

Ascocentrum

Pronunciation: as-koe-SEN-trum

Tribe: Vandeae
Subtribe: Aeridinae

Ascocentrum is a genus of epiphytic monopodial orchids. The plants are typically compact and resemble miniature vandas (to which they are closely related). The species produce upright, densely-flowered inflorescences in shades of bright golden yellow to orange-red or fuchsia-pink. Bloom season is usually late spring.

The genus name is derived from the Greek words for "bag" and "spur", denoting the distinct spur at the base of the lip, and was originally described by Schlechter. The species, notably **Asctm. curvifolium**, have been used extensively in hybridizing with other vandaceous genera.

Commonly grown species: **Asctm. curvifolium**, **Asctm. ampullaceum**, **Asctm. garayi** (correct name for plants often sold as **Asctm. miniatum**)

Number of species: Currently the World Checklist of Monocotyledons recognizes a total of 13 species and 2 subspecies of **A. aurantiacum** (9/2007).

Distribution: Tropical Asia; northeast India, Indochina, the Philippines and Taiwan

CULTURE:

Temperature: Intermediate to warm for the commonly cultivated species

Light: Very bright conditions. The plants will adapt to full sun. Under very high light, upper leaf surfaces will show darkly pigmented spots and freckles.

Water-Humidity: Water regularly and maintain high humidity and good air circulation.

Fertilizer: Feed weekly with balanced fertilizer during spring/summer; biweekly during fall/winter; high P formula ("bloom booster") every fourth feeding.

Potting: Wooden slat baskets or mounts are best. If humidity is high in the growing area, no additional potting medium is necessary in baskets; plants produce an abundance of fleshy aerial roots which attach to the basket or hang free.