

McKee Botanical Garden and the Vero Beach Orchid Society to Host the First Annual Rare & Exotic Orchid Exhibition

Collaboration Celebrates the Rich Legacy of Orchid Cultivation at McKee Botanical Garden

VERO BEACH, FL, UNITED STATES, September 4, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- McKee Botanical Garden and the Vero Beach Orchid Society are pleased to announce the First Annual [Rare & Exotic Orchid Exhibition and Sale](#), taking place at McKee Botanical Garden on Saturday, September 6, from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm, and Sunday, September 7, from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm.

The event will showcase Florida craft artisans and several nationally and internationally acclaimed orchid growers, including Krull-Smith, Odom's Orchids, Ritter Tropic 1, Quest Orchids, and Springwater Orchids. Visitors will enjoy a vibrant marketplace of rare and exotic plants, within McKee's award-winning jungle landscape, as well as lectures and educational offerings throughout the weekend.

On Saturday at 9:30 am, internationally acclaimed plantsman and author Robbie Honey will discuss his most recent book, *The Accidental Botanist*. At 10:30 am, join Dr. Martin R. Motes, Florida's foremost breeder and cultivator of Vandaceae orchids, for a lecture on his experience growing orchids for over 40 years and insights into this striking orchid family. Copies of his bestselling works *Florida Orchid Growing: Month by Month* and *The Natural Genus: Vanda* will be available for sale.

Throughout history, orchids have captivated artists, writers, and visionaries alike. For McKee Jungle Gardens' Co-Founder and orchid enthusiast Arthur McKee, personally amassed the largest private orchid collection in the United States in the 1930s and '40s. This collaborative exhibition honors the Garden's remarkable orchid legacy, which began in 1946 when Arthur McKee invited Dr. David Fairburn from the Missouri Botanical Garden to oversee McKee Jungle Gardens' growing collection. For decades, Fairburn's orchids remained a centerpiece of McKee, beloved by visitors and sought after by collectors.

The story of the Vero Beach Orchid Society is a vibrant tribute to passion, community, and the enduring allure of orchids. In August 1974, Dominic Lettiere's spark lit a torch that continues to glow strongly, decades later. By 1975, VBOS adopted a charter, elected officers, and voted to become affiliated with the American Orchid Society. Today, the Vero Beach Orchid Society remains an active and enthusiastic group of orchid lovers.

McKee Botanical Garden's orchid legacy flourishes with a living collection of more than 900 orchids, encompassing rare, historic, and native species. McKee is also a proud partner in The Million Orchid Project, a groundbreaking conservation initiative to reestablish rare native orchids throughout South Florida. Once the envy of orchid societies across the country, McKee's collection is being revitalized with renewed focus. This inaugural Orchid Exhibition and Sale is only the beginning—future events will expand upon this tradition. Join us as we celebrate the return of McKee's orchids to center stage—and help cultivate the next chapter in our storied orchid history.

McKee Botanical Garden is the first and oldest visitor attraction in Vero Beach. Now a Florida Heritage Landmark, McKee is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is the recipient of The Garden Conservancy's Jean and John Greene Prize for Excellence in American Gardening and is one of only eight Gardens in the world with 51 cultivated waterlilies Certified as a Collection of Excellence by the International Waterlily and Water Gardening Society. Founded in 1922 by early developers and conservationists, Arthur McKee and Waldo Sexton, McKee operated as an internationally renowned visitor attraction from 1932 until a 1976 sale to developers. The 18-acres that remain of the historic garden served as collateral until the final payment from the developer was received. When plans to bulldoze what was once the heart of the garden were announced, an unprecedented community effort ensued to rescue, restore and reopen the historic garden. McKee Botanical Garden now features 10,000 tropical plants, internationally renowned exhibits, the Treasure Coast's largest holiday light display, JUNGLE LIGHTS, the Children's Garden, the Garden Café, the Garden Gift & Book Shop and year-round educational programs for adults and children. Supported by over 7,000 members, hundreds of volunteers, and enjoying record-breaking visitor attendance, year after year, McKee remains a testament to the resilience of nature and dedication of the community it serves.

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