



# Masdevallia Culture Notes

The genus *Masdevallia* is native to the Andean region of South America and is commonly found at relatively high altitudes in a cool, moist and airy position. *Masdevallias* are therefore eminently suited to cultivation in Melbourne. Plants are best grown in fine cymbidium potting mix in small pots. They should be kept between 5 deg C and 30 deg C in a well lit position, but never in direct sunlight. Bright fernery conditions are ideal and *Odontoglossum* and maiden hair ferns provide ideal accompanying plants. The compost must be kept moist at all times and feed once a week with Atlantis Orchids Super Brew at full strength.

If they are kept inside the house for a period of time they are best placed on rocks above a saucer of water, never in it, so that humidity can be maintained around the plant. They can flower any month of the year and some plants will flower for 12 months on end. Individual flowers should last 4-6 weeks. With some species, flower stems will produce flowers for a number of years. If the stem remains green after flowering and especially if it is angular in cross section, do not remove it. Plants may be broken up in the spring, but make sure that clumps of four to five leaves are retained. They are relatively disease free; aphids and snails and slugs can be a problem and should be treated appropriately.

*Masdevallias* provide a fascinating variety of shape and colour throughout the year and provide real rewards when success is achieved.