# The Orchid Conservation Alliance

Annual Meeting, October 31, 2026




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# Agenda

1. **Who We Are and What We Do** — Mary Gerritsen
2. **2026 Goals and Progress** — Mary Gerritsen
3. **Orchids in the Wild Tours** — Mary Gerritsen
4. **Treasurer’s Report** — Roberta Fox
5. **New Conservation Projects and Fundraising** — Ron Kaufmann
6. **Looking Ahead: Plans and Priorities for 2027** — Mary Gerritsen

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# The OCA Team

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**Mary E. Gerritsen, Ph.D.**

President



**Peter Tobias, Ph.D.**

Director



**Ron Kaufmann, Ph.D.**

Director and Secretary



**Steve Beckendorf, Ph.D.**

Director Emeritus



**Roberta Fox**

Treasurer and Membership



**Candy Hollinger**

Social Media Guru



**Jack Lothrop**

Newsletter Editor

# Our Mission: Goals and Progress

## Our Goals

| |
|---|
| Protect orchid-rich habitat |
| Expand existing reserves |
| Identify and evaluate possible new reserves |
| Support conservation partners |
| Engage the orchid community |

## Progress

| |
|---|
| Protected over 5300 acres of orchid rich habitat |
| Identified properties and initiated Dracula Reserve expansion |
| Exploring new Los Alpes (Riosucio) Reserve as well as Salvamontes Reserva Natural La Selva de Ventanas expansion |
| Continued our support of EcoMinga Fundación and Corporación Salvamontes |
| Expanded Orchids in the Wild Ecotours, Membership and Sales booths at shows in California |

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# OCA Conservation Achievements

**5329+**
Acres of orchid-rich habitat protected

**3**
Countries: Ecuador, Colombia. Brazil

**$923,842**
Contributed towards land conservation

**$200,000+**
Additional support for reserve organizations

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# How We Choose Conservation Projects

### Biodiversity

Protect habitats with exceptional orchid diversity

### Local Partners

Work with local organizations capable of owning and managing protected lands

### Legal Protection

Ensure permanent, legally recognized protection of the land

All three criteria must be met before OCA supports a land acquisition project

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# Our Conservation Partners

## Ecuador

### Fundación EcoMinga

Río Anzu, Drácula and *Phragmipedium fischeri* reserves

## Colombia

### Corporación SalvaMontes

La Esperanza and Los Magnolios reserves

OCA has also supported land protection through Fundación Yumartán in Colombia and a one-time contribution to the Serra Bonita Reserve, managed by Instituto Uiraçu in Brazil.

We have worked with the Rainforest Trust, Reserva: The Youth Land Trust and the University of Basel as fundraising and project collaborators

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# Where We Work: Ecuador and Colombia




**Conservation partnerships in:**

**Ecuador** — EcoMinga
**Reserves supported**
Río Anzu
Drácula
*Phragmipedium fischeri*

**Colombia** — SalvaMontes, Yumartán
**Reserves supported**
La Esperanza / Los Magnolios
Yumartán

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# Reserva Río Anzu: Where It All Began



Reserva Río Anzu protects a large population of *Phragmipedium pearcei*

**2007**
OCA's first habitat conservation project

**309 acres**
Protected through two land acquisitions

**$85,000**
OCA contributions towards land protection

**Conservation Partner:**
**Fundación EcoMinga**

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# Reserva Drácula: Protecting an Orchid Hotspot



**2015**
First land acquisition

**3,719 acres**
Protected through successive acquisitions supported by OCA

**400-500 orchid species**
Exceptional biodiversity, including species new to science

**Conservation Partner:**
**Fundación EcoMinga**

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L-R

*Dracula vampira*
*Dracula gigas*
*Trevoria sp.*

L-R

*Scaphosepalum anchoriferum*
*Pleurothallis chicalensis*
*Dracula syndactyla*

L-R

*Dracula trigonopetala*
*Dracula terborchii*
*Platystele baqueroi*

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# Colombia: Protecting the Alto de Ventanas



View of some of the protected forests in the Alto de Ventanas

**2017**
Beginning of OCA support for the SalvaMontes Reserves

**922 acres**
Protected through acquisitions in 2017, 2018 and 2025

**200-250 orchid species**
Estimated within La Experanza and Magnolios reserves

**Conservation partner:**
Corporación SalvaMontes

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L-R
*Sobralia* sp.
*Sievekingia filifera*
*Phloeophila pleurothallopsis*





L-R
*Dryadella simula*
*Dracula lemurella*
*Dracula chimera*

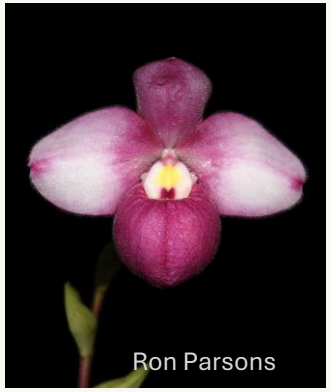




L-R
*Andinia platysepala*
*Lepanthes sp.*
*Lepanthes sp.*

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# Other conservation projects




*Phragmipedium fisheri* reserve
2017
Near Chical, Ecuador
18 acres
Fundación Ecominga



Reserva Serra Bonita
2014
Near Camacán, Bahia Brazil
250 acres
Instituto Uiraçu



Reserva Yumartan
2013
Near Colón, Putumayo, Colombia
101 acres
Fundación Yumartan

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# How We Fund Orchid Conservation

### Memberships and Donations

Individual members, orchid societies, direct appeals

### Fundraising Campaigns

Targeted appeals, matching gifts and species naming opportunities

### Orchids in the Wild Ecotours

Tour proceeds support habitat protection and local conservation

### Community Support

Orchid show sales, speaker donations, and collaborative fundraising

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# Orchids in the Wild Ecotours:

## Connecting People with Conservation




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## Discover

Explore orchids in the natural habitats

## Understand

Recognize the threats to their survival

## Connect

Develop a personal commitment to conservation

## Conserve

Support local partners and protect habitats.

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# Orchids in the Wild: seeing orchids in their natural habitats changes how people think!

- Understand what orchids need to survive
  - Protect the entire ecosystem
- Recognize the threats to their survival
  - Habitat fragmentation, deforestation, agriculture, climate change, plant collection
- Develop a personal connection to conservation
  - Finding a tiny *Lepanthes* in a cloud forest or a *Cypripedium* growing on a steep mountain slope is an entirely different experience from seeing the same species in a greenhouse
  - Creates an emotional connection
  - People are much more likely to care about protecting places they have experienced personally

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# Orchids in the Wild Ecotours: Supporting Local Conservation

- Provide income to local guides, communities and conservation partners
- Demonstrate that intact habitats have economic as well as ecological value
- Generate funds that can be directed toward habitat protection
- Create conservation ambassadors
  - Participants return home with photographs, knowledge and firsthand experience
  - Share what they learned with orchid societies, friends etc. spreading the awareness of habitat conservation

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# Rhodes: Orchids of the Mediterranean











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# Rio Negro: Orchids of the Amazon










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# Northern Yunnan:  Himalayan Orchid Treasures









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# Tibet:  Journey to the Roof of the World










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# Colombia: Exploring Andean Cloud Forests










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# 2026 Ecotours – Conservation Impact

**4** Tours

**43**
Participants

**$44,065***
Net proceeds to OCA

## Every Tour Helps Protect Wild Orchid Habitats

*Excludes November 2026 Nepal Tours

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# Looking Ahead: OCA Ecotours 2027

## Explore the world's orchids while supporting habitat conservation

| Destination | Dates | Availability |
|---|---|---|
| Ecuador and the Galápagos | March 6-20, 2027 | Fully booked |
| Sikkim | April 1-16, 2027 | Fully booked |
| Sardinia | April 20-27, 2027 | **Spaces available** |
| Rio Negro 1 | May 21-June 1, 2027 | Fully booked |
| Rio Negro 2 | June 4-15, 2027 | **Spaces available** |
| Yunnan | June 14-29, 2027 | **Spaces available** |
| Papua New Guinea | August 6-20, 2027 | **Spaces available** |
| New Zealand | November 20-December 5, 2027 | Fully booked |

Visit our ecotours page for more information:
https://orchidconservationalliance.org/ecotours/

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# More Adventures Ahead (2028-2029)

A preview of special Orchids in the Wild tours in the planning stages



Photo by Ron Parsons

## Madagascar

A return to this amazing island nation and the wonders it offers



## China: Cymbidium Tour

Discover native Cymbidium orchids in their natural habitats.



## Thailand

A special tour following the World Orchid Conference (March 2029).

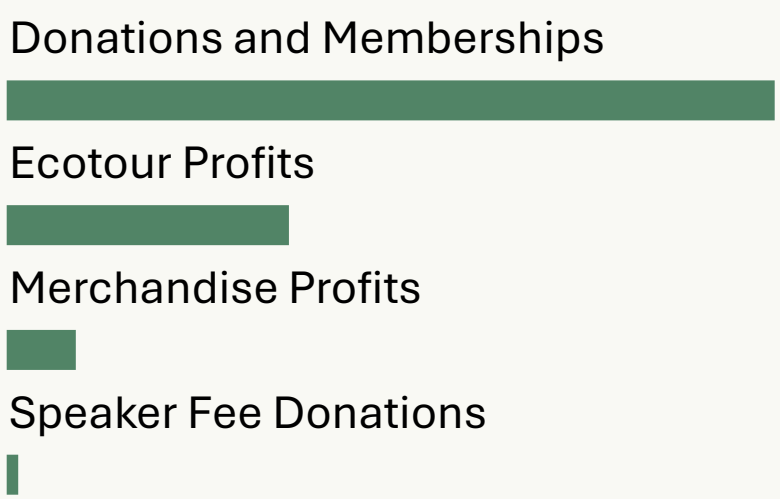
Preliminary plans-dates, itineraries and booking details to be announced

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# OCA Finances: 2026 Year to DATE
# January 1-October 30, 2026

TOTAL INCOME
**$219,562**

TOTAL EXPENDITURES
**$53,062**





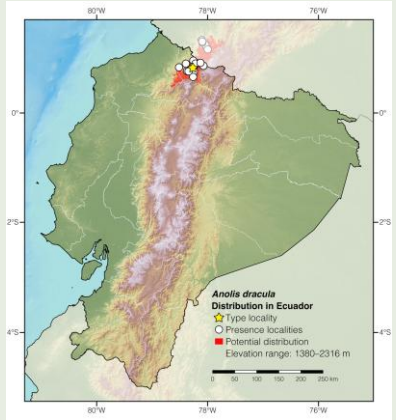


*OCA is raising funds for the proposed expansion of Reserva Drácula while maintaining an operating reserve of approximately $60,000*

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# Current Campaign – Dracula Reserve Expansion

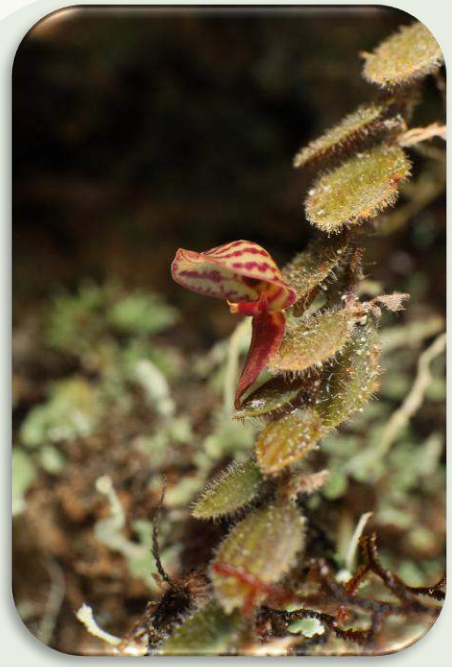
- NE Ecuador, adjacent to existing reserve (4000 ha)
- 1574 acres (637 ha)
- 1450-2700 m elevation
- Mostly primary forest, not well explored
- Contains many rare and threatened orchid species
  - *Brachionidium*, *Dracula*, *Habenaria*, *Platystele*, *Pleurothallis*, *Porroglossum*, *Telipogon*, *Zootrophion*
- Home to rare and endangered birds, mammals, reptiles
- Partnership with Fundación EcoMinga




FUNDACIÓN ECOMINGA
Red de Protección de Bosques Amenazados

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# Current Campaign – Dracula Reserve Expansion



*Andinia pilosella*



*Lepanthes dactylopetala*



*Lepanthes ophioglossa*



*Cyrtochilum geniculatum*

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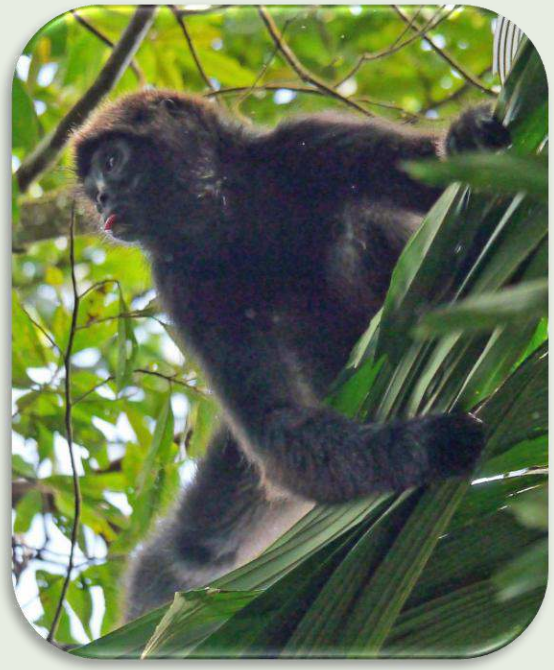
# Current Campaign – Dracula Reserve Expansion



Black and
Chestnut Eagle



Simons' Dwarf
Tree Squirrel



Brown-Headed
Spider Monkey



Golden-Headed
Quetzal

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# Current Campaign – Dracula Reserve Expansion

- **Fundraising**
  - Target: $500,000
  - Donations
  - New species naming opportunities
  - Earnings from Orchids in the Wild Tours
  - Learn more on the OCA website
    - https://orchidconservationalliance.org/dracula-reserve-expansion/




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# Looking Ahead: OCA's Priorities for 2027

- Raise $500,000 to expand the Dracula Reserve
- Recruit new board members and volunteers to sustain and grow the OCA
- Identify new reserves
- Strengthen partnerships
- Grow conservation support

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# Our Immediate Conservation Priority: Expand the Dracula Reserve

500,000
Fundraising Goal

1534
Additional Acres to Protect

Raised as of October 25, 2026: $122,233/$500,000

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# Growing Our Team: OCA Needs You!

*Our ambitions are growing. To achieve them we need more people involved.*

## Board Leadership

Help guide OCA's future and share responsibility for running the organization

## Project Leaders

Take ownership of conservation initiatives, fundraising campaigns or other projects

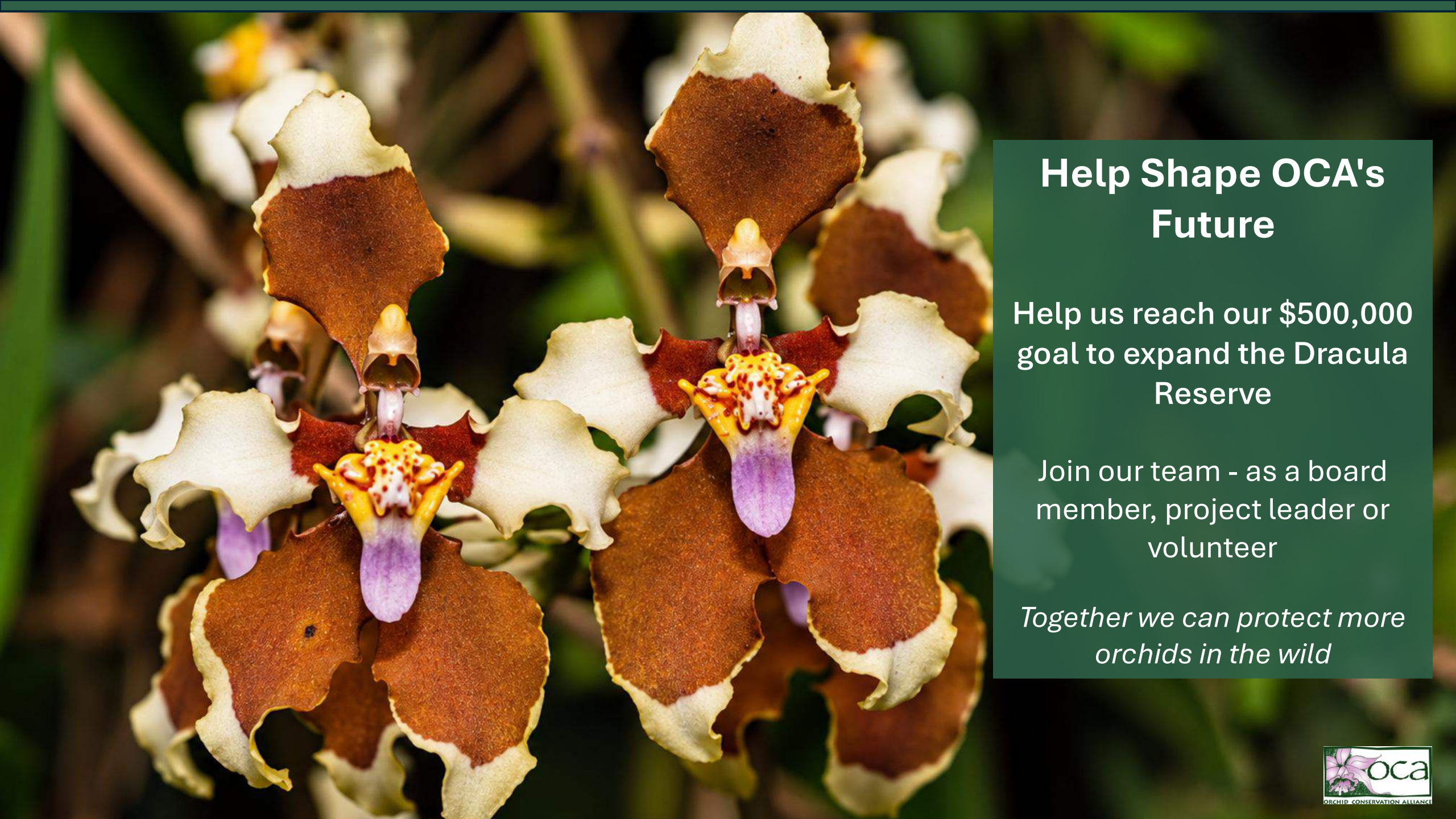
## Communications and Outreach

Help tell our conservation stories and reach new audiences

## Fundraising and Ecotours

Help organize activities that generate support for habitat protection

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# Help Shape OCA's Future

Help us reach our $500,000 goal to expand the Dracula Reserve

Join our team - as a board member, project leader or volunteer

*Together we can protect more orchids in the wild*

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