

## **ORCHIDS, DENDROBIUM PHALAENOPSIS** **AND ITS HYBRIDS**

Dendrobiums are very easy to grow and flower. Their care is very similar to the care of a cattleya. They grow very rapidly and often bloom from both old as well as new growths producing several flower sprays each containing up to 20 blooms.

**LIGHT**-Bright light requiring little if any shade except when the sun is especially bright and the temperature is high. The atmosphere should be buoyant meaning these plants need good air circulation at all times.

**WATER**-Dendrobiums should never be overwatered. Allow the plants to become almost dry before watering. Humidity levels should be between 50% to 70%. Dendrobiums will benefit from a drying off period prior to setting buds or the plant may continue to grow without producing flowers. Never allow the plant to sit in water as this will rot the roots. Roots require air as well as water to remain healthy. Water temperature should feel tepid to the touch.

**TEMPERATURE**-Dendrobium phalaenopsis and its hybrids require warm days and night temperatures above 60 degrees. The deciduous type shed most or all leaves each year and prefer cooler temperatures down to around 55 degrees at night.

**FERTILIZER**-Evergreen dendrobiums are heavy feeders. When buds appear, or if it is necessary to stimulate a plant that seems reluctant to set flower buds, a fertilizer high in phosphorous should be used such as 10-20-20. During the growing season a balanced 20-20-20 is best. Try foliar feeding by mixing fertilizer and spraying it onto the leaves rather than pouring fertilizer into the pot.

**POTTING**-The smallest pot that will hold a dendrobium is the best size to use. Dendrobiums should never be overpotted. They prefer to be pot bound in order to flower well. As many dendrobiums grow fairly tall they have a tendency to become top heavy and you may wish to place the entire plant pot and all in a larger pot to prevent the plant from tipping over.