

Brassia

Pronunciation: BRASS-ee-ah

Tribe: Oncidieae
Subtribe: Oncidiinae

Robert Brown (1773 – 1858) introduced the genus in 1813 in honor of William Brass, Esq., a botanical illustrator who collected plants for Sir Joseph Banks in Guinea and South Africa. The type species for the genus is *Brassia maculata*. **Brassias** are widely distributed, usually quite vigorous epiphytic plants with few-to-many-flowered inflorescences bearing large to very large, whitish to yellowish and light brown flowers with narrow sepals and petals spotted or blotched dark brown and a large, pointed, prominent, more or less reflexed lip. Commonly grown species are *Brs. arcuigera* (= *Bs. longissima*), *Brs. gireoudiana*, and *Brs. verrucosa*.

Number of species: The World Monocot Checklist contains 34 accepted names.

Distribution: These plants grow widely distributed in Florida, Mexico, the Caribbean area to Surinam, Brazil, and Bolivia.

CULTURE:

Temperature: Intermediate to warm.

Light: These plants grow in bright, filtered light.

Water-Humidity: Water weekly if grown in pots, every other day if mounted. Reduce watering during the cooler part of the year. Humidity should be intermediate to high.

Fertilizer: ½ strength balanced fertilizer four to five waterings in a row. Then one watering without fertilizer.

Potting: Coarse grade bark or coconut chips with some medium size pieces of charcoal. Good aeration of the roots is crucial. The plants cannot tolerate deteriorating medium.