

Large Terrestrial Orchids at Gympie District Landcare

<p>Common name: Lesser Swamp Orchid</p> <p>Latin: <i>Phaius australis</i></p> <p>Distribution: In the wild it grows in Melaleuca quinquenervia swamps and in sclerophyll forest, on the SE coast, at or near sea level.</p> <p>Status: Endangered in the wild, but readily propagated along with a lot of cultivars</p> <p>Size: H: 2m – H:1.5 (often less in cultivation)</p> <p>Position: Sheltered semi shade, pots, or houseplants</p> <p>Soil: Moist but not waterlogged</p> <p>Flower: Stunning 1.5m spike in Spring</p> <p>Skill required: Intermediate</p> <p>This stunning terrestrial orchid is one that you don't need to worry about overwatering, in fact they are much happier with a constant supply of fresh water via regular watering or an irrigation system. They will tolerate periods of dry, but they are happier with moisture and humidity.</p> <p>If growing in pots, grow them in an orchid mix or a well-balanced potting mix and a chunky medium to allow it to drain, if you have mature compost or worm castings, they will love a handful of this too. Even though the name says 'swamp orchid' they do not like their roots in water!</p> <p>These orchids are generally fairly hungry and will need a ½ strength liquid fertiliser every 2 weeks to keep them happy.</p> <p>In the garden plant out in a bright shade/semi shaded area that retains moisture in the ground or has high humidity e.g., near too or around a pond.</p> <p>The large flat leaves will act like big sails in the wind and get shredded, so a sheltered position is best.</p>	<p>Common name: Christmas Orchid</p> <p>Latin: <i>Calanthe triplicata</i></p> <p>Distribution: Grows on the floor of rainforests in dense shade, on the coast & coastal ranges north from the Illawarra and up to 1000 m alt.</p> <p>Size: H: 1.5m x W:1m</p> <p>Position: Sheltered shade, pots, or houseplants</p> <p>Soil: Moist Well Drained</p> <p>Flower: Stunning white flower spike Nov-Jan</p> <p>Skill required: Intermediate</p> <p>A stunning huge white flower spike appears around Christmas time (summer) hence its name. Interestingly the white petals can be crushed to produce a blue dye.</p> <p>If growing in pots grow them in an orchid mix or a well-balanced potting mix with a good volume of coir to retain moisture in the pot and a chunky medium to allow it to drain, if you have good mature compost, worm castings or leaf litter they will love a handful of this too.</p> <p>In the garden they need a shady position in soil that is well drained. They will only tolerate filtered sun in the morning, and they will need regular watering, mulching them with leaf litter around the base will help keep moisture in the soil.</p> <p>These orchids are generally fairly hungry and will need a ½ strength liquid fertiliser every 2 weeks to keep them happy in the growing season.</p> <p>The large flat leaves will act like big sails in the wind and get shredded, so pick a sheltered position!</p>
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