

Epidendrum

Pronunciation: E-pee-DEN-drum

Tribe: Epidendreae
Subtribe: Laeliinae

Epiphytic or terrestrial, plants often grow in clumps of reed-like stems. Inflorescence terminal, apical. Column fused with lip entire length, rostellum formed by blade that produces semiliquid viscidium, which when removed leaves a cleft in the rostellum. Pollinated by butterflies or hummingbirds. Genus first established by Linnaeus in 1754 to cover all epiphytic orchids known at the time. *Epidendrum* was first based on *Epidendrum nodosum*, later this species was moved to *Brassavola*. None of the original species included in *Epidendrum* remain in what is generally known as *Epidendrum* today. The actual lines defining *Epidendrum* are not certain at this time.

For the most part discussion below concerns the reed stem, *Epi. radicans*, *ibaguense* types.

Other genera discussed on other culture sheets that could also be commonly called *Epidendrum* include *Encyclia*, *Prosthechea*, *Neolehmannia*, *Oestedella*, and *Barkeria*.

Number of species: The World Checklist of Monocotyledons recognizes more than 1000 species.

Distribution: Tropical America.

CULTURE:

Temperature: Variable, prefer warm but will grow well in intermediate and even cool, down to 50's (10C) though won't grow at that temperature. These in nature come from sea level to high mountain areas; better to research origin of plant if possible.

Light: High light as much as you can give them without burning the leaves, few prefer diffuse light.

Water-Humidity: Roots like to dry completely between waterings, humidity not critical. To get reed stem epidendrums to bloom withhold water, may take a month or so, i.e. if they are growing well but no blooms abuse them a bit and they will flower. The *Epidendrum nocturnum*, *ciliare*, *diffusum* types prefer more water than other types.

Fertilizer: Not critical, whatever you are using for other orchids.

Potting: Mounted or in coarse mixture (lots of air spaces)