

# Orchids: Overwatering is one of the more common mistakes a new owner can make

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“A hot sunny window will fry them,” Taylor said, “and sitting near a heat source, even forced air, dries them too much.”

“You don’t want orchids touching a window,” Durham said. “It’s either too hot or too cold for them. Also, orchids don’t like to be crowded, as in touching each other.”

The instruction tag that usually comes with a commercially sold orchid contains information on the lighting, watering and temperature requirements for that orchid.

“It’s important to read this tag,” Taylor said, “and to honor the listed requirements.”

### Welcomed color

When I told Durham I only had two orchids, she grinned and said, “There’s time.” Then she added, “I used to have two or three.”

Like a wives tale, the misinformation that orchids are hard to grow has spread, she said.

Many people are enchanted by orchids and by the thought of growing them. One reason is the varied colors of the flowers.

“Many of the orchids I have bloom January through April,” Taylor

said, “and are a welcome spot of color when we’ve become very tired of winter grayness.”

Don’t be afraid to get started with orchids. Yes, there is misinformation out there about these exotic plants, but there is also a wealth of good information available. Don’t hesitate to contact your local orchid society. The best information comes from person-to-person contact. Embrace everything that growing orchids has to offer.

### Fun facts

Species orchids occur in nature.

Hybrid orchids are often created with human help or intervention.

Vanilla planifolia is known as the orchid of commerce. It was first used by the Aztecs to flavor chocolate. Vanilla beans are the dried seed pods of this orchid.

There are four basic orchid types: Epiphytic, terrestrial, saprophytic and lithophytes.

For more information, check out these two books:

“Orchid Fever,” by Eric Hansen and “The Orchid Thief,” by Susan Orlean.

*Patty Hardin is a freelance writer in Long Beach, Washington.*



One of the most common mistakes new orchid owners make is overwatering orchids.

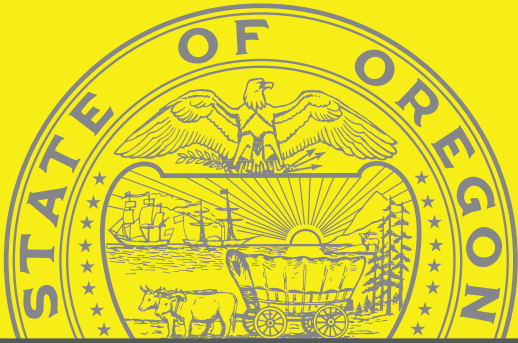


Though orchids appear tropical and exotic, they can thrive in Astoria if properly cared for.

Alex Pajunas/The Astorian

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