Species of the Month

November 2006

Greater Las Vegas Orchid Society



Miltonia spectabilis

AKA Oncidium spectabile

Plants of *Miltonia spectabilis* grow very well under intermediate to warm conditions. They can be found growing widespread along the east coast of Brazil at elevations near 2600 feet. These relatively small sympodial epiphytes are usually 7 to 12 inches tall with growths spaced less than 1 inch apart joined by a long scaly rhizome. The ovate flattened pseudobulbs are generally 2 to 4 inches long with two 12 inch narrow strap-like leaves that grow out of the top of the pseudobulbs. The 3 to 6 inch inflorescence emerges from the base of each growth along the folds of the sheathing bracts. Each inflorescence will normally have one to two white or purple flowers (depending on the variety) that are 3 inches across and very long lasting. The sepals and petals are usually white suffused with pink with a large lobed rose-pink lip with deeper redish purple veins. Flower color can be variable. Other cultivated varieties are moreliana, alba, bicolor, radians, lineate and others. These plants can bloom at any time; however late spring and early summer are common. The growth habit can sometimes be untidy.

LIGHT

1500 to 3000 footcandles, very bright indirect light. Provide strong air movement especially at higher light levels. At high light levels the leaves will be very yellow. Best blooming occurs when plants are at the higher light levels.

TEMPERATURE

Warm; 60°F minimum to 80°F maximum. The plants will adapt to conditions several degrees warmer or cooler.

WATER

Water thoroughly while actively growing. Reduce water gradually in autumn as growths mature. Do not let the plants dry out completely.

Sources: www.orchidculture.com/COD/FREE/Miltonia Art.html

HUMIDITY

80% - 85%

POTTING

Due to their rambling growth habit, plants respond well to mounting. Otherwise, shallow baskets with an open fast draining medium based on fine fir bark is an excellent choice to help plants retain moisture.

FERTILIZER

Balanced fertilizer should be applied weekly during periods of active growth, 1/4 to 1/2 strength.