

Peel Region Orchid Society of Western Australia Inc.

PO Box 1303, Mandurah WA 6210

CULTURAL NOTES – CYMBIDIUMS

Compost: Mix must be open and friable wood chip or bark. If it is at all muddy, the plant will drown and this will cause rot or bulb rot. The mix does not break down for at least two years.

Drainage: Good drainage must be provided by placing broken crockery or charcoal in the bottom of the pot. Ensure that the drainage holes in the pot never become clogged.

Location: Easterly aspect, morning sun, or all day sun and under 5/70% shade cloth. Stand pots on a platform 10cm to 30 from the ground. Cover the ground with woodchips for humidity.

Summer - semi shade – sarlon cloth

Winter – full sun, protect from wind and frosts.

Watering: Keep plants moist at all times. DO NOT over water. NEVER let dry out.

Summer – water once or twice daily and never in the heat of the day – eg early morning and/or after 4pm

Fertilizer: Use high Nitrogen soluble fertilizer – eg Aquasol, Campbells' Blue, and Fish Emulsion – all high in nitrogen. This is given to the plants between May and October.

Re-potting: This carried out when the plant has no more space to develop the new blubs or if the plant has grown to one side of the pot. The most favourable time for re-potting is October.

Do not over pot – gently divide plants, cut roots 20cm in length. Plants must be potted into 5cm bigger pots, allowing for two years growth. After re-potting, keep in a cool place for a week or two to recover.

Pests: Protect from pests at all times. Lay snail pellets in shade house. When spikes appear, place a piece of cotton wool around the base of the spike. Don't allow the wool to get wet – as dry wool deters grubs and caterpillars. It is best not grow orchids with other plants.

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REPOTTING ADVICE FOR CYMBIDIUMS

In the Peel Region there is often more than enough rain for the plants in winter, but in summer, you may have to water daily or even twice a day if the temperature rises above 35°C.

If your plant is splitting the pot or is big and untidy, then report or divide after flowering – the best time is early spring.

Here are a few simple rules to follow:

1. Any orchid mix, pine bark or wood chips are suitable as these are free draining and can be purchased from most nurseries.
2. Clean Black plastic pots with good drainage holes are the best to use.
3. Do not put plants into a too big a pot.
4. The potting mix should never get wet and soggy, as this will cause the roots to rot.
5. Clean up the plant – pull off untidy leaves and husks.
6. Tap the plant out and look at the roots. If they are white and crisp, the plant is healthy.
7. Shake of any old potting mix.
8. Trim roots a little and pull off any soggy dark or black roots.
9. Position the plant so the bulbs are level with the top of the pot.
10. Gradually add the new potting mix, firming it down gently.
11. The roots should be firmly surrounded by new potting mix.
12. If you want to divide the plant pull it apart gently.
13. A well divided plant would have minimum of three blubs with leaves and at least two back bulbs.
14. Do not make the divisions too small or it will take years for the plant to flower again.
15. Any leafless green blub can be stripped of roots and replanted, partly buried, into potting mix or moist sphagnum moss and put into a plastic bag. A big majority will shoot and become flowering plants in time.