



Cymbidium (sim-BID-ee-um)

Cymbidiums are native to highland regions of India and Burma. Some miniature species come from Japan and China and a group from Australia. It is a very commonly grown orchid plant due to ease of growing and colorful long lasting flowers. The flowering season can start from October lasting to June depending on the hybrids and species. Cymbidium flowers can last even as cut flowers for 6-8 weeks.

Origin

India, Burma, Japan, China and Australia

Temperature

Cymbidiums can tolerate extremes of highs and lows, between 30° F-90° F. Try to keep temperatures under 90° F, with the best being 75° F-80° F during the growing season of late spring and summer. During the flowering season keep night temperatures below 60° F but no lower than 40° F, with the best being around 50° F. Day temperatures below 80° F are best. The plants can tolerate down to 30° F but spike damage might occur at this level. Growing in greenhouses or indoors is essential in cold areas of the country, during the winter. The plant can be moved outside during late spring and summer and early fall.

Light

Light is the single most important factor to create and maintain productive growth. The plants should be given as much light as possible short of burning the leaves. Light intensity may vary between 4000-8000 footcandles during late spring and summer. That means full sun to 30% shade during this period with good air movement and humidity 50-60%. In winter, 4-6 hours of direct sun light 2000-3000 footcandles is adequate

Watering

Cymbidiums should not be allowed to go completely dry, when you water, water thoroughly and water again before they become completely dry. This may vary between every other day during the hot summer months to once a week during the colder months of winter. Water early in the morning to allow the inner foliage to dry out by nightfall especially during winter.

Fertilizer

Cymbidiums are heavy feeders during their active growing season of late spring and summer. Fertilize them with balanced fertilizer such as 20-20-20, from April to August, once a week with 1 tsp per gallon of water. Fertilizer application should be reduced to about, once a month during September through March. You may give a few applications of "Blossom Booster" 10-30-20 fertilizer such as Nutricote or MagAmp can be beneficial during active growing season of spring and summer. If it is used, apply 90-120 days of the slow release fertilizer so it is leached out by the end of August.

Repotting

Cymbidiums make a massive root system and perform best when left undisturbed for 2-3 years, unless they outgrow the pot or media has broken down severely. Repot in early spring or late winter when they are actively growing. When dividing cymbidiums, divisions should have a minimum of 3-5 bulbs with green leaves. This allows you to have a strong enough plant for the next flowering season. We use several different mixtures to grow cymbidiums but finely graded fir bark with 10% perlite does very well.

Flower Spike Initiation

The best relative humidity for Catts is 40-60%. If you grow your plants in the house putting them in trays filled with gravel and water can provide the needed humidity. The bottom of the pot should always be above the level of the water.

Caution

When growing plants outdoors in summer, watch especially closely for spider mites, aphids, scale and mealybugs. Spray appropriate insecticides as needed. Always use caution and read the label when applying insecticides!! Check your plants carefully before moving your plants indoors for the winter.