

Phalaenopsis Orchids



Phal Fusheng Beauty

Depending on the reference book, Phalaenopsis consist of in excess of 50 species of epiphytic and occasionally lithophytic orchids.

They are monopodial orchids consisting of short stem growth with succulent leaves and copious fleshy roots. They originate from India through South-East Asia and tropical Australia.

They are the most commonly grown orchids on the planet comprising greater than 70% of all pot plant orchids. This is because they have a generally long lasting floriferous flower sprays, wide range of colour and are fast growing from pollination to flowering in less than 3 years (in some cases one and a half to two years).

Growing Conditions

Light - 40 to 10% light transmission. I currently use 25 to 12% but will increase to 35 to 17% in future.

Temperature - Not greater than 30°C. ideally 28° serves best. Not less than 16°C. ideally 20° minimum, but temperatures as low as 3° can be sustained for short periods overnight.

Fertiliser - High nitrogen all year round eg 200mg Nitrogen per litre. I use Peters Peat-Lite High Nitrogen. Lower strength with sphagnum moss medium.

Medium - Currently I use 6 parts medium bark, 2 parts medium styrene foam, 1 part super coarse perlite. Sphagnum moss or coconut husk have proved excellent & both have water saving advantages. Clear pots with styrene foam in the base give good results.

Water - Depending on medium eg. sphagnum once weekly or when sphagnum dries out.

Air Movement - Essential convection or ideally fans.



Phal Leopard Prince

Winter - Continue to use fertiliser, water only on sunny days, in mornings and into pot only - avoiding growing centre. Heat if possible.

Humidity - 50 to 80% Wet floors in the morning or have a humidity controlled floor spray.

Flowering - Dropping the temperature to 20 to 25 degrees C for 3 weeks will give 100% spiking. Light screens and rapid air movement can influence this.

Colours Available - Standard whites and pinks - yellow - red - orange - green - blue. All these are available in striped, spotted, harlequin, French Spot, multiflora and novelty forms. Standard forms have flower sizes up to 150mm width and flower counts up to 20 per spike.

By Dr Graham McKay

These notes have been used at our Cultural and New Grower's Meetings. They are from various sources and we thank the authors. All articles are supplied in good faith and the Bribie Island Orchid Society and its members will not be held responsible for any loss or damage.