



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 2, 2012

Images available on request

Media Contact Only:

Lynn Rossotti

(202) 243-3975

lrossotti@HillwoodMuseum.org

Hillwood Expands [Orchid Month](#) With New Program Offerings

Thousands of orchids fill the greenhouses with fragrance and color, while guest lecturers, specialized tours, and workshops bring new perspective to the exotic flower

WASHINGTON — Hillwood Estate, Museum and Gardens is expanding its [Orchid Month](#) programming by offering visitors more opportunities to explore founder [Marjorie Merriweather Post's](#) original orchid collection and learn directly from orchid experts. **Orchid Month** will run from March 1 to March 30 and feature guest lecturers, behind-the-scenes greenhouse tours, and hands-on workshops catering to all levels of orchid enthusiasts.

A greater number and variety of orchids are in bloom during March than any other season at Hillwood, and improved cultivation methods have made the greenhouses even more lush and vibrant this year. With five climate-controlled greenhouses where visitors can explore thousands of orchids, **Orchid Month** offers a warm retreat for those looking to escape the winter. Hillwood is one of the only public gardens in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area that offers visitors daily access to a working greenhouse where orchids are housed and cared for by staff. Behind-the-scenes tours will be led by the Orchid Curator and offered on a daily basis throughout March.



For the first time, newly discovered archival photos that bring to life Post's lifelong passion for collecting orchids will be shared with the public. A presentation by Jason Gedeik, Head of Greenhouse and Design Operations, will shed light on her original orchid collection. "One of the greatest untold stories about Mrs. Post is that of her life-long love affair with orchids," said Gedeik. "Orchids were her absolute favorite flower and she invested significant resources into fueling this passion. Whether it was building a separate house at Hillwood for her orchid curator or travelling with hundreds of orchids to her vacation homes, Mrs. Post was determined to always be surrounded by these beloved flowers."

Today, Hillwood's collection contains over 2,000 orchids of approximately 1,200 different species, hybrids, and clones, many like the classic Cattleya that were collected by Post herself and that are blooming again today.

Orchid-themed activities for the month of March

Greenhouse Tours

11:00 am Tuesdays and Fridays throughout March

2:00 pm Tuesday through Saturday throughout March

2:30 pm Sunday, March 18

While many public gardens have greenhouses with coordinated displays, Hillwood visitors are treated to the more rare opportunity to tour a working greenhouse. Hillwood founder Marjorie Merriweather Post had the greenhouses constructed to nurture her extensive collection of exotic orchids and cut flowers grown for floral arrangements throughout the mansion. Jason Gedeik, Head of Greenhouse and Design Operations, leads a short tour of the working greenhouse, highlighting its history, Post's infatuation with orchids, and the exotic blooms and fragrances on display now.

Included in suggested donation.

Lectures and Talks:

A Lifelong Love Affair: Marjorie Merriweather Post and Orchids

10:30-11:00 am Tuesdays and Fridays throughout March

10:15-10:45 am Saturday, March 3 and Saturday March 10

Throughout her life, Hillwood's founder Marjorie Merriweather Post was enamored with finely-crafted and beautiful objects. While this passion is most frequently associated with her art collection, it also holds true for her orchids, a large collection of which was amassed throughout her lifetime. Join Head of Greenhouse and Design Operations, Jason Gedeik, as he explores Post's love of orchids with evocative archival images and fascinating stories of how she incorporated them into her luxurious lifestyle.

Included in suggested donation.

The Classic Cattleyas

11 am–Noon Saturday, March 10

From the 1930's to the 1950's, Cattleyas were all the rage in the United States – not as potted plants but as cut flowers. Orchid corsages adorned the shoulders, hair, and wrists of stylish ladies at social affairs. Many people died in their pursuit of these gorgeous plants. This lecture invites the audience to learn about this popular orchid and the amazing stories that accompanied their introduction into the orchid world.

Arthur Chadwick and his father founded the Chadwick & Son Orchids Inc. in 1989 and currently run 11 greenhouses and a retail store. Their book, *The Classic Cattleyas*, widely considered the definitive book on large flowered *Cattleya* species, was featured on the *Martha Stewart Show*. Art speaks internationally and writes a monthly orchid advice column for the *Richmond Times Dispatch*. He will be signing his book, *The Classic Cattleyas*, after the lecture.

\$15, \$7 students, Free for Hillwood members

Overcoming Orchid Pests and Diseases

3-4 pm Saturday, March 24

What is that icky stuff on your orchid? Does your plant have black spots on its leaves or looks sickly and hasn't bloomed in years? Plant pests and plagues confound most growers! Learn how to identify, prevent, and control common orchid problems using an integrated pest management approach that stresses no or few low toxicity pesticides. This lecture addresses everything from improving cultural methods to bio control using good bugs against bad ones. Carol Allen served as supervisory horticulturist at the United States Botanic Garden. She is currently studying plant science at the University of Maryland researching the transmission of virus diseases in orchids.

\$15, \$7 students, Free for Hillwood members

Workshops

Hands-On Workshop: How to Get Your Orchid to Rebloom

2:30-4 pm Saturdays, March 3 and 17

10:30 am–Noon Saturday, March 24

Tired of buying a beautiful orchid only to throw it away months later? This hands-on workshop will teach you how to care for your orchid in order to get more flowers. Orchids can last for decades and offer countless blooms during their lifetime. Bring in an orchid from your home collection and get specific pointers on everything from watering and pruning to the proper light and fertilizer. You'll learn the secrets to mastering the art of successful orchid growing! Handouts provided. Limited to 10.

\$25, \$15 Hillwood members

Hands-On Workshop: To Repot or Not?

2:30-4 pm Saturday, March 10

1-2:30 pm Saturday, March 24

10:30 am-Noon Saturday, March 17

Have you kept your orchid alive for a full year? Congratulations! Even with a successful monthly orchid care routine, your plant will benefit from some extra love and attention. Orchids need to be repotted every 1-2 years. Each type of plant requires a different potting material and technique. Your plant will leave with a "good home" and reward you with years of gorgeous flowers. It's not as hard as you think! Bring one or two orchids from home, along with an unglazed clay pot to this hands-on workshop. Limited to 10.

\$25, \$15 Hillwood members

GENERAL INFORMATION

Location: 4155 Linnean Avenue, NW, Washington, DC
Metro: VanNess/UDC, Red Line (20 minute walk)

Information: 202.686.5807 for information and reservations or www.HillwoodMuseum.org
Follow us [www.Facebook.com/HillwoodMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/HillwoodMuseum) or Twitter @HillwoodMuseum
For Orchid Month information go to www.hillwoodmuseum.org/orchidmonth

Hours: Tuesday through Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm; Select Sundays, 1 to 5 pm. Closed Mondays, most national holidays, and January 16-31.

Café: The HILLWOOD Café serves lunch Tuesday through Saturday from 11:00 am to 3:30 pm.
Afternoon Tea is served on Sundays only from 1 to 3:30 pm.
Express Dining, featuring a quick selection of sandwiches, salads, snacks, and beverages (cash only) is available Tuesday through Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm and Sunday from 1 to 4 pm.
Call (202) 686-5807 for café reservations

Suggested Donation: \$15, \$12 seniors, \$10 college students, \$5 for visitors age 6 to 18.
No donation is suggested for children under 6.

#

One of the premier art collector's museums in the United States, Hillwood Estate, Museum and Gardens is dedicated to enlightening and engaging visitors with an experience inspired by founder Marjorie Merriweather Post's passion for excellence, gracious hospitality, and intent to preserve and share the beauty and history of her collections, garden, and estate. Home to the foremost collection of Russian imperial art in the United States and impeccable French furnishings and objects, Hillwood is set upon 25 acres of gardens and surrounding woodlands in northwest Washington, D.C. Twelve acres of enchanting formal gardens include a Japanese-style garden, a Rose Garden, and a French parterre, while the working greenhouses hold over 2,100 exotic orchids.