

# North American Orchid Conservation Center

A public-private collaboration to conserve orchids native to the U.S. and Canada



*Rose Pogonia*

# Why orchids?

*“...plants of great beauty and charisma can be used to focus attention on habitat that holds more than just the beautiful”*

—Ned Nash, American Orchid Society

Orchids are the most diverse family of flowering plants, but many of the more than 200 species native to the U.S. and Canada are threatened. Part of the reason for their decline is that orchids are intimately tied to their habitats, relying on fungi and pollinators to complete their life cycles.

The survival of orchids depends on a delicate balance within healthy ecosystems. But their decline, like the canary in the coal mine, is often the first sign of trouble.





*Ghost Orchid*

## We are...

the North American Orchid Conservation Center (NAOCC), established by the Smithsonian Institution and the U.S. Botanic Garden, committed to the conservation of our native orchids. NAOCC is growing a network of botanic gardens, public and private landowners, researchers, educators and citizens to meet this challenge.

### investing in the future

- Preserving the genetic diversity of local orchid populations by collecting and storing seeds of native orchids in regional and national seed banks
- Building a living collection of fungi that play a critical role in the life cycle of orchids, especially for germination and growth

### growing for today and tomorrow

- Assuring the long-term survival of orchid populations by developing propagation protocols from research on the biology of orchids and the roles of fungi and pollinators

### exploring innovation

- creating online resources, such as the NAOCC and *Go Orchids* websites, that engage and educate citizen scientists across a variety of platforms

<http://northamericanorchidcenter.org>

<http://goorchids.northamericanorchidcenter.org>



*Crane-fly Orchid*

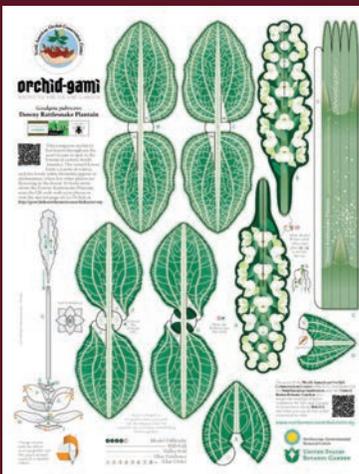
# ...orchid resources

## *protocorms to punch-outs*



Germination of dust-like orchid seeds, such as these Ladies' Tresses, produces *protocorms* or seedlings, the first step toward growing plants to re-establish orchid populations. Exposing these young seedlings to an appropriate fungus improves their growth and increases their chances to survive when planted in their native habitats.

The *Go Orchids* website takes you on a journey across the continent to discover over 200 native and non-native orchid species – even those orchids that seem to have disappeared but may be waiting to be rediscovered. When out for a hike or nature walk, turn your mobile device into a field guide to identify orchids by answering simple questions as photos and drawings guide you through the *Go Orchids* key.



**Downy Rattlesnake Plantain  
orchid-gami template**

*Orchid-gami* provides information about the conservation status and ecology of our native orchids using three dimensional models that are colorful, fun and designed to capture imaginations. Start a conversation about orchid conservation and discover how flower shape and color attract pollinators necessary for seed production.

Contact NAOCC to learn more about *orchid-gami* and how to obtain these orchid punch-outs.



**Crested Coralroot  
orchid-gami model**

# Join us!

Native orchids are at risk! NAOCC is committed to the survival of our native orchids through programs that focus on preservation, propagation, and education.

Let's get started:

- *Discover* more about orchids. The *Go Orchids* website is a great resource for learning about orchids in your area.
- *Volunteer* with your local native plant society, botanic garden, biodiversity project or orchid society. These organizations provide opportunities to learn about orchids in their natural habitats and what needs to be done to protect them.
- *Garden responsibly* and never dig up orchids in the wild. Purchase only nursery-grown orchids from reputable growers.
- *Contact* NAOCC to learn more about orchid conservation and the role you can play.



***Fairy Slipper***



***Pink Lady's Slipper***



*A skipper pollinates the Purple Fringed Orchid as it searches for nectar*



*The Small Whorled Pogonia depends on nearby fungi*



*Striped Coralroot*



Learn more about NAOCC by  
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[northamericanorchidcenter.org](http://northamericanorchidcenter.org)



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