

# Neofinetia

**Pronunciation:** nee-oh-fi-NET-ee-ah

**Tribe:** Vandeeae  
**Subtribe:** Aeridinae

**Neofinetia** is named in honor of Achille Finet, a French Botanist, who worked on the orchids of China and Japan; and from the Greek neo, (new ) to distinguish it from another plant genus named earlier to honor M. Finet. It is an understatement to say that **Neofinetia** has its fanatics, especially in Japan where during the Tokugawa period (1773-1841) it was first recognized as precious and has since played an important role in Japanese cultural arts.

Considered the perfect orchid by the Japanese, **Neofinetia** is appreciated and enjoyed not only for its delicately shaped flowers and enchanting fragrance but also for the foliage which can be variegated or shaped differently from the typical plant. Even the roots are considered worthy of enjoyment. Add to this the fact that there are many color forms and flower shapes it is no wonder that growing **Neofinetia** in Japan is likened to an appreciation of fine art. 1 How much would you pay for an orchid? In Japan at auction in 2005, bidders paid from \$20,000 to \$70,000 for rare varieties of *fuukiran* which seems a bargain compared to the \$300,000 or higher often paid during the 1980's to late 1990's.

Long thought to be monotypic (consisting of only one species), taxonomists have recently recognized 3 species. These small growing monopodial epiphytes, typically with white, long-spurred flowers, are native to China, Korea and Japan. **Neofinetia** resembles a miniature *vanda* vegetatively. Although small, the flowers are showy and pleasingly fragrant at night. **Neofinetia falcata** is present in many hobby collections and in recent years some of the rare forms, long guarded by the Japanese, have become available in the marketplace.

**Number of species:** The World Monocot Checklist currently recognizes 3 distinct species; **N. falcata**, **N. richardsiana**, and **N. xichangensis** described in 2004.

**Distribution:** Widespread in China, Korea, Japan and the Ryukyu Islands.

## CULTURE:

**Temperature:** Intermediate although if kept dry, plants can tolerate rather cool conditions, surviving brief periods near freezing.

**Light:** Bright, filtered light

**Water-Humidity:** Do not allow to remain dry for long periods

**Fertilizer:** Balanced formula weekly when in growth

**Potting:** Small pots with free-draining mix, or slat baskets