



Cultural Requirements - *Dendrobium smilliae*

Dendrobium smilliae is a species of orchid that has many common names, such as Smillie's *Dendrobium* and The Bottlebrush Orchid.

It was first described by Ferdinand von Mueller in 1867. Native to Northeast Australia and New Guinea, where it grows in various habitats from sea level to about 1970 feet (600 m). It prefers rare forests near rainforests, and grows on trees, tree ferns, rocks, and branches with thick organic matter. It is a large, hot to warm growing plant that reaches about 2.6 feet (80 cm) in height, with slender, leafy stems and thin, oblong or lanceolate leaves. It produces ball-like clusters of yellow, green, and pink flowers that are stiff, thick, waxy, and fleshy. The flowers appear in winter and spring on leafless canes. The flowers are 0.6-0.8 inches (1.5-2.0 cm) long. The lip has two convex lines and a bright green top. The spur is purple.



Light: 1672-2325 foot candles of indirect light. Give the plant more light in winter to induce flowering.

Temperature: Keep the day temperature between 84-86°F (29-30°C) and the night temperature around 72°F (22°C) in summer. In winter, lower the day temperature to 75-79°F (24-26°C) and the night temperature to 63-66°F (17-19°C)

Humidity: Maintain humidity at 70-75% year-round.

Substrate, growing media and repotting: Mount the plant on tree or cork with daily watering in summer, or use a pot with a fast-draining medium. Repot when new roots appear.

Watering: Water the plant regularly in summer and early autumn, but less in winter. Keep the plant moist but not soggy during active growth. Reduce watering when new growths mature.

Fertilizer: Feed the plant every week with a 1/2 dose of orchid fertilizer. Use high-nitrogen fertilizer in spring to mid-summer, switching to high-phosphorus fertilizer until late autumn.

Rest period: Let the plant dry enough to drop some leaves in spring for better blooming. In winter, let the plant dry slightly between waterings, but not too much or too long.

References: *American Orchid Society via aos.org*

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