

# Phragmipediums

## Growing Phragmipediums in the Toowoomba Area

Phrags are one of the branches of the slipper family, the main change being that they originate from South America mainly around southern Mexico to Bolivia. They grow mainly in very moist areas but at varying altitudes and at times their habitat is inundated by running water from overflowing rivers and streams.

**Light:** Most of these species require light similar to that required for *Cattleya* cultivation except for the species *besseae* and *schlimii* which require deeper shading. This also dictates the temperatures that they like in that the cooler growers like *besseae* will tolerate down to say 5°C whereas the others prefer 10°C to 15°C minimum.

**Water:** These plants like to be kept moist and some growers have considerable success growing them with the pots standing in shallow saucers. It does pay if growing this way to let them dry out somewhat during the winter months but still keeping them on the moist side.

**Air Movement:** As with all types of orchids this is vital to maintaining good plant health but you must also maintain the humidity around 50%.

**Fertilising:** The same mixture as for Paphs is ideal N 12% - 15%; P – 5%; K 15% - 20%. However, once again, alternating with organic type fertilisers is a great idea.

**Pests and Diseases:** There is little in the way of diseases apart from some leaf rot which can be controlled by fungicide. The main pest is Mealy Bug which can easily be dealt with by Confidor.

**Potting:** This can be done at any time of the year and if you are growing in water then should be done once a year. The best mix for this way of growing is 75% bark and 25% charcoal. If your plants are growing on a bench then replot every 1 – 2 years. You can use the same mix or the bark, charcoal, perlite, coco chip - 25% of each.



*besseae*



*Red Sky*



*Jerry Dean Fischer*

**Disclaimer:** These notes are supplied in good faith and Toowoomba Orchid Society Inc and its members will not be held responsible for any loss or damage.

007/JT0218/MF

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Meetings: Every fourth Friday of each month at 7.30pm, except September & December.

Venue: St. Paul's Hall, Cnr. James and Phillip Sts, Toowoomba