



WHAT ORCHID IS THAT?

Learn to ID & Care for Your Orchids— Even Without Flowers!

Presented by Heather A. Herrick of Adventures in Botany
Kona Orchid Society Show & Sale
May 3rd | 9am–2pm | Kona, HI

Getting to Know Your Orchids

In today's talk, we looked at a few common orchid types and how to tell them apart. Knowing what kind of orchid you have is the first step to giving it the right care. This handout includes quick ID tips and basic care info to help you support your orchids at home.

Understanding Orchid Growth: Monopodial vs. Sympodial

Monopodial Orchids:

- Grow from a single central stem
- New leaves emerge from the top
- Roots come out from the base or stem
- No pseudobulbs
- Examples: Phalaenopsis, Vanda
- Care Tip: Don't cut the main stem — it's how the plant keeps growing!



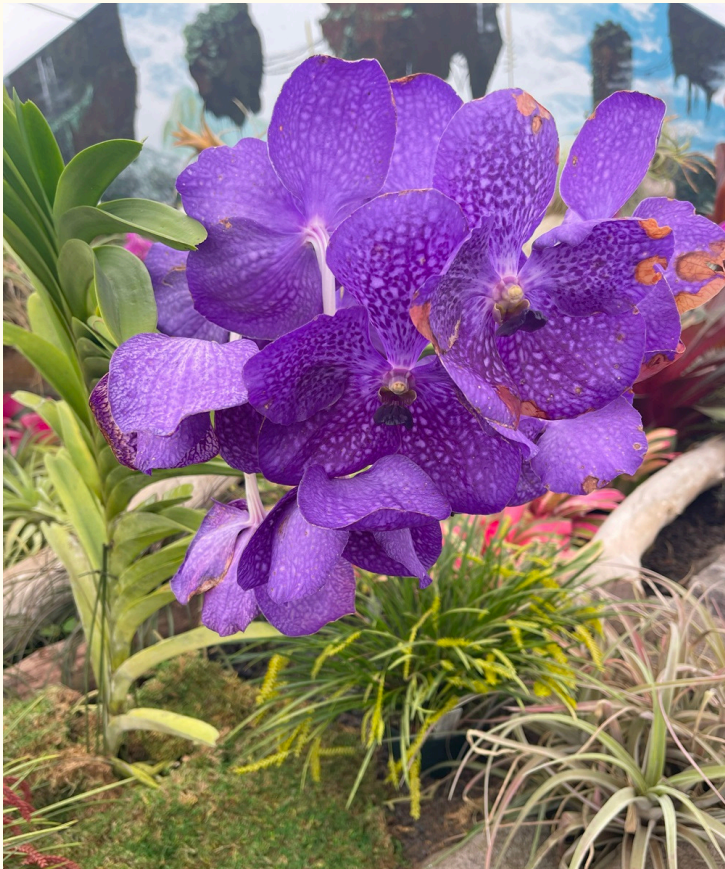
Sympodial Orchids:

- Grow sideways by producing new shoots along a rhizome
- Have pseudobulbs or canes that store water
- Leaves come out of each bulb/cane
- Examples: Cattleya, Oncidium, Dendrobium, Phragmipedium
- Care Tip: These types often need a rest between growth cycles — don't overwater!

Orchid Types, How to ID and Care for Each

Phalaenopsis:

- Flat, wide, leathery alternating leaves
- Thick silvery roots
- Medium to low indirect light, medium humidity
- Let media dry slightly between watering
- Watch for: crown rot!



Vanda:

- Long strappy leaves, aerial roots
- Bright light, probably the highest light orchid on our list
- Grown bare-root or in baskets
- Daily watering/soaking & airflow!
- Common issue: root rot from poor air circulation

Cattleya:

- Pseudobulbs & stiff upright leaves
- Needs to dry out between watering
- Bright light, morning sun
- pot in bark/perlite- depending on rainfall, or mount on trees
- Watch for: overwatering leading to root rot



Oncidium:

- Thin curly leaves, “dancing lady” flowers
- Shriveled bulbs = thirsty!
- Likes staying slightly moist
- Medium to bright light, watch leaf color for clues:
 - dark green= wants more light
 - yellow= wants less light
- Common issue: Shriveling or “accordion leaves” from dehydration

Dendrobium:

- Tall canes (deciduous or evergreen)
- Some drop leaves before blooming
- Bright light, similar to Cattleya
- Generally likes to dry out between waterings
- Tip: Know your Dendrobium sub-type- some need a dormant period



Slipper Orchids:

- Includes Paphiopedilum and Phragmipedium
- Fan-shaped leaves
- Medium to low light
- Keep evenly moist, never dry but never overly wet
- Fine bark & moss media to retain some water
- Common Issue: Dry conditions often lead to decline

Final Tips:

- Label your orchids when you get them
- Repot every 1–2 years or when media breaks down
- Clean leaves, check for bugs
- Know your microclimate, orchid care depends on your specific conditions
- Be patient—growth often comes before blooms!

Stay in Touch:

Heather A. Herrick | Adventures in Botany

- adventuresinbotany.com
- Instagram & YouTube: @adventuresinbotany
- Questions? Want help IDing your orchid? Send me a message!

Kona Orchid Society:

- Guests always welcome!
- Meetings: 2nd Friday of every month, 6:30 pm
- 74-4966 Kealaka'a St.
- Makua Lani Christian Academy
- Learn, grow, share, and connect with other orchid lovers!
- Scan for more info:

