragrance is fantastic.

Grow these orchids in intermediate to warm temperatures.

Provide bright, but filtered light, without direct sun, as the leaves are thin and can burn easily. These orchids like a lot of water. I keep them moist at all times without being soggy, especially during active growth. Water and fertilizer can be reduced in winter, but do not let them dry out completely. The flowers will grow downward and hang below the plant so baskets are best, although my flowers came up out of the pot and then grew downward. Very fun to grow!

Orchid Trivia & Fun Facts

What is the world's largest orchid? That honor goes to *Grammatophyllum speciosum*, commonly called the tiger orchid for its yellow flowers with brown stripes. Tiger orchids are endemic to Malaysia, Sumatra, New Guinea and a few other countries in Southeast Asia. These orchids have been known to weigh more than 1 ton and can exceed 20 feet in diameter. A specimen observed and described by botanists in Borneo was 25 feet in diameter and contained an estimated 2,500 flowers.

The orchid only blooms once every two to four years and produces two different types of flowers. The flowers on the lower end of the inflorescence *do not* have a lip and are produced for the purpose of emitting fragrance. The flowers near the top of the inflorescence *do* have a lip and are pollinated by a specific type of bee.

I took the photo below last summer when I visited the Como Park Conservatory in St. Paul Minnesota. They had a Tiger Orchid in bloom with about 480 flowers. The volunteer said the orchid had been growing in the Conservatory for about 60+ years. It was about 12 feet in diameter, including the flower spikes. They can live for hundreds of years.

