

Care of your Pleurothallid Orchid

The pleurothallid orchid that you receive has been grown in medium to low light greenhouse conditions with warm days and cool nights. Some pleurothallids need high humidity and relatively cool temperatures, but most can grow in normal home conditions provided temperatures do not stay above 85-90 degrees day and night for extended periods of time and humidity is sufficiently high. High daytime temperatures are tolerated if the temperature drops at night. Pleurothallids are epiphytic orchids, growing on trees, usually in the shady parts of the forest. They do not have pseudobulbs, so need to be watered regularly and not allowed to dry out for long periods of time. Most pleurothallids grow well in sphagnum moss, in a pot that provides good drainage. Net pots or baskets are ideal. They also grow well mounted. Pleurothallids are ideal plants to grow under lights or in a terrarium. These plants do not need a lot of fertilizer, so feeding sparingly with a weak fertilizer solution is best. Once a month when the plant is actively growing is probably sufficient.

Pleurothallids grow by producing new leaves next to the old ones. Under good conditions, they will grow year round. Many are free bloomers, blooming whenever a new growth matures and/or blooming sequentially from the same spike for a long period of time. Some species, particularly Draculas, will produce spikes that grow downward into the medium, so need to be mounted or grown in a hanging basket so that the flowers can hang downward. Do not remove a spike unless you are sure that it is dead and no more flowers will be produced. Pleurothallids can be divided when there are enough growths to have at least 6 per division, or they can be grown into large specimen plants.

Enjoy your orchid! If you have any questions about caring for your pleurothallid, feel free to contact us by e-mail or phone.

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