

Species of the Month

May 2007



Cattleya mossiae

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Cattleya mossiae

Mother's Day Orchid

Vigorous growing unifoliate *Cattleya mossiae*, the easiest *Cattleya* species to grow and flower, can bloom anytime from March through May. A Venezuelan native, this spectacular warm to intermediate growing epiphyte orchid begins growing in midsummer and usually complete it's growth phase in October when it sends out new roots. *Cattleya mossiae* is a moderate size sympodial epiphyte with an 7 inch pseudobulb and a 8 inch single, thick, leathery leaf carried at the top of each pseudobulb. The large showy flowers can appear four or five at a time. Plants of this species tend to produce multiple growth leads. This orchid easily adapts to adverse growing conditions making it a great beginner's orchid. Many color forms exist. *Cattleya mossiae* has been widely used in hybridizing over the years since its first introduction to the orchid world in 1865.

LIGHT

Bright; 2500– 3500 Foot-candles. Diffused or dappled light. Higher flower count will occur at high light levels. Provide plenty of air movement.

TEMPERATURE

Warm to Intermediate; 58°F min. to 88°F max.
(Normal *Cattleya* temperature.)

WATER

Water heavily when actively growing in summer and early autumn. Water sparingly in the winter months when the plants are dormant. The plants like to dry out between waterings.

HUMIDITY

70% - 80% is preferred.

POTTING

A medium orchid bark mixture is suitable; however the medium should be very open and fast draining to allow for rapid drying of the roots. Repot in the fall when new roots appear.

FERTILIZER

Fertilizer should be provided on a regular basis during the active growing period, 1/4 strength applied weekly.