

CATTLEYA

No other Orchid is as strikingly flamboyant as the large *Cattleya*, Pronounced **(KAT-lee-a)**. However the *Cattleya* family of plants is a huge group with great variation of form, colour and size. The large white or purple *Cattleya* that we know so well is just one branch of the family.



There are several closely allied genera of orchids that are always included in the *Cattleya* Alliance. These have been hybridised with the *Cattleya* to produce intergeneric hybrids which are often abbreviated in code-- *C* = *Cattleya* *Lc.* = *Laeliocattleya* *Bc.* = *Brassocattleya* *Blc.* = *Brassolaeliocattleya* *Slc.* = *Sophrolaeliocattleya*.

GROWTH HABIT

Cattleyas make successive growths from the base of last year's growth; therefore they are of sympodial growth habit. They are epiphytes, which means they grow on trees or rocks in their natural habitat. The major part of their root growth is accustomed to being exposed to the air.

GROWING CONDITIONS

Cattleya plants can be grown very successfully in a shade house in South Australian climatic conditions but they will require protection from the winter rains. A fibreglass roof cover is helpful to control winter watering. Heating is not necessary but if available can be used. *Cattleya's* can be grown in cold plant houses, enjoy good ventilation and air circulation. And can also be hung on mesh frames rather than flat benches. This not only saves space but also helps provide good air circulation. This type of culture can be inspected by a visit to a nursery.

POTTING MEDIUM

Cattleyas must be grown in a very open potting medium that drains freely and therefore dries out quickly. Medium grade bark 15mm. for mature plants and small grade bark 10mm. for smaller plants. *Cattleya's* do not enjoy being over potted but should be placed in a pot that allows 1-2 years space for growth.

FERTILISER

Use of a regular fertilising programme is recommended. Use a soluble fertiliser and at 1/2 strength weekly or full strength fortnightly. Use BLOSSOM BOOSTER from December to June and HI-NITROGEN July to November. PLANT STARTER may be used at monthly intervals for small plants or as a growth activator as required.