

DENDROBIUMS

Dendrobium's are a very extensive group of Orchids.

They range from Tropical, to temperate to cold . Their habitat is varied and their size range from the large Dendrobium Speciosum to small Kingianum. These are the two most likely plants that will be purchased from our sales table today.

In Tasmania, these are successfully grown under shade cloth protected from summer sun and winter frost.

The Principals of good culture are a combination of light, water, and ventilation.

POTTING MIX

Needs to be open and free draining, a combination of bark small stones or perlite, in fact any product that allows the roots access to water then be able to dry out, particularly during winter. Pots should be resting on wire or similar product to allow air movement under the pot.

LIGHT

Require as much light as possible without burning of leaves or damage from frost. During late autumn and winter months, they require as much unobstructed light for as long as possible, light shade during the summer.

WATER

In the wild, these plants have developed their canes to store water.

During Spring and Summer months they can tolerate as much water as possible, never sit the pot in water.

Also they like humidity, so spray the leaves and any areas underneath the benches to create a humid atmosphere. During winter they may only need to be watered once a week. Spring time, increase the watering as needed.

PLASTIC POTS

The use of plastic pots is recommended because they are light to lift, are able to be cleaned between use, they remain damp as they are not porous like terracotta. They attract the warmth from the sun thus keeping the roots warmer Root development is far better resulting in better growth and flowering.

PESTS

They are subject to attack by scale, mealy bug and most other sap sucking bugs This can be readily removed by wiping down leaves with metholated spirits or white oil. Or spraying with the appropriate insect spray. Slugs and Snails will readily attack the flowers even before they are out. By keeping the plant off the ground and using the appropriate deterrent most of this can be avoided.

FERTILIZERS

To fertilize your Dendrobiums, there are many and varied ones available. The cheapest way is to use pelitised forms and soak them in water until a dark liquid forms then add an amount to water the colour of weak tea.

There are also commercial varieties of fertilizers available in soluble or pellet form Always remember that these plants are Australian Natives and do not require a lot of feeding. If using soluble forms always make the concentration weaker (one quarter Strength).

NEW GROWTH

These appear in spring and summer, they are very soft and easily broken in the small varieties they tend to be a pinky colour with a sharp point, very subject to Aphids, so be vigilant.

Please enjoy your orchid.