



Phragmipedium Culture Notes

The *Phragmipedium* is native to Central and South America and is commonly found growing as a terrestrial in a cool, moist and shaded position. Phragmipediums are therefore eminently suited to cultivation in Melbourne. Plants are best grown in fine cymbidium potting mix in pots. They should be kept between 8 deg C and 30 deg C in a well lit position, but never in direct sunlight. Bright fernery conditions are ideal and *Masdevallia*, *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 generally flower in the spring and flowers appear sequentially along the inflorescence with the first flowers dying before the last ones open. This sequential flowering nature of the plant extends the flowering time.

They are relatively disease free; aphids and snails and slugs can be a problem and should be treated appropriately. Mealy bug and scale can also be a problem at times.

Phragmipediums are related to *Paphiopedilum* (slipper orchids), and *Cypripedium* and whilst a little harder to grow than some others such as cymbidiums, they provide real rewards when success is achieved.