



The Orchidist

The South Florida Orchid Society Newsletter

SFOS February 18 2026 Program

Ramnarine (John) Budree

Culture and Excellence: Lessons from 40 Years of Growing Cattleya

We are thrilled to welcome Ramnarine (John) Budree as our featured speaker for the February meeting. Originally from Trinidad, Ramnarine migrated to Florida 25 years ago, bringing with him a lifelong passion for horticulture that has since evolved into a distinguished career in the orchid world.

John's journey is defined by a desire for challenge. While he has been growing orchids for over 40 years, his move to Florida marked a turning point where he transitioned from reading about legendary growers in AOS

Magazine to working alongside them. He has studied under some of the industry's most respected figures, including Frank Smith of Krull-Smith, Warren Kelly, and Bob Skully.



A defining moment in his career occurred at the 19th World Orchid Conference in Miami (2008), where he was the only hobbyist to produce a solo tabletop display. His hands-on experience spans the entire life cycle of the plant—from flask to flower—and his dedication has resulted in a staggering 75 AOS awards.

Though he maintains a vast collection of over 3,000 plants, John remains a relatable educator at heart. He famously focuses on the "challenge" plants—like the Paphiopedilums he was once told he couldn't grow—and maintains a humble outlook on the learning process, often noting that he has "lost count of the ones he killed" along the way to success.

Join us as John shares his decades of expertise in growing Cattleyas and provides his unique perspective on what it takes to produce award-winning blooms in our South Florida climate.

Martin A. Rivas
Program Director
South Florida Orchid Society

President's Message

Dear Members,

February has certainly tested us! With little to no rain this month and a recent cold front moving through South Florida, our orchids have required extra attention. I have been encouraged to hear how many of you protected your plants and rose to the challenge. Resilience defines both great growers and a strong Society.

Our February meeting will take place at 8:00 PM at Pinecrest Gardens, with plant judging from 7:00–8:00 PM, so be sure to arrive early to enjoy the process. We are excited to share that the Society now accepts Zelle payments in addition to cash, making participation easier than ever. In addition, do not miss our Silent Auction, featuring wonderful plants and special finds.

We are especially thrilled to welcome our featured speaker, Ramnarine (John) Budree, presenting “Culture and Excellence: Lessons from 40 Years of Growing Cattleya.” With more than four decades of experience and an extraordinary 75 AOS awards, John brings both mastery and humility to the art of growing. Having worked alongside industry legends and cultivated over 3,000 plants, he offers insight that is both inspiring and practical for South Florida growers. We are honored to have him with us.

Most importantly, I encourage each of you to bring a friend and introduce someone new to the beauty and joy of orchids. Our Society grows stronger each time we share what we love.

Despite dry days and chilly nights, our orchids, and our community, continue to flourish. I look forward to seeing you on February 18th for an evening of learning, camaraderie, and celebration.

Warmly,

James Furst
President,
South Florida Orchid Society



SOUTH FLORIDA ORCHID SOCIETY MINI-AUCTION SERIES

ALL PROCEEDS from items sold on the **MINI-AUCTION**
go to South Florida Orchid Society for the
benefit of the Society.

Members and guests may donate plants or other items to benefit
this fund-raising effort.

WE ACCEPT CASH, CHECKS. OR ZELLE ONLY.

Thank you for your support,
The South Florida Orchid Society Board of Directors

South Florida Orchid Society

Membership Shirts Available in beautiful Royal Blue!

Ladies V neck cotton (a little lighter in color, but still blue)

- Sm, Med, L, or XL at \$18.25
- 2XL at \$19.25
- 3XL at \$21.95

Ladies or Men's -Polo- in either Polyester or Cotton

- Sm, Med, L, or XL at \$25.75
- 2XL at \$26.75
- 3XL at \$28.00



Shirts can be seen and ordered at our meetings. All shirts must be paid for when ordered.

Remember to wear your shirts to our meetings for a special perk!

SFOS January 21st Judging Report

Judges: Sally Taylor, Julie Rosenberg, Erna Maxwell and Martin Rivas(student)

Blue Ribbons:

- Tolumnia Jairak Flyer - Ariel Girardi
- Rhy. gigantea - Melissa Alatrasta
- C. Horace "Maxima" AM/AOS - Melissa Alatrasta
- Lc. Santa Barbara Sunset "Showtime" - Melissa Alatrasta

Red Ribbons:

- C. Patchara Fancy - Melissa Alatrasta
- Rth. Nobile's Ambar - Melissa Alatrasta
- Lc. Betty Ford "York" AM/AOS - Aida Walchli

White Ribbons:

- C. dowiana "Boon" x L. purpurata "Krull's Rubra" AM/AOS - Melissa Alatrasta

Thank You for showing your blooms. We look forward to more beauties in February.

Erna Maxwell, Judging Chair.

All Award Photos Copyright ©2026 Ron Hunt



C. Horace "Maxima" AM/AOS - Melissa Alatrasta



Lc. Santa Barbara Sunset "Showtime" - Melissa Alatrasta



Tolumnia Jairak Flyer - Ariel Girardi



Rhy. gigantea - Melissa Alatrasta

Meeting Photos!



Meeting Photos!



Photos by Ron Hunt





Volunteer at the Rare Plant Festival

Support SFOS • Enjoy Rare Plants • Free Admission



May 1-3 🌸 Rare Plant Festival

Why Volunteer?



\$65 donated to SFOS for each member who volunteers



FREE festival admission after your volunteer shift



Support our Society & meet fellow plant lovers



Enjoy rare & extraordinary plants

Interested in Volunteering?

Email Maggie to Sign Up!



Email Maggie

maggieaba7@gmail.com

Thank you for supporting the South Florida Orchid Society!

Together, we grow 🌿

James Furst

President, South Florida Orchid Society

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	Feb. 10, 2026 Tuesday 8:30 pm EST	Feb. 12, 2026 Thursday 8:30 pm EST	Mar. 03, 2026 Tuesday 8:30 pm EST	Special Selections
Topic	Greenhouse Chat Orchid Q & A Answers to your questions about all things orchid. <i>Send in your Photos and Questions by Feb. 07</i>	Happy Roots Happy Orchids Get to the root of the matter to help you grow healthy orchids. How to create the ideal orchid root ecosystem.	Greenhouse Chat Orchid Q & A Answers to your questions about all things orchid. <i>Send in your Photos and Questions by Feb. 28</i>	All About Pests and Diseases Identify them and how to manage them. Filter Pests & Diseases from the <u>recorded FULL INDEX</u> category.
Presenter	Ron McHatton AOS Chief Education and Science Officer	Harvey Brenneise Orchid grower with success in various environments	Ron McHatton AOS Chief Education and Science Officer	AOS Chief Education and Science Officer, and Agdia Rep.



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

Use the WEBINAR Display Filter

Registration Is Easy! Just go to www.aos.org/webinars



American Orchid Society
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The South Florida Orchid Society Presents...

"An Introduction to Orchids"

Everything you need to know in order to successfully grow orchids in south Florida.

Pick up your copy today at better orchid Growers or at SFOS Meetings!



South Florida Orchid Society, Inc Board of Directors

President: James Furst

V.P. (Membership): Margaret Marshall

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Treasurer: Ariel Girardi

Directors, Terms ending in 2026

Erna Maxwell, Sally Taylor

Directors, Term ending in 2027

Maggie Echeverria, Charles Asche

Directors, Term ending in 2028

Charles Flick, Vacant

Immediate Past President: Javier Morejon

Special Director: Ron Hunt

Meetings are held on the third Wednesday
of each month from 7 to 9PM

Orchid registration begins at 7:00PM.

No plants will be registered after 7:30PM

Program begins at 8:PM

Become a Member of the South Florida Orchid Society!

MEMBER BENEFITS AND PRIVILEGES

- **MEETING AND MIXING** with many friendly and helpful orchid “neighbors”, amateurs, advanced collectors and commercial growers.
- **WELCOME KIT** includes a copy of “*An Introduction to Orchids*” our book that covers just about everything you need to know to successfully grow orchids in South Florida.
- **MONTHLY MEETINGS** with lectures by leading local and national orchid authorities.
- **FREE REFRESHMENTS!**
- **MONTHLY SILENT AUCTION!**
- **ORCHID JUDGING** each month by qualified regional and national judges.
- **MONTHLY NEWSLETTER** that includes awards given and timely meeting notes.
- **FESTIVE HOLIDAY PARTY!**
- **AIR CONDITIONED** spacious conveniently located meeting hall with ample **FREE** parking.

**CLICK THE ICON BELOW TO DOWNLOAD AN SFOS
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION. (PDF)**



The South Florida Orchid Society, Inc. is affiliated with
the West Palm Beach judging center of the
American Orchid Society.



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