

March 2026



# Southern Tier Orchid Society

WWW.SOUTHERNTIERORCHIDS.ORG

## Next Meeting Mar 15, 2pm-4pm features our *Spring Auction*

We will have some great plants, from Bergen Water Gardens and from White Plains Orchids. We are also accepting donations of healthy orchids from our members. Please let us know if you have any donations by March 8 by emailing to STOSorchids.auction@gmail.com. We are not accepting orchids for sale at this auction, but will next fall.

**Come and bid! Support your club and get some great orchids at good prices!**

To avoid confusion, we will not have a raffle at the March meeting. You may bring Show Table plants.

--Jeff Hackett

*Don't  
forget!*

*Setup on  
May 1!*

*Bring your  
blooming  
orchids!*

**SOUTHERN  
TIER  
ORCHID  
SOCIETY**

## Spring Orchid Show

Saturday, May 2  
Sunday, May 3

Admission \$5  
Free for children 12 and under

Raffles  
Repotting Demo  
Door Prizes  
Orchid vendors

Johnson City Senior Center  
30 Brocton street,  
Johnson City, NY

*E. Hackett*

# Member Info

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

### President

Linda Mittel

### Vice President

LuAnn Meyers

### Treasurer

Mari Stover-Ling

### Secretary

Melissa Bennett

### AOS Representative

Polly Dillon

### Members-At-Large

Jeff Hackett

Gail Gunsalus

Jean Mint

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**Auction Committee** Jean Mint, Jeff Hackett

**IT Specialist** Melissa Bennett

**Librarian** Laurel Shaefer

**Marketing** TBD

**Membership** Melissa Bennett, Anitra Murphy

**Newsletter Editor** Carol Bayles

**Program Coordinator** Jean Mint

**Social Event** Ruth Allen, Jane Trey

**Social Media** Jean Mint, vacancy

**Show Chair** Sam Hance, Jeff Hackett

**Web Master** Carol Bayles

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### Web Site:

<http://www.southerntierorchids.org>

### Email addresses:

[STOSorchids@gmail.com](mailto:STOSorchids@gmail.com)

[STOSorchids.auction@gmail.com](mailto:STOSorchids.auction@gmail.com)

[STOSorchids.marketing@gmail.com](mailto:STOSorchids.marketing@gmail.com)

[STOSorchids.membership@gmail.com](mailto:STOSorchids.membership@gmail.com)

[STOSorchids.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:STOSorchids.newsletter@gmail.com)

[STOSorchids.shows@gmail.com](mailto:STOSorchids.shows@gmail.com)

### Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/SouthernTierOrchidSocietyNY>

### Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/SouthernTierOrchidSociety/>

## STOS Calendar 2026

**Meetings are 2-4 pm (1:30-2 is 'social time')  
at the Johnson City Senior Center,  
30 Brocton St, Johnson City, NY 13790.**

**Jan 18** General Meeting. Orchid Games

**Feb 15** General Meeting, in Person - Speaker Jason Fisher will present via Zoom on Vanilla orchids.

**Mar 15** General Meeting, Spring Auction

**Apr 19** General Meeting, Show Prep, GROS Show

**May 1** STOS Orchid Show  
Setup 2pm-7pm

**May 2** STOS Orchid Show  
Judging 8am-11am, Public 11am-6pm

**May 3** STOS Orchid Show  
Public 10am-4:30pm, Takedown 4:30p-6p

**May 17** General Meeting, Repotting Workshop

**Summer Picnic** TBD

## Neighboring Societies and 2026 Shows

CPOS- Central PA Orchid Society (State College, PA)  
Show **Mar. 21-22**

<https://www.aos.org/community-events/calendar/543>

SEPOS – Southern PA Orchid Society (Oaks, PA)  
Show **March 27-29** [www.sepos.org/show](http://www.sepos.org/show)

GROS – Genesee Region OS (Rochester)  
Show **April 16-19**  
[www.geneseeorchid.org/annual-orchid-show/](http://www.geneseeorchid.org/annual-orchid-show/)

STOS – Show **May 1-3** [www.southerntierorchids.org/](http://www.southerntierorchids.org/)

CNYOS – Central NY Orchid Society (Syracuse)

## Treasurer's Report

### Membership Dues

Thank you to everyone who renewed their membership. Unpaid memberships have been purged from the email list. As always, members can renew their membership at any time. Remember that your membership runs from Jan 1st to Dec 31st regardless of the month you joined.

I would like to extend gratitude to everyone who contributed to our new donation box. Your generosity helps us continue our mission of promoting orchid education, conservation, and appreciation within our society.

### Income Statement

#### Revenues

Membership Dues-\$250  
Donation Box (January)-\$11  
Donation Box-(February)-\$21  
Raffle-\$52  
Show Vendor-\$150

#### Expenses

Feb. Speaker (Jason Fisher)-\$250  
JCSC Rental -\$140  
Operating-\$60  
40th Anniversary Celebrations (Ice Cream Social)-  
\$50

Regards,  
Mari Stover-Ling, STOS Treasurer



## Other News Items

### April 19 Meeting Date

Our April Meeting will be on April 19 as usual. We tried to move it up a week to avoid overlap with the GROS show, but the Johnson Senior Center is not available that day.

### Neighboring Society Shows

We considered having an exhibit at the Central PA Orchid Society's Show on Mar 21-22 but no one has stepped forward to volunteer for this. The drive is over 3 hours and setting up and tearing down are big jobs. CPOS has displayed at our show in the past. One of their members handled the whole thing and stayed all weekend. His expenses were paid by the club. This is something we might consider in the future if someone was interested.

We will be having a display at the GROS Show on April 17-19. They always display at our show and we reciprocate. We are looking for a few more helpers for either setup on Thurs. April 16 or tear down on Sun. April 19 (STOS meeting day). You may do both if you like. This is a good excuse to see their show as well. They do a fabulous job. We will also be looking for some blooming orchids for our display. If you can help with any of these, please send an email to [stosorchids@gmail.com](mailto:stosorchids@gmail.com) or talk to Linda, Carol or Jane at the meeting.

# Don't Just Grow It, Show It!

## Part 2

Now is the time to watch your orchids for those that may be in bloom for our show. If spikes are forming, be sure to support them as detailed in last month's article. For Cattleya types, you may need to separate or arrange the flower buds so they point the nearly same way, don't overlap, and are not hidden by leaves. Cotton balls can work for this.



Photos Carol B

### Insects

Also keep an eye out for insects, especially scale and mealy bugs. Mealy bugs are about 1/8 inch long or smaller, and are white and fuzzy. Young scale can just look like a greenish white oval spot, closer to 1/16 inch long. Mature scale will be larger, rounder, and brown; it contains eggs for the next generation. A cotton swab dipped in isopropanol is a great way to remove individual insects. Mealy bugs fall off easily while scale may have to be rubbed a bit. If there are many bugs in hard-to-reach places, use a spray bottle with isopropanol and a tsp. of dish detergent to spray. Do not spray open flowers. You may have to spray several times. The mature brown scale is resistant to alcohol, removing it is best. This is a good practice all of the time, and if you have had insects in the past, they will likely come back. Mature Phalaenopsis flowers often have mealy bugs which are attracted to the nectar. Remove them very carefully so as not to damage the flower.

Spider mites, which are mostly attracted to thinner leaved orchids, will look like brown dots on the undersides and lighter dots on the upper side of leaves. You can try wiping each entire leaf with a cotton ball dipped in isopropanol, and repeat every few days, but they are very hard to get rid of. You may need to use a pesticide. Always quarantine your plant.

# Don't Just Grow It, Show It!

## Part 2



Scale on left and Mealy Bugs on right. You should never let bugs get this bad. Check your plants carefully and frequently. House plants, too. Photos from Facebook.

### **Clean the Leaves**

Sometimes plants from commercial places have residue on their leaves from pesticide spraying or the leaves of your orchids may just have water spotting. This can be hard to remove. A 50/50 mix of milk and water will help and will also leave a nice shine on the leaves. You can do this closer to show time, but why not have pretty plants now?

### **Identify your Orchid**

Check the plant tag to make sure you can read it and it has the correct identification. Do a Google search to learn more about your orchid. If you cannot read all of the tag, you will still likely find it. You may want to keep a list of your plants for when the tags start to wear out. Unfortunately, many orchids get reclassified over the years, it is best to use the current name when you register your orchid for the show. If you are unsure, the show registrar will help. No id Phals and other orchids are welcome at the show, too.

### **Show Time**

STOS will have an exhibit at the GROS show in Rochester in mid-April, so if you will have orchids in bloom then, you may want to display them in that show. A trick to have orchids in bloom for a show is to keep them slightly cooler to slow down the buds, or warmer to speed them up. Showing off your blooming orchids and maybe getting a ribbon is part of the excitement of owning them.

# STOS Orchid Show Update

## Volunteers

Volunteering is a great way to get to know other club members and really feel like a part of the action.

We will be needing everyone to volunteer in order to have a successful show. Some are needed now, some closer to the show, many at the show, including setup, cleanup, clerks for judging and numerous other roles. There will be an online signup on the website soon. More details at the March meeting.

## Food Committee Needed

We need a Coordinator to take charge of planning the menu, ordering and pick up, directing additional volunteers to help with monitoring the food and dining area and cleaning up at the end of the day. This is a significant part of the show, keeping everyone fed. Note that everyone comes to the food area, giving you a chance to chat with judges, vendors and other members in a quieter atmosphere. Experienced members will be guiding you. And you will still have time to enjoy the show.

## Judging Clerks

On Saturday morning the judges will need people to help them locate plants and rate the orchids for ribbons. This is one of the most satisfying positions and an opportunity to learn about orchids from the experts.

## Merchandise

We will have several items: mugs, T-shirts, magnets, etc, commemorating the show for sale at the April meeting and at the show. There will be more information at the March meeting and an online pre-order form will be available on our website soon.

## Call for Member Displays

Members are also invited to create their own displays. Displays can be:

- As small as **five plants**
- Educational** (no plants required)
- Artistic** and orchid-themed

If you want to put together a display, please let me know **well in advance** so we can plan space and logistics. I am happy to provide guidance.

We also have **posters** and **postcards** to hand out. A postcard is a free raffle ticket for the show. Pick some up at the meeting.

--Jeff Hackett

# Meeting Minutes

## SOUTHERN TIER ORCHID SOCIETY (STOS) GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

**Meeting:** General Membership Meeting

**Date:** February 15, 2026

**Location:** Johnson City Senior Center

Presiding Officer: Linda Mittel, President

Recording Officer: Melissa Bennett, Secretary

After the ice cream social, the meeting was called to order @ 2:10PM. About 35 members and Zoom attendees attended the meeting.

### **Secretary's Report**

Notes from the last general meeting were posted to the February newsletter and were distributed to the membership. The minutes stood approved as distributed.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Mari Stover-Ling reminded the membership that those with unpaid dues would be purged from the email list in February, and that she was, meanwhile, still accepting renewals.

### **Discussion of Activities to be conducted during General Meetings**

Several members have suggested that the General Meetings were so full of activities, that 1) it interferes with social time and 2) that it makes the meetings overlong.

The membership actively discussed a good number of possible solutions.

### **President's Shoutout for Volunteers to help with the Show**

### **Announcement of a Special Guest Event**

Nicole Deanna, a well-known YouTube orchid enthusiast, has accepted our invitation to visit with us via Zoom on May 31st. More details will be available soon.

### **Show Committee Update**

Jeff Hackett updated us on the vendors who are being contracted to come to the Show. He announced that Maurice Garvey would come to the Show to give a presentation on orchidariums. Jeff then presented the new postcards and posters for the members to distribute to spread the word about the Show. He gauged member interest in pre-ordering T shirts and other merchandise. He also asked members to volunteer for the Show. In particular he requested assistance with 3 particular tasks: a show registrar, a floor planner, and someone to help with marketing emails.

### **Adjournment**

The business portion of the meeting was adjourned at 2:40, to be followed by the Raffle and then the presentation of the speaker, Jason Fisher, from Orchids Limited.

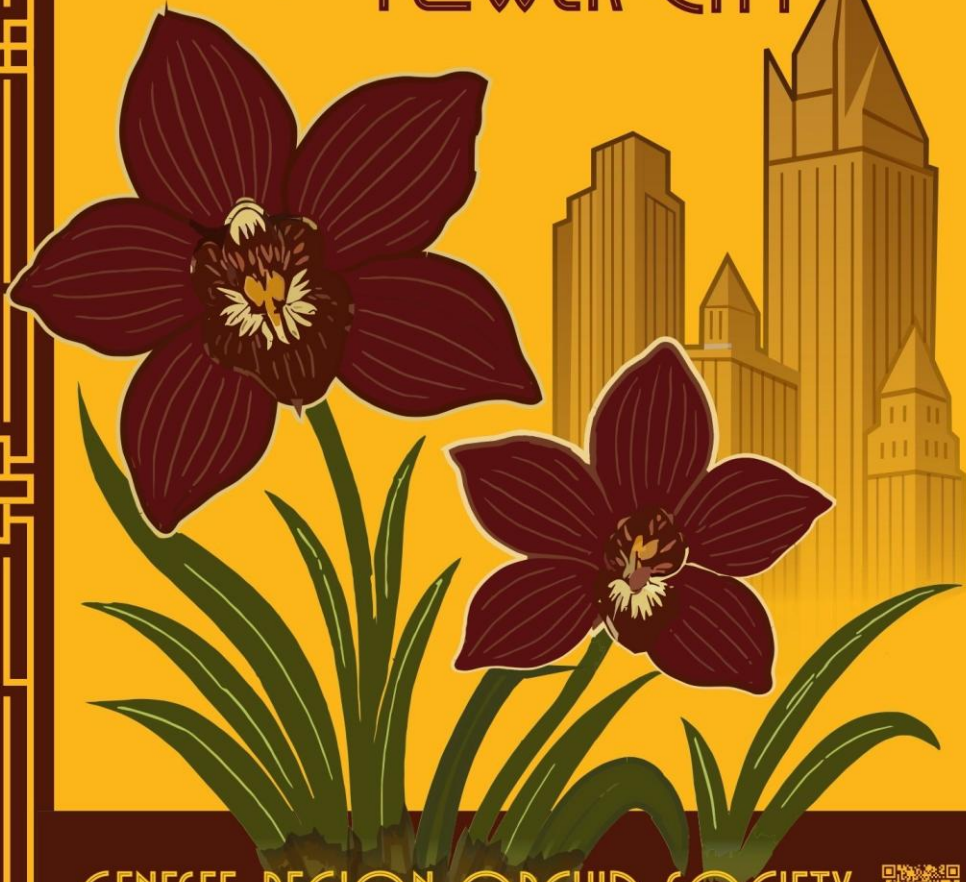
### **Respectfully Submitted,**

Melissa Bennett, Secretary

Linda Mittel, President.

*Note: These minutes are for review by the members and other interested parties and have not yet been approved by the General Membership.*

# 50 YEARS OF ORCHIDS IN THE FLOWER CITY



GENESEE REGION ORCHID SOCIETY



# 2026

## APRIL 17-19 SHOW & SALE

RMSC EISENHART AUDITORIUM  
657 EAST AVE  
ROCHESTER, NY 14607

FRIDAY 1-5 PM  
SATURDAY 10-5 PM  
SUNDAY 10-4 PM

ADULTS \$10  
STUDENTS WITH ID \$5  
CHILDREN UNDER 12 FREE  
REPOTTING \$5 AND UP  
ORCHID SEMINARS

# More than a Flower: The Connective Power of Orchids

January 30 – April 26

National Museum of African American  
History and Culture

Smithsonian Gardens, DC



*Rhyncholaeliocattleya Memoria Grant  
Eichler 'Lenette'*

The 30th annual orchid exhibition—presented in partnership with the U.S. Botanic Garden (USBG)—is now open at the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC). Featuring hundreds of orchids from both collections, the exhibition examines the cultural, historical, and artistic connections inspired by the Orchidaceae family. Visitors can explore stories of prominent African American orchid collectors, view orchid-inspired artworks, and participate in daily orchid discovery activities. Timed entry passes are required and may be reserved through NMAAHC's website. Same day passes are available at the entrance. See NMAAHC staff for assistance

## Celebrating 30 Years of Collaboration

Since 1995, Smithsonian Gardens and USBG have partnered annually to highlight the diversity and significance of orchids. This milestone year recognizes both the longevity of the orchid exhibition series and NMAAHC's 10th anniversary. The exhibition continues our shared commitment to horticultural education, conservation, and public engagement.

## Programs & Highlights

### Expert Is In: Orchid Q&A

Meet an orchid expert and learn more about this incredible plant family. On select dates throughout the exhibition period, horticulturists from Smithsonian Gardens and USBG will be available to answer orchid care questions and provide practical guidance.

### Discovery Station: Orchids

Explore the connective power of orchids. Take a closer look at the amazing traits that orchids share, uncover the history of vanilla, and get inspired by the orchid collection. Enjoy hands-on activities for all ages with our knowledgeable volunteers, who are happy to answer your orchid care questions. [Plan your visit.](#)

### Digital Resources

Explore the gardens from home! Horticultural guides, StoryMaps, collection features, and more are available at [gardens.si.edu](https://gardens.si.edu).

## Presidential Update: Ensuring Our Growing Space is Secure

Whether you grow your orchids in a professional greenhouse or on a dedicated windowsill, you know that success requires more than just water, media, and fertilizer. It's about the "hidden" work—monitoring humidity, adjusting light, and ensuring proper airflow and temperatures. If the environment isn't right, the plants may survive, but they won't truly thrive—and they certainly won't bloom.

I have recently focused on a similar "environmental check" for the **Southern Tier Orchid Society**. Just as we monitor our growing spaces, I felt it was my responsibility as President to ensure our organizational "climate" meets modern New York State standards.

When STOS was founded, the rules for nonprofits were much simpler. To ensure we are prepared for today's legal requirements, I researched and presented information to the Executive Board so that **strong decisions could be made to protect the Southern Tier Orchid Society as an organization and its volunteers**. Based on that research, we are moving forward with:

- **Legal Guidance:** We are working with an attorney to ensure we meet all New York State nonprofit requirements. They will soon meet with the Board to explain these essential compliance rules.
- **Essential Insurance:** We have added **D&O (Directors & Officers)** and **EPLI (Employment Practices Liability)** to our insurance portfolio. These are specialized protections added alongside our general policy. They provide a vital safety net for our Officers, Members-at-Large, AOS Representative, and President Ex-Officio, as well as the society as a whole.

If you are considering a leadership position or a role on the Board in the future, it would be wise to review the legal responsibilities required of those who guide a not-for-profit corporation. Even as a general member, you may find it interesting to learn how the club is structured and what the specific expectations are for our officers and directors.

Our attorney highly recommended the following resource from the **New York State Attorney General's Office** as an excellent guide for understanding these duties: [Right From the Start: Responsibilities of Directors of Not-for-Profit Corporation](#).

I hope the membership recognizes that these steps—engaging legal counsel and expanding our insurance portfolio—are critical to the long-term health of the **Southern Tier Orchid Society**. While our general liability insurance covers the "where" and "when" of our meetings, these additional protections cover the "who." They are an essential investment in the sustainability of our club, ensuring that our leadership volunteers and the organization itself are shielded as we move forward together. By taking these steps, we aren't just following the law; we are ensuring that STOS remains a safe, stable, and thriving community for years to come.

Linda Mittel, President

# Show Table – Angel Caoile



Phrag Cape Sunset



*Dialaeliocattleya* (Dialc.) Silver Heart  
x Lc Johanna Rose



Cattleytonia (Ctna.) Sacramento Splash



Phal. Miki Cotton Candy

# Show Table –Angel Caoile



*Sophrolaeliocattleya* (Slc.) *Bella del Caribe*



*Brassocattleya* (Bc.) *Daffodil*



*Oncostele* Hilo Firecracker 'Lucky Strike'

Divisions of this plant were sold at a STOS auction some time back. You may have one. We didn't know the name at the time and called it an Oncidium.



# Show Table – Luis Matienzo



Phrag caricinum



Phrag Prince Edward o York



Phrag. Eric Young

# Show Table



*Ascocentrum* is 14 years old – Gail Gunsalus



*Dendrobium* Chocolate chip from Bingo session - Gail Gunsalus



*Potinara* (Pot.) Star Fire 'Xmas Red' x Mem. Alida Laboy 'SVO' AM/AOS – Jane Trey



*Brassanthe* (Bsn) Maikai a division from Linda Mittel – Jane Trey

# Show Table – Linda Mittel



Phal. NOID. Yellow.



Dendrobium Winter Pixie



Phal Miki Pink Planet

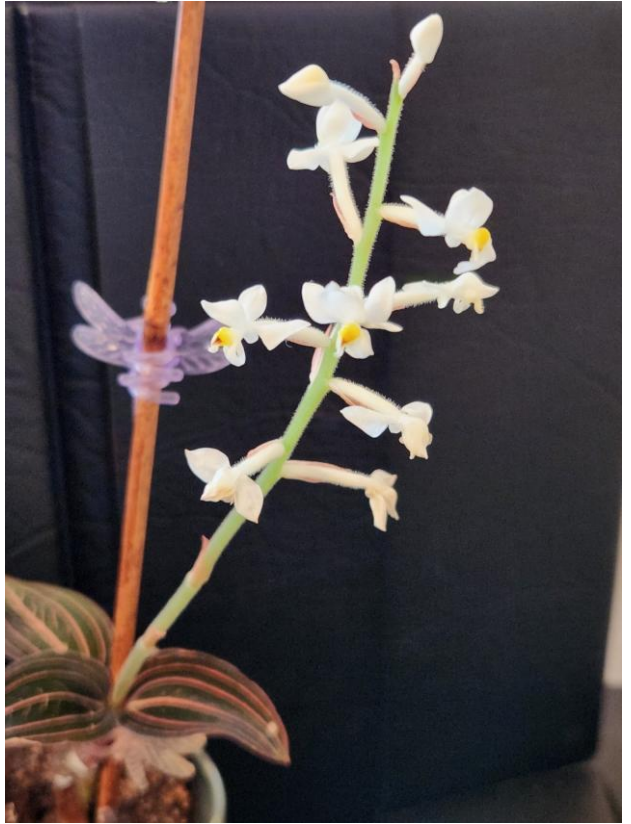


Tolumnia Jairak Firm Red

# Show Table



Ctt. Hilo Sunrise - C. Harmill 'Orange Glow' x Gur. aurantiaca 'Mishima Spot'  
- Joanna Higgins



Ludisia discolor from holiday party  
- Ondra Murray



Zygonisia Snow Bird - Laila



Bracidostele Gilded Tower 'Mystic Maze'  
- Laila

## **Orchids as Food** *(from Orchid Bliss 2026, submitted by Ben Cabot)*

Orchids can be eaten and enjoyed, and Dendrobiums are at the top of the list for this. Soft cane dendrobiums, are used in sauce recipes and stir fry dishes. In Thailand, they dip dendrobium flowers in flour and egg batter and deep-fry them into crunchy snacks.

Another type of orchid that is commonly used for culinary purposes is epidendrum. In Hawaii, fresh orchid flowers are added to salad dishes or are candied and coated in sugar. Meanwhile, European chefs love using orchid petals to garnish or decorate their cakes, cupcakes, and other desserts. Orchid tubers are also used by South Africans to flavor their meat sauces. In fact, due to this demand, some African orchids are now threatened.



Photo credit Chadwick and Son Orchids

Orchid ice cream is very popular in Turkey. It uses the same powder used in making salep, combined with sugar, milk, and mastic. This ice cream is unique in that it's chewy and it doesn't melt. The closest food item to orchid ice cream in terms of texture is saltwater taffy. Greece has similar ice cream, and it is called dudurmas or kaimaki. Many restaurants are now using orchids as a garnish for drinks and cocktails, too. And some people add them as ingredients to marinades and salad dressings or place them in flavored jellies, oil, and vinegar.

### **What Do Orchids Taste Like?**

Fresh orchid petals taste fresh, light, bland, and crisp, which some people say is similar to watercress, cucumber, endive, chicory, lettuce, and other leafy greens. Some say they taste light at the start but sweet or bitter towards the end. However, the exact flavor generally depends on the genus of the orchid you are using and your own preferences.

### **Nutritional Value of Orchids**

Like most edible flowers, orchid blooms are rich in vitamin C, boosting your immune system and helping stave off infections. They are also rich in fiber and essential minerals like iron, calcium, and potassium. Moreover, they are an excellent source of antioxidants and phytochemicals.

## Let's Talk About Vanilla

Vanilla beans come from the seed pod of the vanilla orchid, which originated in South and Central America, but currently, Madagascar is the largest vanilla producer. The extract is made with chopped vanilla beans and alcohol, a process that can take a few months. The taste of the vanilla extract depends on where the vanilla orchids were cultivated. Extracts from the Madagascar vanilla beans, have a traditional, full-bodied, and strong taste. Mexican vanilla bean extracts have a smooth flavor featuring a hint of spice. Meanwhile, Tahitian vanilla bean extracts are delicately flavored, with fruity and floral notes.

## Things to Watch Out for When You Consume Orchids

When you eat orchids, you will have to be on the lookout for hazards like allergies. People who have allergies to pollen and those who have specific food allergies need to stay alert for unexpected reactions. So be on the safe side and have your antihistamines within reach. Moreover, people who have asthma may also react negatively to edible orchids. It is also important that the orchids have not have been sprayed with pesticides if they are to be eaten. Flowers dyed blue or other colors may not be safe for consumption.

## How to Store Orchids Flowers for Consumption

It is always best to use freshly cut or freshly picked orchid blooms in your food or drink and to use them right away. But if you have some extra flowers, you can still save them for another dish on another day. A cut orchid flower can last up to 10 days if you keep it inside an airtight box or container and place it inside your refrigerator. Just maintain a temperature of 36 to 40 degrees Fahrenheit inside your fridge. This will preserve its shape and freshness.

## Final Thoughts

Orchid flowers are not known to be toxic to humans and are considered safe to eat. But the same can't be said about the other parts of the plant. Some species have edible tubers, and of course vanilla orchid beans are edible. But that's it. As for the flowers, they have been used as herbal remedies in many cultures for hundreds of years. So go ahead and try making some orchid tea. Flowers also make great ingredients for a wide variety of recipes. So be adventurous and give your food some extra twist.\*

**\*Note: The claims made in this article are not endorsed by STOS. Please do your own research before consuming any orchid flowers.**

Edible Orchids - 50 Count (Pack of 4)

Visit the California Specialty Farms Store

4.3 ★★★★★ (20) | Search this page

\$68<sup>95</sup> (\$0.34 / count)

Price history

Or \$11<sup>49</sup> /mo (6 mo). Select from 2 plans

Save up to 9% with business pricing. Sign up for a free Amazon Business account

**Brand** California Specialty Farms

**Item Form** Granules

**Specific Uses For Product** Plant Growth

**Unit Count** 200 Count