

Mounting an Orchid

Barb Schmidt

- 1.** Any epiphytic orchid can be mounted; although, certain genera and species work better, such as Phalaenopsis, Oncidium, Vanda, and Neostylis.
- 2.** It is important to use a clean, sterile mount which has a rough surface for the orchid roots to attach to. Good mounting material includes cork bark, driftwood, clay pots, tree fern, or a rough stone.
- 3.** Place the orchid to be mounted in a bowl of water for 10 minutes. The water should be just at the top of the pot. This will soften the roots and loosen them from the inside of the pot.
- 4.** When you remove the orchid from the bowl of water, add a handful of sphagnum moss to moisten it.
- 5.** Place a blunt knife down the inside of the pot and slide it around the entire pot inside. This will cut any remaining roots away from the inside of the pot.
- 6.** Gently squeeze the side of the pot, turn upside down, and pull the orchid out of the pot onto a covered table.
- 7.** Using a clean, sterile pair of garden scissors, cut away any dead roots. Dead roots can appear dried and shriveled or black, soft and decaying. A healthy root should feel plump and firm to the touch. Remove any old media attached to the roots.
- 8.** Lay the orchid mount in front of you on the table. Position it to give the orchid the most space to grow on, i.e. sympodial orchids will grow horizontally, and monopodial orchids will grow vertically.
- 9.** Place the moistened moss on the mounting material where the orchid's roots will be.
- 10.** Lay the orchid on the mount, positioning its roots over the moss.
- 11.** Tie the orchid and moss onto the mount just tight enough to hold it in place until its roots attach to the mount. Shoe laces or cable ties work well for this.
- 12.** Water the orchid every 2 or 3 days until it grows more roots, which can take 6 months or longer.