



MILTONIA Goodale Moir



MILTONIA Honobulu



PAPHIOPEDILUM Pavilion Mist



PAPHIOPEDILUM Delophyllum

# Orchids



PAPHIOPEDILUM Depetle

## GROW INDOORS

### PAPHIOPEDILUM species

The Paphiopedilums are probably the most popular genus of orchids in cultivation today. The flowers have a lower petal that is shaped like a little slipper giving rise to many of this orchid's common names, including 'lady slipper', 'slipper' and 'Venus' slipper'. Its shape also led people to believe that these plants are carnivorous.

One of the sections within the genus Paphiopedilum comprises plants that flower sequentially. Usually not more than two flowers will be open at the same time and a new flower opens when the old one drops. Each flower lasts from two to four weeks and, because a single inflorescence can bear up to twelve flowers, one after the other, the plant can provide months of pleasure. The striking mottling on the leaves adds to the beauty of these plants. The characteristic of producing flowers successively is not always dominant in the hybrids; instead they sometimes produce multiple flowers simultaneously.

Plants in this section are easy to grow and suited to indoor culture. Placed near a window where they receive some light but not direct light they can grow happily for years. They need warmer conditions and should be protected from cold drafts in winter. When potted in a free draining mixture of bark, river sand and some palm peat they will require watering two or three times in the warmer months and once a week when the temperatures are lower. Fertilizing once a week enhances growth and flowering. They benefit from being transplanted once a year as they do not tolerate stale or decomposed growing medium.

Species in this section include *P. primulinum*, *P. glaucophyllum* and *P. moquetianum*. Hybrids of these species, such as *P. Pinocchio*, *P. Avalon Mist*, *P. Delophyllum* and *P. Depetle*, are also definitely worth seeking out.

## GROW OUTDOORS

### MILTONIA species

Brazilian in origin, Miltonias are closely related to Oncidium and are amongst the easiest of all orchids to grow outdoors. They have yellowish-green leaves, flattened pseudobulbs on a creeping rhizome and produce showy flowers with colours ranging from white to purple. Some, such as *MILTONIA spectabilis*, usually bear one flower at a time while others may carry up to ten flowers; *MILTONIA dowseii* is an example of the latter. Flowering time can vary from mid-summer to autumn depending on the variety and the climatic conditions. Whether grown in a pot or mounted on a piece of wood, Miltonias will seldom let you down and a wonderful show of flowers is almost guaranteed on a yearly basis.

Miltonias multiply rapidly and are excellent subjects to grow into specimen plants. High light and frequent watering are prerequisites for good performance in the garden and heavy feeding during the growing season will result in bigger pseudobulbs that will, in turn, result in better flowering. They can handle cooler temperatures but should be protected from frost and chilly wind. As with most plants it is best to keep them a bit on the dry side when the temperatures fall because this will help prevent cold damage. If you do apply water in the colder months it is advisable to do so in the mornings so the plants have dried by the evening.

Along with *M. spectabilis* (which bears white flowers with a pink lip) and *M. dowseii* (brown and yellow barred sepals and petals with a white lip) look out for the following species and hybrids: *M. moreletiana* (deep purple flowers), *M. flavescens* (starry creamy yellow flowers), plus *MILTONIA x BLUNTI*, *M. Honobulu*, *M. Golden Jaguar* and *M. Goodale Moir*. When purchasing these orchids take care not to be confused by those that bear the genus name Miltoniopsis (the 'pansy orchid'); although they are related their growing requirements differ from those of Miltonia. ⑤

Information supplied by Pantaac; contact Nollie on 0847532823 or e-mail: info@pantaac.co.za.

## Hybrid orchids

Unlike most other groups of plants orchids hybridise widely in nature. For the last 150 years they have been widely crossed in cultivation to produce over 110,000 hybrids (called grexes). Orchid hybrids can involve up to 20 distinct species from up to nine distinct natural genera. The first hybrids were made in 1854 and detailed records have been maintained since that time. For the last 50 years this has been done by the International Registration Authority for Orchid Hybrids, since 1962 under the aegis of The Royal Horticultural Society. Over 3,000 new hybrids are being added annually. A bi-monthly update is published with The Orchid Review, the orchid journal of the Royal Horticultural Society and reprinted in several orchid journals around the world. The update is also available online in pdf format. (Verbatim from: [http://www.rhms.org.uk/plants/registration\\_orchids.asp](http://www.rhms.org.uk/plants/registration_orchids.asp))