

Brassavola

Pronunciation: bra-sah-VOH-luh

Tribe: Epidendreae
Subtribe: Laeliinae

Named by Robert Brown in the early 1800's, **Brassavola** is a very popular, showy genus that has been used hundreds of times by hybridizers. Beloved by all from the beginner to the advanced hobbyist to the sophisticated hybridizer, **Brassavola**, especially **B. nodosa**, is a must for any collection due to its easy growth habit, flower longevity and wonderful evening fragrance. Commonly known as 'the lady of the night' the sweet fragrance of **B. nodosa** can easily fill a large greenhouse. Although now considered a separate genus, (*Rhynchoaelia*) **B. digbyana** was once the backbone of 'fluffy' Cattleya breeding, the brassocattleyas (BC.) and brassolaeliacattleyas (BLC.). Nowadays breeding with **B. nodosa** has become very popular as evidenced by the numerous awards granted to such hybrids as *Bl.* Yellow Bird, *Blc.* Apache Sunrise, *BC.* Binosa, *BC.* Maikai, *BC.* Carnival Kids, *Bl.* Richard Mueller, *BL.* Morning Glory and a long etc.

The genus **Brassavola** was named in honor of the Italian botanist, Antonio Musa Brassavola. Species found in hobbyist collections include **B. cordata**, **B. cucullata**, **B. cebolleta** and **B. acaulis** with **B. nodosa** being the most well known and easily cultivated.

Number of species: The World Monocot Checklist currently recognizes 20 species (9/2007).

Distribution: Tropical America from Mexico through Central America and the West Indies to Brazil and Argentina.

CULTURE:

Temperature: Warm; 60-65F 915-18C) minimum temperature.

Light: Good light; 2400-3600 footcandles.

Water-Humidity: High humidity (40-70%) and plenty of well draining water, especially during active cycle. After new growths are complete, decrease water and humidity somewhat but do not allow leaves to shrivel during this period.

Fertilizer: Weekly or every 2 weeks during active growth; once a month during rest period. Do not let fertilizer salts accumulate; flush with clear water once a month.

Potting: Pots or hanging baskets with any good, open epiphytic mix.