

Home and Backyard Orchid Growing

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June 2009



I have around 200 orchid plants, mostly Vandas, Cattleyas and Dendrobiums. They get full sun till about noon, after that the oak trees filter the sun till 3 or 4 in the afternoon after which they get full sun again. I give them as much sun as they can stand, the more the better. I water the Vandas every day. They can only absorb

water through the root system and that hangs out and dries in the air movement. I water them very heavily, at least till the roots turn green.



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The Cattleyas and Dendrobiums get watered about every third day. I keep them separate from the vandias as best I can to make this possible. I fertilize with a 20-20-20 fertilizer, one teaspoon to a gallon. I fertilize every Sunday. Each time I fertilize I use Inoculaid on the plants, mixed in with the 20-20-20. The root growth is fantastic.

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During the winter when the temperature is below 46 degrees I move them all into my garage where my son Bill installed lights and hanging metal poles. Bill, a licensed electrician, ran a new line into my garage to handle two refrigerators and the new lights. I have 4 four high intensity bulb fixtures which he attached to the ceiling. They are the new small bulbs measuring about 3/4th of an inch. Each fixture has two grow bulbs and two bloom bulbs. He then secured them through the ceiling by screwing eyebolts into the wood and then suspended pipes from chains. He attached the same 3/4 inch pipe I use outside to the bottom of the chains so orchids can be hung on the pipes. In the summer I can remove the pipes so the garage is more functional. It is a little crowded (too many vandas) but they will not last outdoors in the cold weather and must be protected from the cold weather.

