

KEEPING STUDENTS WELL INFORMED AT HOME WHILE THEY'RE DISTANCE LEARNING.



WORLD OF WONDER

Exploring the realms of history, science, nature and technology

ORCHIDS

Phalaenopsis

From Indonesia, this orchid is available in multicolor varieties with stripes and spots.



Prized for their beautiful blossoms, orchids come in a huge array of colors, shapes and scents. Despite their delicate image, many are very hardy and easy to care for. They have captivated the interest of horticulturists over generations, and many people grow orchids as a hobby.

Types of orchids

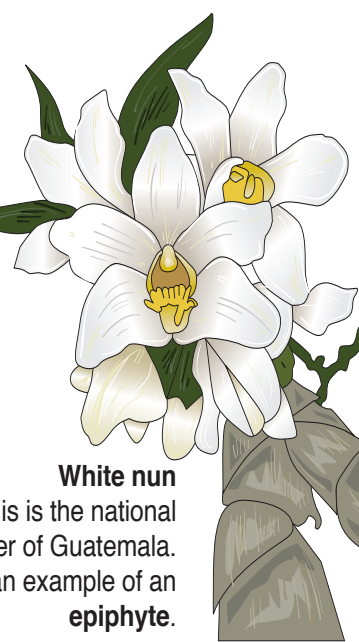
There are many varieties of orchids from around the world. Shown are some popular orchid varieties.

Cattleya

This large flower is found in the American tropics. Its flowers can be white, lavender, purple, yellow or red.

Orchids grow in the wild but are also cultivated as house and garden flowers.

White nun
This is the national flower of Guatemala. It is an example of an epiphyte.



Did you know?

Orchids have some of the tiniest seeds in the world.

Instead of having a classical root, orchids have a rhizome, tuber or aerial roots.

Orchids can live to be up to 100 years old. Some wild species have been known to live more than 200 years.

The largest and tallest species of orchid in the world is **Grammatophyllum speciosum** — it can grow up to 25 feet (7.6 m) tall.

The orchid genus containing the smallest species is **Platystele**, and the very smallest of these was discovered so recently that scientists haven't yet given it a name.

The national flowers of Belize, Brazil, Cayman Islands, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Seychelles, Singapore and Venezuela are orchids.

Thailand is the largest global exporter of tropical orchids.

There are about four times as many orchid species as there are mammal species, and more than twice as many orchid species as bird species.

New orchid species are discovered and described by scientists each year.

Uses

Decorative: Many people appreciate orchids for their beautiful flowers, and they are a popular choice as a cut flower and for corsages.

Perfume: Orchids are often used for their fragrances in perfumes and soaps.

Horticulture: Colorful orchid flowers play a vital role in nature throughout the world.

Food: Vanilla flavor comes from the seedpods of some orchid plants. It is used in baked goods and beverages.

Medicinal: Orchids have been used as a medicine by many cultures since ancient times. They have commonly been used to treat malaria, skin diseases and blemishes.

In a word

The term **orchid** was first introduced in 1845 by John Lindley. Orchid is a short form of **Orchidaceae**, the scientific family of flowering plants they belong to.

The basics

Orchids are one of the largest and oldest families of plants in the world — they have been around for than 120 million years.

There are 25,000 to 30,000 orchid species and about 120,000 hybrids.

There are two basic orchid growth types.

Monopodial orchids have a central stem. Flowers usually grow off the stem, between the leaves.

Sympodial orchids have a rhizome that sends out a shoot, from which a stem, leaves and eventually flowers form.

Habitat

Orchids grow everywhere except for deserts or glaciers. Most prefer tropical areas.

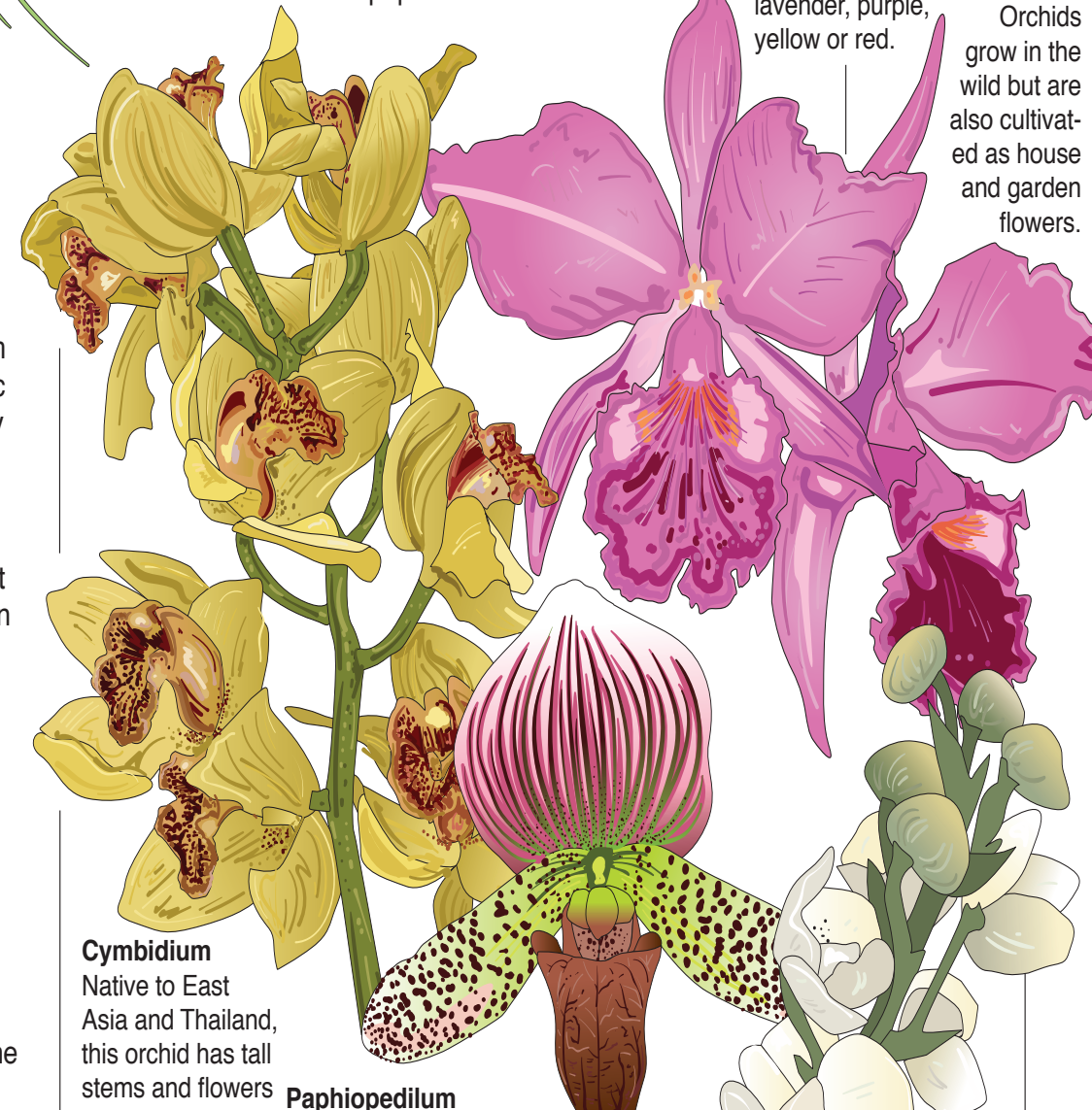
Many orchids do not have their roots in soil. Some are **epiphytes** and grow on other plants. Others are **lithophytes** and grow on rocks. These kinds of orchids get moisture and nutrients from rainwater, decaying plant matter or even the air.

Some orchids are **terrestrial**, growing on the ground.

Habitat loss and pollution are endangering many species.

For beginners

If you are interested in growing orchids, Phalaenopsis orchids are excellent for beginners. Paphiopedilum, Dendrobium, Oncidium, Vanda and Epidendrum are also easy to grow.



Cymbidium

Native to East Asia and Thailand, this orchid has tall stems and flowers in white, pink, red or yellow.

Paphiopedilum

Also known as the **Venus slipper**, this plant is native to Southeast Asia and islands of the central Pacific and tends to produce one flower.

Slipper orchids trap insects to aid pollination.

Holy Ghost orchid

Also known as the dove orchid, this plant is found in Central America, Panamá, Venezuela and Ecuador.

Miltonia

There are 12 species in this fragrant genus. Also known as pansy orchids, they are largely found in Brazil.

Dendrobium

This orchid is native to Southeast Asia. It is easy to grow and available in stripes or spots. It is also long-lasting as a cut flower.

SOURCES: World Book Encyclopedia, World Book Inc.; <https://kids.kiddle.co/>; All about Growing Orchids, Ortho Books; American Orchid Society; www.aboutorchids.com; <https://easysciencetorkids.com>

LEARN ABOUT GUYANA IN THE NEXT INSTALLMENT OF WORLD OF WONDER

CASA GRANDE
Dispatch
Pinal County's Daily Newspaper

Newspapers
in Education

OUR WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS IN EDUCATION PAGE CAN BE A FUN LEARNING TOOL FOR YOUR KIDS. CHECK BACK EACH THURSDAY FOR A NEW, EXCITING TOPIC!

CASA GRANDE
Dispatch

TO SUBSCRIBE:
(520) 423-8685

