

REASONS WHY YOUR ORCHID WON'T RE FLOWER

Ryan "The Orchid Guy"

In last month's newsletter, we covered a few very important things you should do whenever you bring orchids into your home.

And I can't stress enough how important it is to follow those 3 critical first steps.

Now that you've established the solid foundation needed for your orchid to thrive, one of the first questions you might be asking is:

"How much water should I give my orchid?"

In today's newsletter we're going to tackle that very question, and in the process, I'll share with you a few of the watering tips.

When it comes to figuring out how much water you should give your orchid, there's bad news and good news. The bad news is unfortunately, there's no "one size fits all" answer. BUT... The GOOD NEWS is, I have a few little "tricks" (which you'll learn in a minute) that you can use to take virtually ALL guess-work out of the process next time you water!

But first, let's talk about the factors that play role in determining how much you should water our plants.

FACTOR #1: THE TYPE OF ORCHID

Naturally, different orchid varieties have different watering requirements. So your first step is to find out what kind of orchid you have.

In general, Miltonias, Phalaenopsis, and Paphiopedilum orchids enjoy continuously damp conditions. Whereas Cattleyas and Dendrobiums need to dry out between waterings.

So your first step is to determine what kind of orchid do you have?

(If you're not sure, then you might benefit from the "Orchid Cheat Sheets" included free when you order our book. These cheat sheets outline the watering requirements for each of the most popular orchid varieties.

AND each Orchid Sheet includes an "identification photo" of the variety to help you determine what type of orchid you have.

****FACTOR #2: THE TYPE OF POT**

If you remember from yesterday, I mentioned that you should always use either a plastic or natural clay pot for your orchids. (And NEVER a glazed, decorative pot because the glaze can be toxic to orchid roots).

Water evaporates much faster from clay pots than it does from plastic pots.

So this means that an orchid potted in a clay container will need to be watered more often than that same variety potted in a plastic container.

So your second step is to determine what kind of pot are you using - Clay or Plastic?

****FACTOR #3: THE TYPE OF POTTING MATTER**

The type of potting matter you use will also factor into how much & and how often you should water.

For example, moss stays wetter much longer than bark does. Therefore, an orchid potted in a potting mix mostly made up of moss would require watering less often than that same orchid potted in a potting mix primarily consisting of bark.

So your third step is to determine what kind of potting matter are you using? One that holds moisture for a long time? Or one that dries out quickly?

****FACTOR #4: YOUR ENVIRONMENT**

Your orchid and potting matter will dry out more quickly when 1) the temperature is too hot, 2) the light is too bright, or 3) the humidity is too low.

Also, don't forget about seasonal changes in your climate. In general you'll need to give your orchid more water in the hot summer months, than in the cooler winter months.

So your fourth step is to determine what kind of environment is your orchid in? One that is hot, bright, & dry? Or one that is cooler, darker, & more humid? Once you've answered these 4 questions, this will

help you determine exactly how much water to give your plant...But if you're like most people, by now you probably have MORE questions than when you first started reading!

And this is where most orchid books and resources will leave you hanging...

Understanding these 4 factors IS important... But at the end of the day watering your orchids doesn't have to be a mystery. After all, we're not talking about brain surgery here! :-)

So let me help you out by making things completely SIMPLE - and boil everything you need to remember down to my "5 Simple Watering Rules of Thumb."

5 SIMPLE WATERING RULES OF THUMB

1. Potting material should never feel "soggy."
2. But if the potting matter feels "bone dry" then it's time to water right away.
3. Small pots (5" or less) need more frequent watering than big pots (6" or more).
4. Clay pots will evaporate more and dry out more quickly than plastic pots of the same size.
5. And when in doubt, err on the side of caution... OVER-watering is one of the leading causes of orchid death! Simple as that!

In the next few newsletters, we'll continue going through the basics of orchid care - more good stuff on watering, plus tips on temperature, light, fertilizer, potting, & more!

(And I'll do my best to continue making everything simple & easy to implement - because if you're like me, I usually need an "idiot-proof" way of remembering what I'm supposed to do (just ask my wife) :-)
Until next time,

WATERING YOUR ORCHIDS

For many of us, When we first see signs of trouble with our orchids, our first reaction is often:

"Maybe I'm giving it too much or too little water?"

In today's newsletter, we'll answer the question: "How do you know if you're overwatering or under watering your orchid?"

Both overwatering and under watering can cause damage, and even lead to killing your orchid, so it's important to determine whether improper watering is causing damage to your plant.

But what are some of the tell-tale signs?

If you ARE giving your orchid too much or too little water, you will most definitely see signs of water damage.

For example, pleated, plucked, soft and droopy leaves are all signs of under watering. Your orchid may also suffer from shriveling pseudobulbs and something called "bud blast" (which is when the buds of your plant fall off before they've had a chance to flower.)

Unfortunately though, these symptoms can also show up if you're OVER-watering your orchids as well....

So the question remains: How can you tell if you're over or under-watering orchid?

The only reliable way to REALLY know for sure is to carefully remove your plant from its pot and examine the ROOTS directly*

*WARNING: Be extremely careful not to damage your plant when doing this - if you're not sure how to properly remove your plant from its pot, be sure to consult with an experienced grower, or refer to the section of our book where we take you through the process step-by-step.

....but for today's newsletter, let's assume that you already know how to properly remove your plant in order to examine the roots.

Once removed, you want to take a good close look at the entire root system of your plant.

How does it look? Signs of OVER-watering include: - Soggy, dark, mushy or foul-smelling roots

Signs of UNDER-watering include: - Dry, brittle and shriveled roots. ..If you find the latter, look closely at the potting material to determine if your potting material is the cause of the problem.

Coarse potting material interacts poorly with roots and can lead to dehydration.

If the damage is limited, simply altering your watering schedule based on what you discover should be sufficient to bring your orchid back to full health.

HOWEVER...If you find that the root / plant damage is extensive, you'll need to take specific *immediate* action by removing the damaged or diseased portion of your orchid's root system (otherwise you risk losing your orchid).

To learn exactly what to do, consult with an experience grower

(To be Continued Next month)