



*Drew Mathieson Center*  
for Horticultural & Agricultural Technology

For more information on the Drew Mathieson Center, Bidwell Training Center  
as well as other Manchester Bidwell Corporation subsidiaries and programs:

[www.manchesterbidwell.org](http://www.manchesterbidwell.org)

# About Us

## About *Phalaenopsis* orchids

*Phalaenopsis* is a genus that includes approximately 60 orchid species. It is named for the moth genus *Phalaena*, as the flowers of some *Phalaenopsis* species resemble moths in flight, and generally have white or pink flowers. Originally native to southeast Asia, *Phalaenopsis* orchids now can be found on nearly every continent. *Phalaenopsis* orchids have become increasingly popular due to their ability to thrive under typical household conditions. The plants are generally in bloom for three months and can be encouraged to re-flower if the stems are cut off right under the flower. The ideal temperature ranges for *Phalaenopsis* orchids are 60-65 degrees Fahrenheit during the night and 75-85 degrees Fahrenheit during the day. They do best in a well-lit window facing east or south.



## About the Drew Mathieson Center

The Drew Mathieson Center is one of Western Pennsylvania's premier educational greenhouses. The 40,000 square foot complex is situated on the Bidwell Training Center campus and was established, in part, to support training in the plant sciences.

The center is the home for BTC's Horticulture Technology major and boasts four gutter-connected, high tech greenhouses with integrated classroom and lab components. It offers an applied learning experience for students aspiring to careers in landscaping, design, retail or wholesale floral, greenhouse operations and other "green" industries.

The daily operation and production of specialty crops, including the greenhouse's signature plant, the *Phalaenopsis* orchid, hydroponically grown vegetables, and other seasonal crops not only contribute to the center's unique combination of education and production but to the diverse learning experiences afforded to its students.

## About Bidwell Training Center

Since 1968, BTC has attracted national recognition for its innovative and career-oriented training that changes the lives of people in transition in southwestern Pennsylvania. BTC provides literacy and remedial education and partners with leading corporations to design high-caliber, market-relevant career training programs that lead to entry-level employment. Students can choose to major in one of eight fields of study: chemical laboratory technician, culinary arts, electronic record medical assistant, horticulture technology, medical claims processor, medical coder, office technology and pharmacy technicians.

BTC attracts a diverse group of adults from all racial, ethnic, economic, educational, and employment backgrounds reflective of the population in the region.

# Orchid Care

According to the American Orchid Society, *Phalaenopsis* orchids like those grown at the Drew Mathieson Center are the most popular variety of the flower in the United States. Not only are they beautiful, but the plants are also easy to care for and adapt well to home and office environments. Here are some tips on how to make the most of your orchid:

## Lighting

The *Phalaenopsis* requires considerable sunlight. Orchid experts recommend placing the plant either in an east-facing window or in a lightly shaded south-facing window to ensure adequate light.

## Temperature

Typical household temperatures are ideal for *Phalaenopsis* orchids. Nighttime temperatures should be between 60 and 65 degrees Fahrenheit, and the range for daytime temperatures is 75 to 85 degrees Fahrenheit.

## Water

The Drew Mathieson Center cultivates its orchids in Grade AAA long fiber Sphagnum moss. That medium requires watering every 7-10 days.

Orchids fare better when they are kept relatively moist, but take care not to overwater them. For the best results, water the orchid first thing in the morning to give it the opportunity to dry out somewhat throughout the day.

## Fertilizer

A nutrient solution specifically designed for orchids is highly recommended and can be easily obtained at a garden supply store. The solution should be applied every other week.

## Pests and diseases

*Phalaenopsis* orchids are most often affected by spider mites and mealy bugs. The plants also are susceptible to bacterial and fungal infections, particularly if their flowers are watered directly. Consider using appropriate insecticides and bacterial and fungal repellent to protect your plant's longevity.

## Repotting

The *Phalaenopsis* should be repotted every other year, ideally immediately after it has flowered.

Source: Orchids.com



# Why Buy Orchids?

It is no surprise that orchids are becoming increasingly popular. They provide the rare combination of exotic beauty and affordability. Here are a number of other top reasons to buy *Phalaenopsis* orchids:

## Availability

When the flowers were first discovered over two centuries ago, orchid lovers had to spend large sums of money and travel great distances in order to indulge their passion. Now one only has to travel as far as a local retailer.

## Duration

The *Phalaenopsis* orchid is in bloom for three months, a particularly lengthy time among orchids.

## Longevity

Orchids can thrive for years when they receive proper care and attention.

## Maintenance

Orchids generally do well under typical household temperatures in well-lit windows.

## Beauty

Because orchids can live year-round, they can add a touch of beauty — and a much-needed reminder of milder seasons — to an otherwise dreary winter day.

## Special Occasions

Orchids make excellent gifts for housewarmings, hostesses and other special occasions.

## Continuity

The *Phalaenopsis* can be encouraged to bloom again if the stem is cut off after the initial flowering.

## Satisfaction

Growing orchids can be the source of a very satisfying hobby. The American Orchid Society boasts a membership of more than 16,000 orchid enthusiasts.

## Elegance

Even a single orchid can add a dramatic touch to any room's décor and can make particularly elegant centerpieces.



# Fundraising with Orchids



The idea of an orchid sale may be a new one for your organization, but fortunately other nonprofit groups have blazed this trail before you, and you can learn from them. Based on the experiences of our past customers, the following suggestions will help you build a foundation for a profitable orchid sale. If you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to ask. Consider us a resource in your effort to hold a successful fundraiser!

## Orchid sale logistics

While we offer both lavender and white *Phalaenopsis* orchids, we encourage you to sell only one of those two colors. This prevents you from encountering challenges in sorting the orchids for delivery. Also, customers cannot change their minds at the last minute and ask for lavender instead of white, or vice versa.

Place a one- or two-day limit on the window in which customers can order their orchids. When the opportunity to order stretches out over a number of days, potential customers may procrastinate and end up forgetting to do so.

Ask customers to pay for their orchids when placing their order. This will ensure a positive experience for both you and the buyer.

## Promoting your orchid sale

Be sure to allow ample time to promote your orchid sale. If you give people too little notice, they may not be able to buy orchids. Alternatively, if you let people know too far in advance, they may forget about the sale when the time comes for it. Plan to begin advertising your sale a week or two before the date you will be taking orders.

Use a number of methods to spread the word about your orchid sale. Consider flyers, posters, stories in organizational newsletters and local newspapers, e-mail blasts and social media tools like Facebook and Twitter. Ultimately, though, word-of-mouth tends to be the most effective marketing technique. Talk up your sale to as many people as you can!

Remind your potential customers of how beautiful and exotic the orchids are and how easy it is to care for them. We can provide fact sheets on both of those topics that your organization can distribute to customers.

## Delivering the orchids

Set aside a convenient time (lunchtime, the end of the workday) for orchid pickup to make it as easy as possible on your customers.

Keep a list of all orchid buyers with you so that you can cross-check that payment has been received. If you have a particularly large sale, you may want to organize the delivery by groups (i.e. last names that begin with A-L go to one person, while those with M-Z go to another) in order to make the process smoother.

# Event Planning

Even in relatively simple arrangements, orchids can add a dramatic flair to any event's décor. Once thought to be an exotic indulgence, orchids have become increasingly affordable in recent years, and clients are pleasantly surprised to discover that such a "luxury" will not be a budget-buster.

Event planners throughout western Pennsylvania have turned to the Manchester Bidwell Corporation's Drew Mathieson Center for orchids to decorate parties, galas and other special events. Before choosing our orchids, though, many planners ask questions like these:

## What kinds of orchids are grown at the Drew Mathieson Center?

We specialize in the *phalaenopsis* orchid shown below. Because its smooth, mystical flowers look like moths in flight, it is more commonly known as the moth orchid. Our orchids come in white and lavender varieties. Other orchid species are subject to availability.

## Are your orchids only available during certain times of the year? How much do they cost?

Our orchids are available year-round. Their prices start at \$15 each. That cost is comparable to other wholesale orchid vendors, and the proceeds benefit our nonprofit organization.

## How far in advance do I need to place an order?

We ask that you place your order six to eight weeks in advance of your desired delivery date. This gives us ample time to prepare your order for delivery.

## Will you deliver the orchids, or will I have to pick them up?

For a fee, we can deliver orchids to any location within a 50-mile radius of our greenhouse, which is located in Pittsburgh's Manchester neighborhood. Delivery is available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.–3 p.m. and should be scheduled at least three days in advance.

## What organizations benefit from sales of your orchids?

By incorporating orchids grown at the Drew Mathieson Center into your event, you are helping to support the programs of Bidwell Training Center (BTC) and Manchester Craftsmen's Guild (MCG), subsidiaries of the Manchester Bidwell Corporation.

For more than four decades, BTC has prepared job seekers for entry-level employment in a variety of professions. Our students receive training in fields ranging from horticulture to culinary arts to medical coding, completing both classroom-based coursework and hands-on externships that prepare them for success in the workplace.

MCG's Youth & Arts program initiates and supports positive change in the lives of young people through engagement in the visual arts.

MCG Jazz preserves, promotes and presents jazz through live performance, recordings and educational outreach.





# Florists

Orchids can add a dramatic flair to even simplest arrangements. Once thought to be an exotic indulgence, the flowers have become more affordable in recent years, leading to an increased demand for them. If you have not already gotten more frequent customer requests for orchids, you probably will in the near future.

Florists throughout western Pennsylvania have turned to the Manchester Bidwell Corporation's Drew Mathieson Center for orchids. Before choosing our orchids, though, many florists ask questions like these:

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# Grocery Stores

Once thought to be an exotic indulgence, orchids are becoming an increasingly affordable and popular choice for flower lovers. Because people are eager to treat themselves to a taste of luxury at a reasonable cost, orchids can boost sales in a grocery store's floral department. The beautiful flowers also can serve as the centerpieces for striking displays, attracting the attention of potential buyers.

A number of Pittsburgh area grocery stores have chosen to sell orchids grown at the Manchester Bidwell Corporation's Drew Mathieson Center. Before making the decision to include our orchids among their floral offerings, though, many store operators ask questions like these:

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## Should we note that the Drew Mathieson Center is the source of our orchids?

While we don't require that you list us as your orchid supplier on any display signage, we encourage you to do so. It can be an important piece of the marketing puzzle. Shoppers who know that their purchase will benefit such an important community resource may be more willing to splurge. Also, our product is grown and distributed locally, which can be attractive to certain shoppers.

## Are your orchids only available during certain times of the year? How much do they cost?

Our orchids are available year-round. Their prices start at \$15 each. That cost is comparable to other wholesale orchid vendors, and the proceeds benefit our nonprofit organization.





# Non-profits

Once thought to be an exotic indulgence, orchids are becoming an increasingly affordable and popular choice for flower lovers. People are eager to treat themselves to a taste of luxury at a reasonable cost, so orchids can be a profitable choice for nonprofits in search of a unique fundraiser item.

Orchids grown at the Manchester Bidwell Corporation's Drew Mathieson Center have been the source of successful sales at a number of local nonprofit organizations. Before embarking on such a fundraiser, though, many groups ask questions like these.

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