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PC-9 Paphiopedilum Orchids

Paphiopedilums are also referred to as “paphios” or the Lady Slipper Orchid. These are among the least demanding orchids in their cultural requirements. They do well indoors, in greenhouses and outdoors in areas that do not freeze. The main flowering season is December through March. Hybridizers have recently created many varieties which flower in the summer. There are other varieties which flower two or three times a year.

Temperature and Light

There are both warm and cool growing paphios. Paphios with solid green leaves are considered cool growing. Those with mottled leaves come from the more tropical areas and are better suited to warmer growing conditions; these paphios are the summer flowering or year round blooming types.

Because paphios do not require high light intensity, they are ideal for that sunny window, fern garden, or any other filtered sunlight location. Paphios do very well in an atrium where filtered sun shines only a couple of hours a day with diffused indirect sunlight the rest of the time. If you have a greenhouse, your conditions may be ideal. If the greenhouse contains various types of orchids, grow the Paphios in the shadiest, coolest part of the greenhouse. Maintain an optimum temperature of 60°F at night and 70-85°F during the day. To induce flowering early in the season (around Christmas), they may be given lower night temperatures in March and April.

Water, Fertilizer, Humidity and Soil

Paphios are semi-terrestrial. We recommend growing them in a 50/50 mixture of **Kiwi** (premium grade New Zealand pine bark) and **Eden Valley Blend Potting Soil w/ BIOCHARmix** kept on the moist side. Water about twice a week in the hot summer months and once a week the rest of the year. Paphios cannot store water and should not be allowed to dry out. The potting mix should be thoroughly saturated when watered. Water should not be allowed to stand in the leaf axils (center of the plant) overnight.

Feed with **Grow More Orchid Food** according to the directions on the label to encourage growth and repeat blooming. Flush water through pot thoroughly between fertilizer feeds to help leach out accumulated salts.

They like humidity — gravel-filled trays with a little water in them will provide some humidity as the water evaporates from the surface of the stones. Never allow the pot to stand in water, as this would keep the plants soggy and could cause root rot.

Repotting and Dividing

Paphios can be repotted every year; however, if a plant is doing well and the mix looks firm, it can go a second year. Divide only when necessary — don't be too eager to divide plants. To get the largest and best quality flowers, we recommend letting your plants grow to good specimen size. They should have at least 8 growing points before dividing.

Our source for much of this information is the **American Orchid Society Guide: Growing Orchids**. We highly recommend purchasing your own copy to ensure greater success with your orchids.

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