



## Orchid, 1908

WAGL-240

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Any plant of the family *Orchidaceae*.

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Builder: New York Shipbuilding Company, Camden, New Jersey

Commissioned: 5 August 1908

Decommissioned: 1 December 1945; transferred to Philippines

Length: 190'

Beam: 30'

Draft: 13' 3"

Propulsion: 2 triple expansion inverted direct acting steam engines fired by 2 Scotch-type boilers producing 1,100 SHP.

Speed: 12.0 knots maximum (1908)  
13.5 knots maximum (1945)

Complement: 5 officers, 23 crewmen (1909)

Armament: 2 x 20mm/80; 2 depth charge tracks (1945)

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### **Class History:**

*Manzanita* was one of eight "Manzanita" class tenders (originally known as the "8" class for the eight tenders built) constructed for the Lighthouse Service. They were designed by the Navy Department and incorporated numerous innovations as compared with previous designs. "They were constructed of steel and completed as coal burners and were the first of their kind ever constructed. They were built with vertical sides, which provided a flat surface on which buoy pads could be attached. Also, the vertical flat sides reduced the tendency of a buoy to

slide beneath the hull when the tender was maneuvering alongside. The deck edge on the forecastle was rounded in order to prevent the buoy cage or lantern from catching. Steel replaced wood for the booms, and wire rope replaced manila. The boom was somewhat longer than what might be expected to permit a special rigging for the transfer of supplies to lighthouses on inaccessible rocks and cliffs. Water capacity was significantly increased, with separate tanks for lighthouse replenishment. These ships had fine lines as opposed to their predecessors, making them faster and more maneuverable. They heeled sharply, however, when lifting buoys." [Scheina, p. 140.]

In the late-1920's and early 1930's, all tenders in this class had their coal-fired steam plant replaced with an oil-fired plant and new water tube boilers were added as well.

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### **Tender History:**

*Orchid* was built in 1908 by New York Shipbuilding Company, Camden, New Jersey as a Lighthouse Service tender. Assigned permanent station at Baltimore, Md., she operated through most of her career in Chesapeake Bay waters. She performed tender operations out of Baltimore through 1935, when she transferred to Norfolk, Va.

When the Lighthouse Service became part of the Coast Guard in 1939, *Orchid* was one of the older service craft that made the change. She continued active service as a buoy tender out of Norfolk through the war.

In early December 1945 she decommissioned and was sold to the Philippine government.

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### **Sources:**

*Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, Vol. V, p. 166.

Douglas Peterson, *U.S. Lighthouse Service Tenders, 1840-1939* (Annapolis: Eastwind Publishing, 2000), pp. 85-86.

Robert Scheina, *U.S. Coast Guard Cutters & Craft of World War II* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1981), pp. 140-141.

