



# Woolf Orchid Culture

## **Paphiopedilum Culture**

*by John Woolf*

This varies with the type of parents used in the cross however we have found, with the exception of those crosses with the Brachypetalum/Parvisepalum they will grow and flower well under the following conditions.

### **TEMPERATURE**

Minimum of 8 - 10 degrees celcius to a maximum of 30 degrees celcius.

### **LIGHT**

40% to 50% light for all except the multflorals 50% to 70% for them.

### **POTTING MIX:**

We use Debco composted bark fine grade for seedlings in compots and 50mm tubes medium grade for 80 & 100 mm pots and Coarse grade for anything larger.

### **WATER**

Quality of the water is critical. If you are using water from town bore supplies or from a new cement tank have a sample tested for all nutrients as water from some of these can be high in salts e.g. magnesium sodium etc. as well as containing chlorine They also may have a high pH. All these factors will affect the uptake of fertilizer and the production of a good root system. Plants should be kept moist at all times. A good potting mix and good air movement and good drainage holes in the pots are a must.

### **FERTILIZER**

We use a low nitrogen fertilizer BM7 made in Qld by Groforce and we alternate with a special Paphiopedilum blended fertilizer produced by Horticultural Solutions of Qld. Plants are drenched twice a week in summer and once a week in winter with half strength and drenched with dolomite at least 3 times per year. We do not use any of the other 'special' additives available on the market today. Remember there is no substitute for good culture. Plants need sunlight, water, a potting mix and a little nutrient to perform well.

### **PESTS**

The only real pest that worries some Paph. growers is the mealy bug. These can be controlled with a good insecticide with a wetting agent . If you have a bad infestation spray with only a wetting agent (mixed with water of course) leave for several hours and then spray with your insecticide / wetting agent mixture. Remember also if there are mealybugs on the plants there will be many more in the potting mix. So dip the pots until all the air has stopped bubbling out.

**REMEMBER TO WEAR ALL OF YOUR PERSONAL PROTECTION GEAR.**



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## **DISEASE**

If your growing conditions are right that is a good potting mix, good air movement, good light and good quality water you should have little problem with disease. If you do suffer a problem (or should I say 'if your plants suffer a problem) have it diagnosed by an expert and he will suggest a fungicide / bactericide to control the problem. Most products on the market today are specific so don't waste you hard earned cash by spraying something that may add to your problem not control it.

**AGAIN DON'T FORGET YOUR PERSONAL PROTECTION GEAR.**

**GOOD GROWING.**