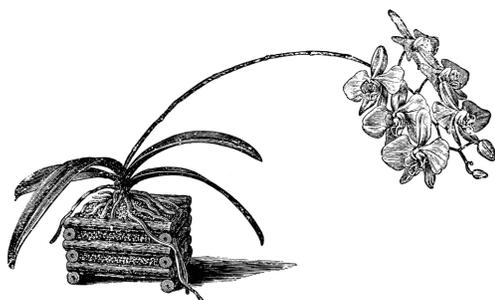


PHALAENOPSIS ORCHID

Phalaenopsis orchids are a genus of orchids comprised of approximately 50 species. These orchids are evergreen tropical perennials that are commonly sold as a houseplant. Phalaenopsis are monopodial, meaning they store water in their leaves as opposed to pseudobulbs like other varieties. New growth appears from the crown of the plant regularly and with age these plants are capable of blooming multiple times in a year. They come in a wide variety of colors and are a great addition to any hobbyist orchid collection. These plants are epiphytes in nature and can be found clinging to rocks or trees in tropical environments. They are also commonly known as moth orchids.



Latin Name: Phalaenopsis Orchid

Type: Evergreen tropical houseplant

Exposure: Bright indirect light

Growth rate: Moderate

Hardiness: Not frost hardy

Size: Varying, typically 1'

Soil: Fir bark mixture or all-purpose orchid bark

Growth Habit: Monopodial (New growth appears from crown)

Where should I plant my orchid?

Phalaenopsis orchids are a great houseplant that can reliably flower if their cultural needs are met. They prefer to be slightly rootbound as they are epiphytic in nature. These orchids typically need to be repotted every two years or when the medium begins to deteriorate. They are not frost hardy and require temperatures between 60-90 degrees.

How much water will my orchid need?

They require pots with excellent drainage and cannot sit in water for any length of time as this promotes root rot. If the plant is planted in a clear plastic pot, watering requirements are easily met. Observe the plant weekly, when its roots have turned from bright green to grey, it is time to water. Typically phalaenopsis will need to be watered weekly, preferably in the morning. These plants also enjoy high humidity, which can be achieved by placing the plant over a shallow tray filled with pebbles. Contrary to popular belief it is never a good idea to use ice cubes to water orchids. This is a pervasive myth that is not recommended by The American Orchid Society.

When should I fertilize my orchid?

Many orchids require regular feeding to perform well and phalaenopsis is no exception. Apply a balanced liquid fertilizer once per month or an orchid specific granular format once every 6 months when it is not in bloom.

Are there any pest or diseases I should be aware of?

Typically, these orchids are not visited by many pests, although bacteria may become an issue. They can however, become prone to thrips, and mites. The most common fungal infections for phalaenopsis are rhizoctonia, botrytis, or anthracnose. Rhizoctonia called appear as an atrophied new leaf or browning at the base of the crown of the plant. Botrytis can appear as watery patches on flowers. And anthracnose appears as blackish or gray-brown patches on the edges of leaves. Many of these ailments can be cured with proper ventilation.