

## Growing Cattleya Orchids



C loddigesii

1. Firstly, Russ showed how he pollinates the orchid then showed a seed pod (7 months later), then from pod to flask of baby plants (a further 12 months) The next stage was from flask to community pot (another 10 months) lastly from community pot to C size plant in 18 months. (nearly 4 years)

2. When to water - Have 2 pots, 1 empty and 1 full of potting mix. When watering the orchids make sure the 2 pots get watered. When you think it's time to water the orchids again have a look at those 2 pots. Empty the bark from full to empty and see how damp the mix is. If it is still damp **do not water**.

3. Use Baysol for the snail problem. Those small snails love the new root tips.

4. The book "Orchids for Dummies" is a good read and full of basic information.

5. Hybrid orchids –The first named plant has the seed pod and is the pod parent while the second plant is the pollen parent and provides the pollen.

6. Don't water late in the day as water will remain in leaf joins or in flower sheaths. This can cause disease or dieback.

7. Russ keeps his pseudobulbs clear of the outer dry shell. This keeps water and pests such as mealy bug at bay.

8. Use small plastic clips for tying and straightening inflorescences. They are quick and easy to use.

9. Make sure water does not stay in the sheath holding the flower buds. Put a small hole at the bottom of the sheath to drain away any water. Be careful you don't damage the stem.

10. Cut a small piece of plastic tubing about 2-3 cms long, then cut it lengthwise. Place the tubing around the stem of the new flower to help it stand straight and not sag over.

11. Use Sterri-Kleen for sterilizing all tools used on the orchids.

12. Available from Bunnings is Steriprune which is used to paint the cuts on the orchid plants to prevent disease from entering the cut.

13. In a bucket of water pour some bleach. Ant plant to be repotted goes into the bucket to get rid of any foreign bodies.



C Lulu Pink Blush

14. New bark. Wash the bark first to get rid of all the dust and dirt. Then fill a large drum with water and add the bark, then add 2 good handfuls of dolomite. Allow to soak for a few days finally allow the bark to dry in the sun.

15. Have a calendar on which you note everything that is done to the orchids. (eg watering or fertilizing).

16. Sprayphos use regularly once per month as a systemic fungicide. Use carefully.

17. Use Rogor to get rid of mealy bugs.

From a demonstration by Russ Hopkins - July 2006

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