

McBean's Ltd

CULTURAL NOTES

(1) Phalaenopsis

TEMPERATURE:

For your phalaenopsis we would recommend temperatures around

Day 18.5 - 30 degrees C (66 - 86 degrees f)

Night 16.5 - 18.5 degrees C (62 - 66 degrees f)

Don't reduce the night temperature below 12 degrees C (55 degrees f). Although it may look fine, your plant will not bloom but just 'tick over'. If your conditions are near to this minimum, keep your orchid quite dry. Higher day time temperatures are no problem as long as your plant is in a shady place and humidity and airflow are good.

LIGHT:

Being accustomed to the dappled light of the forest, moth orchids dislike direct sunlight, especially through glass. Indirect sunlight is ideal.

WATERING:

If your orchid has been grown in a peat, perlite and bark mixture it's important to let the compost dry out between waterings.

Water well from the top taking care to keep the centre of the plant dry and leave to drain. Don't let your plant stand in excess water and if the pot is placed inside another container, make sure it isn't standing in trapped water.

Rain water is recommended but distilled water can be used instead as long as you remember to add fertiliser. An occasional water with tap water will do no harm.

FEEDING:

Feed your plant regularly with orchid fertiliser when you water. Every fourth watering leave out the fertiliser to allow any build up of salts to be washed

from the compost. Plants in poor condition should have very low levels of fertiliser, if any, until a substantial root system is reestablished.

HUMIDITY:

If you live in a dry atmosphere, standing the plant on a moist gravel tray will create a micro climate and assist growth. Make sure that the base of the pot is above the water level. Putting the pot on an upturned saucer would help lift it slightly. Gently misting the plants early in the morning can be useful if the air is really dry.

POTTING:

This is usually carried out every other year between March and June.

Your moth orchid doesn't like a heavy compost but prefers its roots to dry between waterings. A well aerated, free draining compost which includes bark is best. We recommend our Phalaenopsis Mix.

For a small charge McBean's experts will replot your plant – bring it to the nursery Tuesday – Friday (not weekends, please)

FLOWERS:

The flowers of your moth orchid may look delicate but are extremely long lasting, often remaining in good condition for three months. When the flowers die, cut the stem back just above a node, leaving 30cm (12") or so of stem. Often a secondary spike, or flower stem, is produced from this node and your orchid can be back in flower after two to three months.

Because the moth orchid does not have an annual rhythm like most plants we grow, it may produce flower spikes any time of the year. Should a large, healthy plant fail to produce a flower spike in a reasonable time (six months), reduce the temperature by 5 degrees C (8 degrees f) for four weeks and that should encourage flowering.

OTHER HINTS:

* The moth orchid likes home conditions similar to you. It doesn't like standing next to or directly above a heater or radiator and it dislikes draughts.

* Occasionally a leaf may go yellow and drop off. Don't worry; it's quite normal.

* If it loses lots of leaves, you are probably overwatering and giving it a root problem.

* If your orchid should suffer serious leaf loss, stop watering and feeding for four weeks. This can encourage new roots to be produced.

(2) Zygopetalum

TEMPERATURE:

Ideally we would recommend temperatures of:-

Summer 18 - 35 degrees C (65 - 95 degrees f)

Winter 7 - 24 degrees C (45 - 75 degrees f)

with a significant night time drop in temperature.

However, zygopetalum are extremely resilient and can tolerate much higher temperatures as well as much lower ones for short periods. They can survive short periods with night temperatures of just above freezing, provided that daytime temperatures are warmer.

Confused? Don't worry too much. Try a minimum of 13 degrees C at night and something between 17 - 25 degrees C during the day and your plant should be happy.

LIGHT:

Your zygo will be happiest in good light, but not in direct sunlight.

WATERING:

Water thoroughly from the top and leave to drain. We would recommend using rain water if available. The best time would be in the morning so that the foliage will have plenty of time to dry before temperatures cool.

Never let your plant completely dry out but remember that it isn't a bog plant. Never let it stand in excess water. Make sure any excess is allowed to drain away. Be especially careful if the pot is placed inside another container where water may get trapped.

FEEDING:

Feed your plant regularly with orchid fertiliser when you water. Every fourth watering leave out the fertiliser to allow any build up of salts to be washed from the compost. Plants in poor condition should have very low levels of fertiliser, if any, until a substantial root system is reestablished.

HUMIDITY:

Zygopetalum like a comfortable but not dry atmosphere. Good air movement will help dry the leaves after watering. If the foliage remains damp crown rot can occur at the base of the leaves.

POTTING:

This should be carried out in spring or early summer. Choose a container that is not too large. There should be sufficient space for only two new pseudobulbs to develop before next repotting. Your zygopetalum doesn't like a heavy compost. A well aerated, free draining mix is best.

We recommend our Cymbidium Mix for Young Plants.

For a small charge McBean's experts will repot your plant – bring it to the nursery Tuesday – Friday (not weekends, please)

FLOWERS:

When mature your plant will produce several flower spikes. Peak flowering time is in the spring, early summer.

HINT:

* If you have a strong healthy plant with a new pseudobulb which is reluctant to flower, try placing it in a cooler room for a couple of weeks when a new growth is beginning to emerge.

(3) Odontoglossum

TEMPERATURE:

For growing Odontoglossum we would recommend:-

Day 15 - 23 degrees C (59 - 73 degrees f)

Night 10 - 15 degrees C (50 - 59 degrees f)

LIGHT:

Your plant will be happiest in good light, but not in direct sunlight.

WATERING:

Where possible we would recommend using rainwater, particularly if your orchid is in sphagnum moss.

If your orchid has been grown in peat and perlite it's important to let the compost dry out between waterings BUT if your plant has been raised in a rockwool mix, you should never let it dry out completely or the rockwool will harden. If this happens, you'll have great difficulty getting the rockwool to hold enough water again.

Plants grown in a sphagnum moss mix should be allowed to dry slightly before watering once more.

Never stand the plant in excess water but make sure that it's allowed to drain away. Be especially careful if the pot is placed inside another container where the water may get trapped.

FEEDING:

Feed your plant regularly with orchid fertiliser when you water. Every fourth watering leave out the fertiliser to allow any build up of salts to be washed from the compost. Plants in poor condition should have very low levels of fertiliser, if any, until a substantial root system is reestablished.

HUMIDITY:

If you live in a dry atmosphere, standing the plant on a moist gravel tray will create a micro climate and assist growth. Make sure that the base of the pot is above the water level. Putting the pot on an upturned saucer would help lift it slightly.

POTTING:

This should be carried out between February and April for young plants and those not producing flower spikes, or in September for flowering size plants. This need not be done every year.

A well aerated, free draining mix is best. We recommend our Odontoglossum Mix.

For a small charge McBean's experts will repot your plant – bring it to the nursery Tuesday – Friday (not weekends, please)

FLOWERS:

Normally your plant will produce a single spike, although sometimes large mature plants will produce several. The flowers may last five to seven weeks. Peak flowering times are late autumn/winter or late spring.

In order to get maximum pleasure from your plant in flower, place it in a cool corner. When the plant has finished flowering cut the flower stem to within three centimetres of the base.

OTHER HINTS:

- * Never stand your plant too close to a heater or radiator, nor in a draught.
- * Plants may lose the odd leaf from time to time. Don't worry.

(4) Cymbidium

Cymbidium are classed as 'cool growing' orchids. We would recommend :-

Day 16 - 20 degrees C (61 - 68 degrees f)

Night 11.5 - 14 degrees C (53 - 58 degrees f)

It's very important that the night temperature falls below 15 degrees C (58 degrees f) when the flower buds are developing otherwise they may drop off prematurely.

LIGHT:

When indoors, keep your plant in a light position. From June to late September it should be placed outside as your cymbidium needs the light, air and most importantly, temperature differential (a reasonable drop in temperature at night) if it is to produce flowers for the following season.

WATERING:

If your orchid has been grown in a peat and perlite mix, allow the bulk of the compost to become dry before giving a thorough watering. Be careful not to waterlog the compost by watering too frequently. BUT if it's in rockwool, never allow the compost to dry out completely or it will harden. It's extremely difficult to make the rockwool hold sufficient moisture again.

Never stand the plant in excess water but make sure that it's allowed to drain away. Be especially careful if the pot is placed inside another container where the water may get trapped.

FEEDING:

Feed your plant regularly with orchid fertiliser when you water. Every fourth watering leave out the fertiliser to allow any build up of salts to be washed

from the compost. Plants in poor condition should have very low levels of fertiliser, if any, until a substantial root system is reestablished

To help flower spike initiation, do not fertilise during July.

HUMIDITY:

If you live in a dry atmosphere, standing the plant on a moist gravel tray will create a micro climate and assist growth. Make sure that the base of the pot is above the water level. Putting the pot on an upturned saucer would help lift it slightly.

POTTING:

This should be carried out in March to May, or directly after flowering. If you are changing from rockwool it is important to remove all the old material before replanting in an organic mix.

Your cymbidium is a terrestrial orchid which doesn't like a heavy compost, preferring its roots to dry between waterings. A well aerated, free draining compost is best. We recommend our Mature Cymbidium Mix.

For a small charge McBean's experts will repot your plant – bring it to the nursery Tuesday – Friday (not weekends, please)

FLOWERS:

Large flowered varieties usually bloom from November to May, with flowers lasting eight to twelve weeks. Miniature varieties usually bloom from October to May, with flowers lasting six to eight weeks.

Cymbidium flower spikes need supporting as they develop to give the best effect. This is usually done by loosely tying the growing spike to a short garden cane. When the flowers have faded, cut down the spikes to around 5 cm (2 in).

SUMMER CARE: (Flower spike initiation)

Place your cymbidium in an unheated greenhouse or out of doors from late June to the end of September as it needs the light, air and a drop in night temperature to produce flowers the following season.

When putting it out, take care to 'harden' your plant to the outside conditions, particularly the high light. Place it in a semi-shaded position, then gradually increase light levels. When returning your plant indoors, acclimatise it gradually. A sudden burst of heat could result in bud drop.

OTHER HINTS:

- * Never stand your plant too close to a heater or radiator, nor in a draught.
- * Plants will lose the odd leaf from time to time. Don't worry.

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