



Naples Botanical
GARDEN

For Immediate Release

A Celebration of All Things Orchid Orchid Fest is Feb. 14–28 at Naples Botanical Garden

NAPLES, FL – February 3, 2020 – Naples Botanical Garden is excited to present its annual Orchid Fest, a two-week affair running Feb. 14-28, including the Naples Orchid Society’s Show & Sale Feb. 22-23. The festival celebrates the allure of these prized flowers and offers ways for nearly everyone in the family to experience them.

Embedded in the festival are a number of potential stories we’d like to share. Please let us know which one(s) best fit your audience and reporting needs. We can accommodate journalists during the event or arrange interviews, visual opportunities and demonstrations in advance.

The event

Live coverage opportunities abound during the festival, which expanded from one week to two based on response to last year’s inaugural event. Each day is packed with demonstrations ranging from orchid care to landscaping tips to orchid art. In addition, staff will lead six daily tours dedicated to this beloved epiphyte.

The [Naples Orchid Society’s Show, “Wild About Orchids,”](#) will run during the festival second weekend, Feb. 22-23, and will spotlight prize-winning orchids of many species and hybrids. During those two days, exhibitors will showcase everything from floor-sized artistic displays to cut orchid flower arrangements. Six vendors will have plants available for sale, with Orchid Society members on hand to answer questions about orchid care.

How to care for and landscape with your orchids

In the last decade, orchids have become a staple of supermarkets and home improvement stores. Despite their popularity, some would-be buyers find their delicate beauty downright intimidating.

Fear not! Orchids are easier to care for than you think. Garden staff will be leading talks such as “So You Purchased an Orchid—Now What?” and offering tips to make sure even orchid rookies succeed.

Ready to try your hand at growing them outside? Horticulturalists can offer your audience a primer on how to use orchids to enhance your yard, patio or lanai. Festival demonstrations include instructions on how to mount orchids in trees or affix them to other natural materials, such as driftwood.

Orchid artistry

Orchids are works of art unto themselves, but they can be incorporated into visual and wearable art in different ways. Discover “kokedama,” the Japanese practice of growing flowers encased in a moss-covered ball of soil. Learn how to make beautiful hairpieces from orchid blooms or use them to inspire living jewelry creations. Members of our horticulture staff will be leading these demonstrations, showcasing both their gardening knowledge and their creative sides.

The science of orchids

In the lab that Naples Botanical Garden shares with Florida Gulf Coast University, you’ll find hundreds of petri dishes. The Garden’s Director of Collections Nick Ewy, an expert in orchids and other epiphytes, is testing how to grow orchid seeds, collected from the Garden’s Preserve. He’ll pot the successful sprouts, tend them in the nursery and eventually introduce them to the Garden’s native Florida habitat, which includes an orchid boardwalk where guests can safely experience Florida’s swamps and their foliage.

Orchids are complex species, with specialized habitats, pollinators and fungi that the microscopic seeds need in order to grow. While hybridized orchids are increasingly common, those collected in their native habitats, such as the ones in Ewy’s lab, are not.

Ewy can explain the process and challenges of growing these orchids from seed; discuss the variety of Florida native orchids he’s growing; talk about the role orchids play in the ecosystem and what makes these plants so unique.

Please note: This angle is best pursued in advance of the event.

Orchid Facts:

- About 10 percent of all plant species are orchids.
- Orchids are the largest plant families worldwide with nearly 25,000 species of wild orchids and 10 times as many known hybrid varieties.
- North America is home to more than 200 orchid species; more than half of which are endangered or threatened somewhere within their native range.
- Orchids boast an array of evolutionary features; some even mimic the appearance and scent of bees and wasps to attract “mates” to pollinate their flowers.
- Vanilla is an orchid!
- Collier County was made famous in the 1998 book *The Orchid Thief*.

- Naples Botanical Garden has some 5,000 orchids in its collections, representing more than 1,600 different species, hybrids and varieties.

For more information on Naples Botanical Garden, please visit naplesgarden.org/media, or contact info@naplesgarden.org or 239.643.7275.

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About Naples Botanical Garden

Naples Botanical Garden is a 170-acre, world-class garden paradise that features plants from around the world. The Garden provides arts, culture, youth and adult education, conservation, wellness, and volunteer programs that contribute to the quality of life in Southwest Florida. The Garden's living collections are always growing and evolving, leaving our audiences with a deeper engagement with our curated gardens and Preserve, broadened with every visit. Regular hours of operation are 8 a.m.–5 p.m. every day, with the Berger Shop in the Garden and Fogg Café opening at 9 a.m. Regular admission is \$19.95 for adults, \$9.95 for children (4–14); Members and children 3 and under get in free.