

### Cattleya Alliance



Cattleya alliance which includes Cattleya, Brassavola, Laelia and Sophronitis are easy to grow in the Mackay area. They have the largest range of colour, shape and size in the orchid world. They require between 50-75% shade, usually under shadecloth. As Cattleyas live epiphytically (on trees) in nature, the potting mix needs to almost dry out between watering. Water approximately three times a week in summer & once a week in winter. A high nitrogen fertiliser should be used in the growing season and a phosphorus fertiliser in the flowering season. Cattleyas are best grown in a bark and charcoal mix. High humidity needs to be maintained at all times by keeping the floor of the bush house damp. Cattleyas should be watched closely for pests and disease. If found, appropriate spray should be used.

### Paphiopedilum

Commonly called Slipper orchids. There are more than fifty species found in nature from the high hills of northern India and China to the lowlands of the Philippines. All Paphiopedilum flowers are characterised by a cuplike lip called a pouch and by a prominent dorsal sepal. They are primarily terrestrial growing in leaf litter on the forest floor. Slippers are best grown in a fine bark and charcoal mix. As Slippers do not have pseudobulbs, they should never be allowed to dry out. The mix should be kept moist but not wet. Slippers should be fertilised regularly with half strength fertiliser. They should be grown close to the floor of the bush house to maintain high humidity under 75% shadecloth. Air movement should be maintained at all times, but cold drafts should be avoided.

### Hard Cane Dendrobiums

These are commonly called Evergreen or Cooktown orchids. They mainly flower in autumn. In the warmer months new growths will develop, lengthen and produce roots. Water 2-3 times per week. In spring use a high nitrogen fertiliser and after Christmas change to a high phosphorus fertiliser for a good flowering. In winter they need very little water and no fertiliser.



**Soft Canes:** Mainly spring flowerers. In the warmer months, new green leafy growths develop, lengthen and produce roots. New growths may need staking. In the cooler months, plants may lose their leaves and produce flowers along the cane. Water sparingly in winter and no fertiliser in winter.

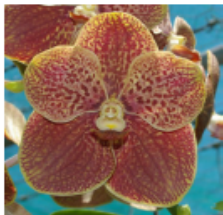
### Phalaenopsis

These orchids are commonly called Moth orchids. Phalaenopsis are native to the hot steamy low lit jungles of the Pacific region, from India, South East Asia to Cape York. They grow epiphytically, high up in the trees where they enjoy constant air movement. In the summer months they require constant air movement and high humidity between 40-70%. Temperature in summer should not go above 30°C. Fertilise Phalaenopsis regularly in summer. As they do not have pseudobulbs, never allow them to dry out. Water regularly but do not keep them too wet. In the winter months, temperature should not be allowed to drop below 10°C with 15°C being the optimum. Phalaenopsis thrive in shady conditions above 1000 footcandles (approx. 75% shade), so that the light intensity reaching the plants keeps the leaves firm, succulent and dark green.



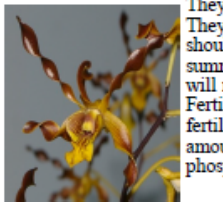
### Vanda Alliance

Vandas and allied species come from the tropics of Asia, India, Burma, Thailand to New Guinea. They are of monopodial habit (one foot) growing continuously throughout the year. Some of the terete Vandas can be grown outdoors under full sun while the strap leaf type like light shade, approx. 30-50%. Air movement and high humidity should be maintained at all times but avoid drafts in winter. Vandas should be grown in a very open mix of bark and charcoal, preferring hanging basket culture where their roots can grow out of the basket sometimes to the floor. In summer, Vandas may need daily watering, as well as misting several times a day. Water less in winter but never allow them to dry out. Being robust plants, Vandas are heavy feeders. Fertilise them regularly. When crossed with Ascocentrum species to give Ascocenda, the plants produced are smaller with some having bright coloured flowers.



### Ceratobium Dendrobium

Ceratobium Dendrobiums are commonly called Antelope Dendrobiums because of their straight twisted petals. They mainly come from Northern Australia, New Guinea, through to the Philippines where they grow in the hot humid lowland jungles. They are usually large evergreen plants. They require warm nights in winter so they should be grown under fibreglass. In the summer months, they will grow quickly and will need watering at least every second day. Fertilise once a week with a high nitrogen fertiliser. As the days get cooler reduce the amount of water and change to a high phosphorus fertiliser for a good flowering.



In winter, they need very little water and no fertiliser. Air movement and high humidity should be maintained at all times. They should be potted in a pot only big enough to allow two years growth. Repot in spring when the new growths are 50-75mm high.

### Oncidium

Commonly called Dancing Ladies. Ideal orchids for the new grower as they are easy to grow. Widely distributed throughout tropical America to southern Brazil. There are many cultural types while the blooming period runs throughout the year.



Most Oncidium flowers come in the yellow and brown shades, while miniature equitant Oncidiums can be any colour. Most Oncidiums will grow under 50-75% shadecloth. Good air movement and high humidity are essential. The miniature equitant Oncidiums can be grown on cork slab. Most other types prefer to be grown in a pot with a bark and charcoal mix. Water Oncidiums abundantly in the growing and flowering season. Water early in the morning to allow the potting mix to dry out before night fall as the fine roots will rot if the potting mix is too wet. Half strength fertiliser should be used weekly. Be careful with high nitrogen fertiliser if you want flowers.

### Australian Natives

Australian Native Dendrobiums are growing in popularity following the work done by the hybridisers. They have used many natives to improve the colour range and the life of the flowers. They are easy to grow providing care is taken with their cultural requirements. Pot natives in smaller pots using a bark and charcoal mix that will allow them to dry out quickly. Water regularly in summer allowing time for them to dry out before watering again. In winter, give them only enough water to stop them shrivelling. Fertilise in summer with half strength fertiliser. They need no fertiliser in winter. Grow natives under 75% shadecloth allowing good air movement and high humidity. Hybrids using Dendrobium canaliculatum or similar types may need shelter in winter. Repot in spring after flowering. Orchids are generally fertilised by way of adding appropriate fertiliser mixes to water and spraying both the leaves and root systems.

