

# Key West Orchid Society

Newsletter

Jay Pfahl, President

Liza Bray, Editor

## May 2024

### KWOS Meetings

20 October

17 November

15 December

### KW Garden Club

Meets Mondays from 9:00 to noon for potting, rooting, weeding, etc., and general clean up. Stop in to help anytime you have a free Monday morning.

### KW Tropical Forest /Garden

Volunteers meet at the nursery every Wednesday and Saturday from 9 to 12 for propagation and to clean up the Garden. Come in and help anytime you can.

### Redland International Orchid Festival

17- 19 May 2024

Fruit & Spice Park  
24801 SW 187th Avenue  
Redland, Fl. 33031

The KWOS will not have a May meeting as it coincides with the last day of the Redlands International Orchid Festival.

In April, KWOS members had a rare treat: two professional presentations; the first from KWOS vice president, Leigh Coolidge at the Key West Tropical Forest and Botanic Garden on 20th April, finally introducing our collaboration to preserve and produce native Florida and Caribbean basin orchids.



*Vanda denisoniana*

At last this has taken physical form, and we have just received photos of our first seedlings, which have been produced in collaboration with Fairchild Tropical Gardens in Coral Gables. Fairchild have been doing our laboratory work as part of their Million Orchid Project.



*Brassia caudata*

Once our facilities are a reality at the Botanic Garden, we will be doing flasking and propagation here in the Keys. The focus is on the five species of native orchids: *brassia caudata*, *encyclia tampiensis*, *epidendum nocturnum*, *cyrtiopodium punctatum*, and *vanilla barbellata*.

Before any of this can happen however, is the minor matter of fund raising. This effort will prove to be the most important undertaking the KWOS has ever attempted, and a departure from our friendly social get togethers. The road to success here is largely dependent upon, not just professionalism, but basic fund-raising capabilities.



*Our first thousand encyclia tampienses seedlings at Fairchild Tropical Gardens*

The second, equally professional, and very entertaining, was our April meeting. José Exposito, of Soroa Orchids in Homestead, and long-time supporter of the KWOS, gave an effortless, highly informative, and entertaining presentation on growing tips and a survival guide for orchid lovers in south Florida. Having lost his entire nursery in 1992, when Andrew mowed down a very narrow stretch across Homestead, he has dispensed with frills, gives a no-nonsense presentation without the help of any pictorial aids, which boils down to a how-to-guide to grow orchids here in the Keys. He did observe that we tend to throw together various species under the same tree and expect them to flourish even though each species requires different growing conditions.

Since the Covid pandemic we have not held summer meetings at members' homes. In the past, the summer meetings also featured snacks and drinks in addition to the opportunity to see members' orchid collections. If anyone would like to take on this opportunity, we will get the information out to the membership.

Our next formal meeting will be at West Martello on 20th October.

"Friends of Key West Orchid Society".

It is located at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1505314023598455>

You can request to join and will be admitted by the moderator (Leigh)

Website: [www.keywestorchidsociety.org](http://www.keywestorchidsociety.org) and Facebook