



As they are commonly known, Moth orchids are a lot easier to care for than you may think. Here are a few tips to help you get years of flowering from these stunning plants.

Basics

The trick is to have a nice warm spot around 22–25°C during the day, out of direct sunlight where your orchid can grow quietly. Orchids like to be restricted somewhat, so do not overpot. Feed your plant at least once a month and do not overwater as this can cause root rot. Do not worry if roots creep out of the pot, as they are actively photosynthesising or looking for water and nutrients.

Light Levels

Moth orchids require bright indirect light. Direct sunbeams on the plant can cause damage to the foliage, causing black splotches and bleaching on leaves. While in flower, move to a slightly cooler area for an extended flowering time as heat makes flowers more perishable.

Watering

Depending on your home's heat and lighting situations, create a watering schedule and adapt as needed to suit your requirements. Water from the top of the pot directly onto the media, not the plant's centre. It is generally around every 7–10 days in summer. In winter water every 3–4 weeks. If you have a hot house in winter, you may need to do this more often. Although you can overwater, don't be afraid to water your orchid. It is best to place it in the sink, because the thick roots act as a sponge, allowing your orchid to absorb the water with a generous drink. Then let the plant fully drain before placing back in its cover pot. In all cases make sure the orchid dries out sufficiently and the condensation disappears on the inside of the pot before re-watering. Make sure your orchid is not sitting in water. If conditions are hot (e.g., summer), either move the plant to a cooler spot or give a light misting with Gro-Sure Orchid Mist 'n' Feed once a week.

Feeding & Temperature Control

Your orchids should be fertilised at least once a month. There are many fertilisers, so pick one that suits your needs. We have a few options including Thrive Orchid Liquid Food, Thrive Orchid Spikes or the Burnets Orchid Drip Feeder that sits in the pot plant lasting a month. When in flower, misting the flowers with Gro-Sure Orchid Mist 'n' Feed is ideal.

Just remember when you fertilise your plant to water first, then feed from the top to prevent root damage. Phalaenopsis orchids need temperatures around 22–25°C during the day and a minimum of 15–18°C at night. Don't forget if your home is very dry you should occasionally mist the plant.

Encouraging Flowering

To get your orchid to flower again they must have a drop in temperature at night. A 10°C drop is a sufficient shock to initiate the plant to flower. This process takes 4–6 weeks for a shoot to be visible. Shifting your plant from your living room to a bathroom for this period will assist with initiation. As the shoot appears it can be placed back into the living space. Once your flowers start to droop, don't wait for the flower stem to die back. Encourage new flowers from the existing spike by cutting it to the third node from the base. If you cut higher the new spike will come back quicker but with less flowers.





Re-potting

If your orchid has lots of roots creeping out of the pot, that's not a bad thing, as they love to be root bound, but it may be time to re-pot. Orchids like to be restricted somewhat, so use a pot approximately 2–3cm bigger in diameter than the current pot. If the old media (orchid mix or fern fibre) breaks down, remove it and replace it with a new mix. Only re-pot after your orchid has finished flowering.

After repotting, leave your orchid to sit for 2–3 days to recover and heal from any root wounds before watering or feeding again. Clear pots are ideal, as you can monitor your root health and see any sign of root rot from excess watering.

Please feel free to come in and see us or call with any questions. All our staff at Oderings are happy to help you with any questions you may have. You are also welcome to bring your orchid with you.

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