

Species
of the
Month

November 2003



Doritis pulcherrima

Phalaenopsis Cousin

Easy growing *Doritis pulcherrima* is an excellent candidate for home growing. This small terrestrial plant will form side shoots and if left undisturbed the plants will form large clumps with multiple spikes during their prolonged free flowering growing period from summer through late fall. This highly variable species is widespread from northeast India through Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Malaya, Sumatra and Borneo. Usually found at relatively low elevations the plants like shaded areas in sandy, well-drained soil. *Doritis* has been used extensively in breeding with *Phalaenopsis* to produce *Doritaenopsis* hybrids. *Doritis* contributes a long flowering season, great color, compact growth and upright spike habit.

LIGHT

Bright shade; 800 – 1500 Footcandles. Usually can take more light than *Phalaenopsis*.

TEMPERATURE

Warm to Intermediate; °60F min. to 90°F max. Summer temperatures can be a bit warmer. Winter temperatures a bit cooler.

WATER

Water heavy from late spring through autumn, while the plants are actively growing. Less water in winter, but NOT ever completely dry!

HUMIDITY

75% - 80% is preferred, but will handle much less.

POTTING

Use an open well-draining medium. Perhaps medium fir bark mixed with sponge rock and charcoal. Repotting is best done when new roots are starting growth.

FERTILIZER

Fertilizer should be provided on a regular basis during the active growing period, 1/4 to 1/2 strength applied weekly. Low nitrogen and high phosphate may be used in the late summer to promote better blooming during the next season.