



JULY 2026



Welcome to the AOS Corner, your monthly newsletter for Representatives, Presidents, and Newsletter Editors. It is hard to believe we are stepping into the final six months of the year! The past few months have been busy for our Affiliated Societies with shows and a myriad of other orchid related activities. By now repotting has been completed as well as preparations for the heat of the summer. As climates vary all over the country, our procedures are tailored to what's best for our plants and their environments. Let us also prepare to celebrate one of the most important holidays of the year—get those fireworks and sparklers ready, get the grills lit up and gather with family and friends to pay homage to our amazing country on her 250th birthday, July 4th!



MESSAGE FROM THE AFFILIATED SOCIETIES COMMITTEE CHAIR

Have a question about our Committee? Want to get Involved with the AOS? Please send me an email at arod@aos.org and you are also welcome to join us at our next virtual meeting on July 15, 2026 @ 8 P.M. (Eastern Time) – Thank you for your time and support to the AOS!



Webinars - Coming Attractions!

REGISTRATION IS EASY www.aos.org/webinars
Cannot make it on the scheduled date and time? No need to worry.
Register now and view on your time schedule.
Send Your Greenhouse Chat Questions and Photos to: greenhousechat@aos.org
Greenhouse Chat webinars are recorded and summarized by topic for future viewing.

When	July 09, 2026 Thursday 8:30 pm EDT	SUMMER BREAK Review the Full Index of Recorded Webinars on the AOS Website	In Search Of Webinar Presenters
Topic	FREE Live Greenhouse Chat Orchid Q & A Answers to your questions about all things orchid. <i>Send in your Photos and Questions by July 07</i>	Filter by Members Only or All Viewers Select From Title - Choose Culture, Virtual Events, Judging, Pests and Diseases, Greenhouse Chats and More. Click Register or Watch Now.	Future Webinars You are invited to share your orchid knowledge with an enthusiastic audience of thousands. We can show you how. <i>Contact webinar organizer for details. greenhousechat@aos.org</i>
Presenter	Ron McHatten AOS Chief Education and Science Officer	The Experts Orchid Growers, Orchid Judges, Biologists, Scientists and More. Offering Culture Tips and Education.	Expert Growers, Hobby Growers, AOS Judges, Scientists, Biologists and YOU!

Webinar announcements are posted on the AOS website,
on Facebook and Instagram,
and in the AOS Corner of your Affiliated Society's newsletter.

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MESSAGE FROM THE AMERICAN ORCHID SOCIETY PRESIDENT



Welcome. Last weekend I participated in a workshop with my home orchid society, Heart of Texas OS in Austin, TX. We had a nice crowd of 18 participants seeking to learn new ways to grow in various places: greenhouses, under lights, outside. Some were members, most were not. The non members are the orchid interested that we are seeking to turn into orchid enthusiasts, or members of our local society, and ultimately members of the AOS.

Surprisingly in Austin it is possible to grow outside from March to late October. So some of our members have traveling collections, which spend part of the year inside so that they don't freeze or experience weather a bit too cold and most of the year outside.

I have a mix of all three. Some of my biggest brassavola hybrids really thrive outside during the summer, putting out longer spikes with more flowers. The biggest danger is grasshoppers, so they have to be covered with row crop material around the entire plant.

My new greenhouse is less than a year old. It is my third greenhouse and the most automated and tricked out one yet. It took several months to tear down the old one, prepare the site for the new one and get it built and all the components installed. So I had a lot of plants inside that got lugged to the bathroom at least weekly for a 'bath' and a lot outside covered in row crop material that had to be opened up, watered, and then closed back up at least weekly. so more work than usual.

And, of course, I have plants inside. Some are being quarantined. I try to keep all new plants separate for at least a month to ensure that I am not introducing pests into my greenhouse. Some are in bloom, because who doesn't love seeing their blooms every time they walk through the house. And some just grow better inside than out.

One of the members attending the HOTOS workshop suggested that we have a repotting party where we met at a member's house, brought plants and supplies and repotted plants. We are in the planning stage of setting that up in several locations centered around where we have the most members.

When was the last time your society had a workshop to engage your members, and attract non members? Activities that support your members are the best way to keep and attract members.

Speaking of supporting members, I just participated in a webinar, moderated by Julio Hector, and led by Cam Mackey entitled 5 ways to get value from your AOS membership. The webinar will be uploaded and available to everyone in a few days. A link will be sent to all with an Orchidgram in the near future.

The point of the webinar was that your membership in the AOS is so much more than just a subscription to Orchids magazine. While the magazine is the AOS's flagship product, there are many more benefits to membership. There are many ways to learn how to grow better using the AOS care sheets and webinars from experts in many different genera.

Another benefit that is often overlooked is the reciprocal garden admission program, which offers free or discounted entry to many botanical gardens, conservatories and arboreta nationwide. You can find the list of reciprocal entities under the benefits tab on the AOS website landing page.

Watch the webinar to find out all the tips on how to navigate our website and use all the resources offered by the AOS.

If you break the membership costs of a US gold or silver member into a monthly basis, you can join as a gold one year member for less than the monthly price of Netflix, or as a silver one year member for less than one venti peppermint mocha a month. For all the entertainment value offered with an AOS membership, I think it is a bargain.

As AOS Rep for your society please be an advocate for the AOS by actively encouraging your society members to join the AOS. If you know and understand all the benefits available to members you can be an incredibly powerful tool of engagement for your society and the AOS. Send me an email. alisong@aos.org.

KEEP YOUR SOCIETY INFO CURRENT ONLINE...

Please visit our webpage with your Society Member # and Login
to Update Contacts, Meeting and Show Dates

If you have any issues accessing your Society Member page or need help accessing,
please send an email to grahamramsey.aos@gmail.com



CLEVER, CRAFTY AND CONVENIENT – CORK COOZIES ARE JUST PLAIN COOL!

BY JILL BLAKE SMITH



Most orchid hobbyists who have been bitten by the bug have developed many innovative methods of potting, hanging and mounting their plants, following the tips and hints of more experienced growers and emulating the real creativity they observe in the exhibits at shows. And it is true that enthusiasts are always looking for new ideas to grow their orchids to maximize blooming, as well as displaying them to elicit oohs and aahs from friends and other society members.

Scott Peplin is an orchid grower from South Florida who also builds structures for housing orchids which he calls “orchid environments.” He cares for and services collections of local clients and conducts classes at his “Orchid Bar and Grill,” the centerpiece for his stunning orchid collection. A whirlwind of a guy who is always “on,” Scott has a knack for devising new ways to grow his glorious plants. His latest and greatest pet project is the “cork coozie” and it is proving to be a wildly successful and easy means to get orchids going and growing!

Those cork slabs for mounting that are fairly easy to come by are also available at many orchid supply companies in tubes of various lengths and diameters, sold by the pound. The very small size with diameters of three or four inches are better for air plants. The medium or large diameter tubes are more suitable for growing orchids. Scott takes one of these tubes, typically about five to eight inches in diameter for a medium coozie, and saws it into sections about six to eight inches long, depending on what kind of a plant he’ll be working with. That’s about right for a mini to medium Cattleya or Brassavola nodosa.

Then he drills four holes a few inches apart and bends the prongs of a wire hanger into each hole about an inch. If the coozie has a vertical split, he uses a snap tie to secure it. He might loosely encase the bare roots of the plant in coconut coir or he just plops it right into the cork container, making sure it doesn’t slip through. He secures the plant tag onto the wire and then he is ready to hang it in a spot with conditions conducive to growing that type of orchid. Voila! Orchids grown in cork coozies tend to do better hanging rather than on a bench because the roots seem to thrive with more air movement.



The coconut husk is entirely optional—bare root is fine too. If you create a coozie while your orchid is in active growth, in a matter of days, the roots will grow and graft onto the interior of the coozie and continue to happily spread all around it. Even though the orchids growing in this type of environment are essentially bare root, they may not necessarily require more frequent watering than plants growing in medium since the cork does retain some moisture. They should be fertilized like other potted or mounted plants. Sometimes Scott will be able to get some rather large tubes and he fondly refers to these as “pony kegs” or “keggers,” depending on the size. These are ideal for larger orchids or plants that have simply outgrown their current habitat and they’re constructed using the same method as the smaller coozies. The size of the coozie will all depend on the size of the root system of your plant.



Orchids that seem to thrive in cork coozies are *Cattleyas*, *Brassavola nodosa* and their crosses, *Laelia*, *Oncidium*, and *Catasetum*. Small *Dendrobium* will do well in little coozies because they like being tightly packed. The larger ones tend to be too top heavy for the coozie environment.

Cork bark has many features that appeal to orchid growers because it is a natural product, stripped from cork trees at optimal times so as not to damage the trees and allowing new bark to grow in its place. No trees are destroyed and there is no disturbance to flora or fauna. When used as a planter for orchids, there is resistance to mold and fungal growth, coozies last for many years, they withstand all weather and are a 100% sustainable material. Cork coozies are easy to maintain, no re-potting required and they're quite attractive, especially when festooned with moss or viny foliage. What a concept!

Scott has been studying and growing orchids for more than 30 years in Fort Lauderdale. His knowledge of orchids is vast, his collection is massive and he thrives on discovering and creating new and innovative ways to grow his beauties. He is a noted speaker at all of the South Florida orchid societies and he is a former member of the Board of Trustees of the Fort Lauderdale Orchid Society.

Scott's website is: www.Orchidenvironments.com



SHARE YOUR IDEAS & STORIES

YOUR GREAT IDEAS

Has your Society created ways to keep your members engaged and having them coming back for more? Do you have a fun fact you would like us to share? We would like to hear from you.

YOUR BLUNDERS

Do you have a recurring problem? Share your mishaps as well! Your lessons can help others avoid similar mistakes. Please email us your stories to arod@aos.org. If you wish your story to remain anonymous, we will be more than happy to keep it so.

AFFILIATED SOCIETIES COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Affiliated Societies Committee is looking for team members. Help us continue to build relationships and resources for all the American Orchid Society Affiliates. Please send an email to arod@aos.org if you are interested in joining us virtually at our August 15th Meeting @ 8 P.M (Eastern Time).

THANK YOU FOR READING!

Please remember to include the Affiliated Societies Committee (affiliated_societies@aos.org) to your newsletter distribution. We would like to know what you are doing. Help us help everyone by sending us your great ideas, recurring problems and your blunders; we all need that little inspiration in our orchid journey. If you have something to share, or there is something you would like to read about, please let us hear from you.

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