

10 February 2005

Orchids

We look at a colourful flower display.

What makes a good **orchid**? The main things that the judges look for are colour and for shape. And it depends on the type of orchid that we're talking about, where there can be a very big difference from the **original orchids** of the **species** to what is **grown** in the **hybrid** today.

Yes, a hybrid is the **cross breeding** of orchids. Where you might have once species **crossed** with another, it's called a **primary hybrid**. Then after many **crosses** it becomes a **complex hybrid**.

Some of the orchids in South Australia we have to grow in a **glasshouse** environment because they're **tropical** orchids and therefore we have to as close as possible **reproduce** that.

And we do that by having it completely self-contained and we have humidity problems that we've got to counter by spraying the ground and around the orchids. We have to use heat in the winter and we have to use cooling in the summer.

With cymbidium orchids, which are the majority of the orchids in this Show, they grow naturally in South Australia under shade cloth. They grow very, very well. It's one of the best states in Australia to grow cymbidium orchids.

I do say the **cymbidium** is my favourite and I also **have quite a passion for** what's called **paphiopedilum** or the slipper orchids, but each of them have their own particular fascination and interest.

I think it's just the challenge of getting something that's different and something that's better, so that you're really looking at the challenge on the basis that there is an improvement that you can produce, that others do not have.

story notes

orchid

A type of flower. Note the spelling and pronunciation of **orchid**. The **c-h** is pronounced with a **k** sound. Remember not to confuse **orchid** with the similar **orchard**, which does have a **ch** sound.



Listen to the words by following the link.

more information: [orchid & orchard](#)

original orchids

The **original orchids** are the types of orchids found in nature.

species

A **species** is an particular type of plant or animal. Members of a species are all exactly the same type. The scientific term for a more general group of plants or animals that are similar is genus.

Cymbidium is the genus name for a group of orchid flowers that are very similar . A particular type of cybidium is a species such as *Cymbidium bicolor*. Notice that the species name (*bicolor*) does not have a capital letter.

Check out today's spotlight for more about scientific names.

grown

The past participle of the irregular verb **grow**.

more information: [grow](#)

hybrid

A **hybrid** is a mix of two different species.

cross breeding

mixing different types

crossed

mixed

primary hybrid

Graeme says that one orchid species crossed, or mixed, with another is called a **primary hybrid**. If one or more primary hybrids are crossed, a **complex hybrid** is created.

crosses

mixtures with various different types

complex hybrid

Graeme says that one orchid species crossed, or mixed, with another is called a **primary hybrid**. If one or more primary hybrids are crossed, a **complex hybrid** is created.

glasshouse

A **glasshouse** is a building with a glass roof and sides. It's very warm inside a glasshouse.



tropical

The orchids are grown in a glasshouse environment because they're **tropical** orchids, which means they're from the tropics. The tropics are areas near the equator that are very warm and wet.

reproduce

copy

cymbidium

Cymbidium is the genus name for a group of orchid flowers that are very similar. A particular type of cymbidium is a species such as *Cymbidium bicolor*

When writing a full scientific name such as *Cymbidium bicolor*, the genus name has a capital letter and we often use italics.

Example: [*Cymbidium bicolor*](#)

But when a genus name is used as a general term, we use the lower case and don't use italics.

Example: I went to the show to look at some [**cymbidiums**](#).

have quite a passion for

To **have a passion for** something is to really love it.

paphiopedilum

Here, **paphiopedilum** is the general name for a group of similar orchids. It's a genus name that is capitalised in a scientific name such as *Paphiopedilum appletonianum*.

The more common name for these types of orchid is **slipper orchid**.
