C A C T U S S T O R E - G E N E R A L C A R E

MINIATURE ORCHIDS

TAXA:

NOTES :_____

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From Borneo, to China, to Africa, to Brazil, orchids grow almost everywhere. In fact, orchids are the largest family of plants on Earth boasting more than 35,000 species and over 10,000 human-made hybrids. Notwithstanding their wide range of occurrence, these peculiar plants have retained a mysterious allure—famous for their ability to inspire obsession, bordering on psychosis, in humans.

Orchid mania aka Orchidelirium, came into full effect during the 19th century in England when wealthy orchid collectors financed elaborate and often dangerous expeditions into the unknown jungles of South America hoping to get their greedy little paws on new varieties of orchid that would then fetch ungodly prices at auction.

Although today we look at these plunderers with disdain, and rightfully so, we do it from the perch of a world where orchids have long been in greenhouse cultivation. A world where the wealth of delicate jungle ecologies can be experienced and enjoyed from our windowsills without having a negative impact. Thus ushers in a new era of Orchidelirium. One not fueled by greed or markets, but by curiosity and connection. Today we no longer see orchids as empty objects of value, but as friends and co-collaborators with us in this miraculous Earth system.

Welcome to the weird and wonderful world of rare miniature orchids. Don't be afraid. They're much easier to care for than you think. Just follow the instructions.

WATER

WATER QUALITY:

Water quality is extremely important for orchids. Here's what you need to know:

Rainwater is best.
Reverse Osmosis,De-ionized or Distilled water is great.
Good Tap Water will also do, so long as it is low in dissolved salts and minerals.

***Tap Water Tips-** Try adding half a teaspoon of distilled white vinegar per every gallon of tap water to help dissolve mineral salts. Also when using tap water, it is best to drench the entire plant to help clean off mineral residue (the white chalky stuff that builds up on the leaves and roots).

HOW TO WATER:

DUNKING: Fully submerge your orchid in room-temperature water for at least a few seconds. It's particularly important that the aerial roots get totally submerged. A regular old bucket is great for this.

MISTING: Misting is great if you're using high quality water. Never mist your orchid with tap water.

How Often: It's almost impossible to overwater a mounted orchid. 3 to 5 times per week is recommended. Everyday in dry conditions is usually great.

Time of day: During warm months, water at night. During cool months, water in the morning.

* * * FOOD ***

Water once a week using a **BALANCED LIQUID FERTILIZER.** Twice a week is even better. We add 1-2 full droppers of *Super Kabuto* 7-7-7 per every gallon of water for orchids. For seasonal orchids (those that lose their leaves either during the summer or the winter) stop feeding when your plant is dormant. Once the leaves grow back, you can resume feeding.

* * * AIRFLOW ***

A **SLIGHT BREEZE** promotes healthier flower spikes. Grow your orchid next to a cracked window, or place a small fan nearby.

* * * LIGHT ***

Most orchids grow on or under trees. Likewise, they prefer **BRIGHT FILTERED LIGHT** and "bright shade" over direct full sun.

*** FLOWERS ***

Do not remove old flower stalks. Many orchids like to grow their flowers on old stalks. Lastly, when your plant is in bloom, take a picture and send it to us **@hotcactus_LA.**

THAT'S IT!