

PHRAGMIPEDIUM CULTURE

This orchid is originated from South America. They can be found growing near streams or on wet slopes on higher altitude. The grassy leaves don't have pseudo-bulbs attached at the base; therefore this orchid dislike drying out. The flowers are quite beautiful, colors ranging from apple green to fiery red. Some petals resemble Fu Manchu mustache, while some resemble long locks of maiden hair. They are called "slipper orchids" because of the unique pouch-shaped lips. The pouch does not catch and dissolve insects like the carnivorous pitcher plants. Instead, they trap insects for pollination purpose.

LIGHT: they like bright light in the home, near a shaded south window. However, this group tolerates a wide range of exposures.

TEMPERATURES: Phrags prefer 55 to 65° F at night and 75 to 85° F or more during the day. The plants can stand night temperatures in the 50's F if necessary, when grown outside in mild climates, as well as temperatures to 90° F.

WATER & FERTILIZER: the roots need a constant supply of water. Therefore water them frequently or use a moist medium—never soggy and never dry out. Using a watering can with the orchid in the sink works best. Pour at least one gallon through the pot to make sure the orchid is watered well. Remember, you can not over water by pouring too much water through the pot, only by watering too often.

These plants resent being over-fertilized. Thus, care must be taken to avoid burning the leaf tips and the fleshy, hairy roots with too much fertilizer. A balanced fertilizer should be applied on a regular schedule. It is best to apply fertilizer at 1/4 strength with every watering.

RE-POTTING: plants should be re-potted about every two years, or as the medium decomposes. Mixes vary but most are fine-grade fir bark, with varying additives—perlite, and sphagnum moss. Moisture retention with excellent drainage is needed. Divide large plants by pulling or cutting the fans of the leaves apart, into clumps of 3 to 4 growths. Do not over-pot; an average plant should have a 4 to 6 inch pot.



by appointment
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