

The Orchid Society Of WA (Inc)

Oncidium (on-SID-ee-um) Orchids

The Oncidium orchids are commonly known as the 'Dancing Ladies', because their broad flat lip gives the illusion of a ruffled lady's shirt. Over the past few years they have become very popular with growers both for ease of growing and lasting sprays. With hybridising, a wide range of colour and skirt sizes are available.

POSITION

Oncidiums will grow quite happily in glasshouses through to the shade house.

TEMPERATURE

Oncidiums prefer temperature in the range of 20-30 °C highs (day) and 12-18 °C lows (night) but most grow and bloom well where growing temperature may be higher or lower for a limited time.

LIGHT

They require bright light much the same as cattleya orchids. The leaves should be a pale green, not dark green or reddish green. If reddish green the plant is receiving too much light, if dark green too much shade.

WATER

They should be watered thoroughly and then allowed to become moderately dry between waterings. Generally, they require more water while the new shoot is growing and less once the bulb has formed.

FERTILISER

The plant requires fertiliser at least once a month but fortnightly is preferred. Good results may be obtained by using high growth NPK of 20-10-20 year round and cutting back to half strength when plants are not developing new leaves.

HUMIDITY

Like most orchids, Oncidiums enjoy moist air, requiring a minimum of 40-50% humidity in the immediate vicinity of the plant. Humidity can be increased by misting during periods of hot weather.

POTTING

Oncidiums need to be repotted at least every year to 2 years. As a general rule, repot them when the new shoot is 50 to 75 mm tall or when new roots appear. The potting medium should consist of medium pine bark with perlite, charcoal, or polystyrene balls added to provide good aeration of the mix.

DIVIDING

Only divide when the divided plants will be in clumps of three to five mature bulbs.

NB: These suggestions have been made without prejudice as a guide and no guarantees can be given with regard to successful growing.