



## ODONTOGLOSSUM CULTURE

### HOUSING:

#### Greenhouse:

If available, will allow better control of the environment. Depending on your climate, heating or cooling or both may be required to try and maintain the optimum range, i.e. minimum 8 – 10 degrees and a maximum of 26 degrees. Humidity is easier to maintain in an enclosure, 70% is ideal. Air movement should be provided – fans are probably the most convenient method. As much fresh air as possible should be admitted at all times while you can maintain adequate humidity and temperatures.

#### Bush-house:

Depending on your local climate, this may suffice. During the winter months a bush-house may be able to provide good conditions, however, humidity needs to be watched. The winter months will probably call for the use of some cover to prevent the plants from becoming too wet. Extremes of wind both hot and cold must be avoided at all times.

If possible, see how people in your area house *Odontoglossums*. and watch their results. The most important thing to remember is to have a try, many people have been surprised at how easily they can (with a little extra care) grow these wonderful plants.

### TEMPERATURE:

The optimum has already been mentioned, obviously it is not possible for everyone to maintain these ideals. A degree of flexibility would allow for a maximum of 30 degrees and a minimum of 6 degrees. In this range, more care is needed. Extremes may occur beyond this range – these may not cause problems if they are of short duration. If it becomes hot, increase shade and humidity, if cold be very frugal with your watering.

### SHADE:

This will vary depending on the position of your enclosure and its type of construction.

Summer	-	70% to 80%
Autumn	-	Early on retain shade, reduce later to 50%
Winter	-	No shading may be necessary, but watch out for bright days.
Spring	-	Increase shade to 70% as days brighten.

In all cases, common sense should dictate what is necessary. the leaves of your plants should never feel warm to touch. A natural reaction of the leaves from too much sun is to “bronze” i.e. a red tinge develops on the leaf. A small amount of this will do no harm in late Autumn and early Spring. Depending on the breeding, some types will bronze more readily than others e.g. *Odm. crispum* types. “Blocking out” the plants during the worst of the day’s heat may be necessary. If air temperatures can be kept around the ideal, the amount of shading may be reduced – remember, watch the leaves.

### WATER:

#### Quality:

Rainwater is probably best unless your water supply is reasonably pure. Watch the ph if you use town water.

#### Frequency of watering:

Depends on your conditions. Try and keep your mix just moist (easier said than done). In the Summer, watering should be stepped up and then reduced as the days shorten. Remember though, pouring water on the plant in the hot weather is not an alternative for providing humidity, all you will do is waterlog your mix. The type of mix you select will determine the regularity of watering, i.e. Coarse will take more water, Fine will need less water.

### FERTILIZER:

Use most at  $\frac{1}{2}$  or  $\frac{1}{4}$  strength, with regular flushing of pure water to remove excess salts. Large amounts of fertilizer will do harm, as will a lack of fertilizers in bark mixes. Leaf tip burn may be caused by over fertilizing.

### POTTING:

As small a pot as possible is best used, most mature plants will fit into 4" and 5" pots, very vigorous growers may require a 6" pot. Clay or plastic pots may be used, both will provide good results. Plants will often flower in 2  $\frac{1}{2}$ " pots. Don't be tempted to put these in larger pots. Over potting may result in a loss of roots.