

Odontoglossum

Also used for:

Odcdm, Vuyl, Odtna & Blira and many others

Pronunciation: oh-dont-oh-GLOS-um

Tribe: Maxillarieae

Subtribe: Oncidiinae

Odontoglossums grow as epiphytes, lithophytes and rarely as terrestrials in wet cloud forests between 1200 and 3800m. They are sympodial orchids with mostly ovoid, compressed pseudobulbs and one to two leaves. Etymology: Greek odonto, tooth; glossa, tongue; in reference to the toothlike callus on a tonguelike lip. The type species is **Odontoglossum epidendroides**, described by Humboldt, Bonpland and Kunth in 1816.

Odontoglossums are commonly crossed with other species to form unusual new hybrids.

Number of species: Until recently most authorities claimed about 100 to 175 species. However, ongoing phylogenetic and molecular analysis by Mark Chase, PhD (and others) of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew may well lead to a total revision of the genus. Currently the World Checklist of Monocotyledons recognizes 67 species and 20 natural hybrids.

Distribution: Andean regions of Venezuela, Columbia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia.

CULTURE

Temperature:	Hybrids: 50 to 55F night, 72 to 78F day Species: Most species will do well under this same temperature regimen. However, high altitude species often will accept much cooler temperatures. Seasonal variations in habitat temperatures are small.
Light:	Bright shade (1800 - 2000 foot candles). Odontoglossums are often found at the forest edge in bright shade. The brighter the light short of allowing the plants to become too warm, the better the plant will grow.
Water-Humidity:	Odontoglossums grow year round in the perpetual spring of their native habitat and receive rainfall throughout the year. Under ideal conditions the plants should never totally dry out, but should not be allowed to remain sodden. Pure water of less than 180 ppm/tds (total dissolved solids) and 6 to 6.7ph is very beneficial for optimum growth. Humidity between 50 and 70% is optimum. Maintain good air movement.
Fertilizer:	Odontoglossums benefit from a balanced fertilizer with an N-P-K ratio of 3-1-2 that also contains micronutrients. Application rates should be light (80-100 ppm is best) and consistent with active plant growth.
Potting:	Never over pot! Use pots and media that promote rapid drainage and avoid stale or soggy conditions at the roots. Repot annually or biannually if you must to avoid stale conditions. Best results may be achieved by planting in hanging wooden baskets or "rafts" which allow for rapid drainage and maximum air movement around the plant. Choice of potting media is wide and includes bark, perlite, charcoal, lava rock, course peat and rockwool.

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