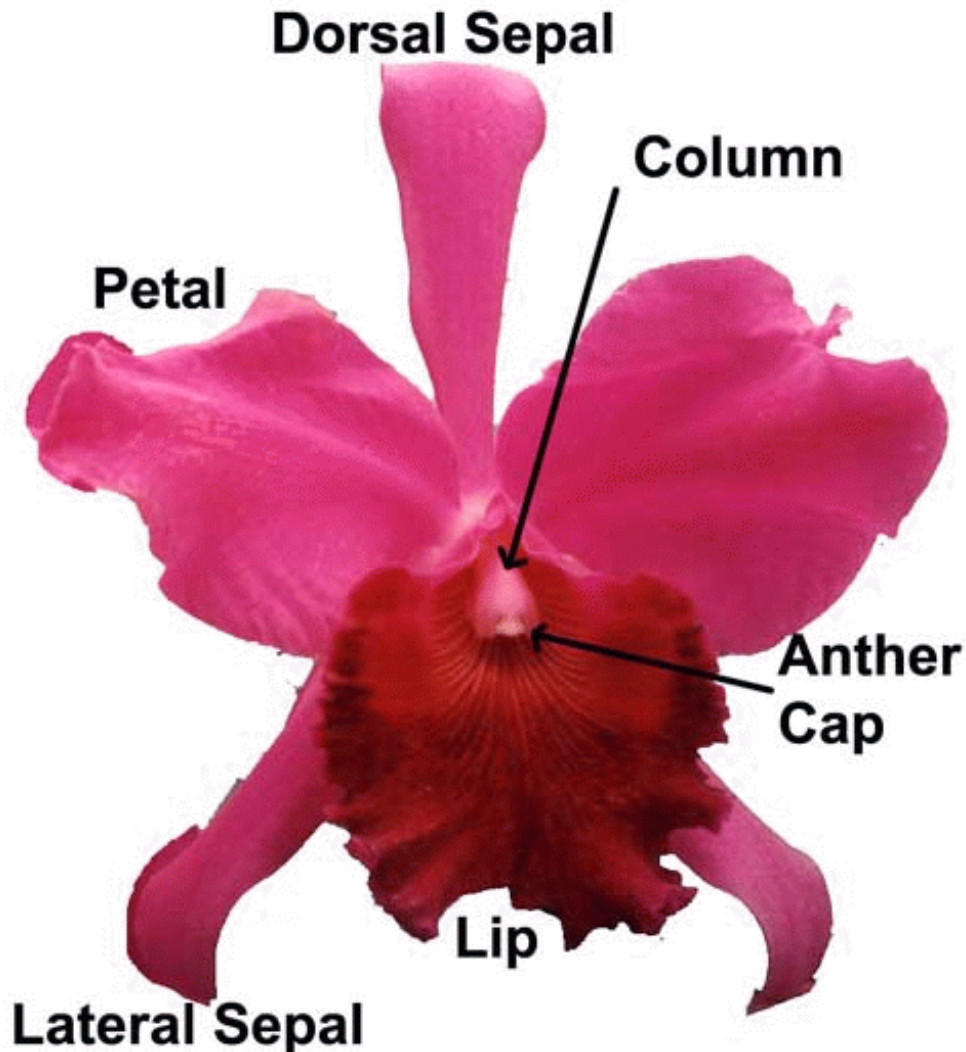


## AY HONOR – Orchids

The requirements for the Orchids honor are as follows:

**1. Define the characteristics of an orchid.**



**2. What are the two main groupings of orchids according to their growth pattern? Name and show examples of each from an orchid or a picture of one.**

There are two general types of orchids, one is Epiphytic and the other is Terrestrial. They have two general growth patterns which are monopodial & sympodial.

**Monopodial:** This is a plant that grows predominantly upwards from the bottom leaf upon leaf. For examples of the plants see Phalaenopsis and Vanda type orchids.

*Sympodial*: This is a plant that grows along a surface with a rhizome. The new growth is from a continuation of the rhizome. For examples see the Cattleya and Dendrobium type orchids such as the flower above.

### **3. What are the differences between epiphytic, parasitic, and saprophytic orchids?**

Epiphytic Orchids, grow in trees (some in rocks also known as Lithophytes). They use the tree they are growing on as a host, similar to a pot or basket. They do not remove nourishment from the "host" only the water that washes across the roots. This is why you typically find them in the area where branches come together.

Parasitic Orchids, in short there are none.

Saprophytic Orchids, these are orchids that receive their nutrients from decaying matter. These are terrestrials.

### **4. Discuss the distribution of orchids, making particular reference to the occurrence of these in your area.**

This will vary by area. Please check [www.aos.org](http://www.aos.org) for a list of growers / websites in your area.

### **5. Name the main cultivated genera of orchids. Identify three from an orchid or picture. What is cultivar?**

*Main cultivated orchid genera*: Cattleya, Cymbidium, Phalaenopsis, Vanda (Ascocenda and similar).

Orchid identification – visit <http://www.orchidworks.com/> for some excellent photos. The NAD Pathfinder website has also produced several pages of Picture Flashcards with correct Genera.

*Cultivar*: An individual plant and its vegetative propagations in cultivation; a horticultural variety. (Definition from: <http://www.ocos.net/glossary.cfm>)

### **6. Discuss the main essentials to observe in the cultivation of orchids. Grow at least one orchid for at least six months.**

Check out such websites as:

[www.discoverorchids.com](http://www.discoverorchids.com)

[www.orchidlady.com](http://www.orchidlady.com)

[http://www.orchids.com/support/supportCareTips\\_Cattleya.html](http://www.orchids.com/support/supportCareTips_Cattleya.html)

### **7. What are the main uses of orchids? What orchid is used commercially?**

The most common uses of orchids are food flavoring, bouquets and corsages.

#### **As food:**

Most know "Ice Cream and Flavorings". If a product is made with Vanilla it is made from an orchid that is the most commercially used. There are many types of vanilla but the 3 most commonly used commercial vanilla are:

Vanilla fragrans

Vanilla planifolia

Vanilla pompona

With planifolia being the most used of all.

In some areas in the world there are terrestrial orchid "tubulars" that are used as a source of food.

They are often ground up into a pulp and added to other food items.

**For flowers:**

Many orchids are used with corsages and bouquets you will find the Cymbidiums, Cattleya Dendrobiums and Phalaenopsis.

---

*Answers for this AY Honor were compiled and submitted by Kevin Johnson,  
[www.discoverorchids.com](http://www.discoverorchids.com) 2005.*