



## Cultural Requirements of Psychopsis

By Richard A. Fulford

**Psychopsis** with 38 chromosomes and two pollinia grow epiphytically in wet rainforest and also dry upland forest. The pseudobulbs are tightly clustered, oval, oblong and almost round, very compressed, wrinkled, often dull red. The leaves are solitary and erect. Inflorescences are normally solitary per bulb, jointed and arched, arising from the base out of a sheath, producing a succession of flowers which last approx. 10 days, variable in color and size from inflorescence to inflorescence and from blooming to blooming. Never cut the inflorescence until it is obviously spent as old inflorescences will continue to produce flowers for many years.



The narrow, upright attenuated dorsal sepal and petals are dull to vibrant red-brown often with a narrow yellow picotee or with a few yellow transverse stripes. The broad, often down swept lateral sepals are canary yellow heavily marked with irregular transverse red-brown bars. The large lip is three-lobed with a large canary yellow center, bordered by a red-brown band. In addition to the normally pigmented forms, pure yellow forms devoid of the red pigment also exist. Flowering occurs at intervals throughout the entire year and well grown plants will have many inflorescences with more than one flower per inflorescence.

In their native habitat **Psychopsis** prefer the trunks and branches of trees where they dry out quickly although they do not like to dry out completely and do not require a rest period. **Psychopsis** are intolerant of stale conditions at their roots and benefit from annual repotting, especially in bark mixes. The roots of these plants are fine and subject to salt burn if the potting medium is not regularly flushed with pure water. Because of their fat pseudobulbs, cultural problems can go undetected until significant damage has been done.

**Temperature:** Approx. 60°F at night to 90°F during the day.

**Light:** 1800 to 3000 foot-candles. Under brighter light conditions, flowers will be smaller, less intensely colored and tend to be more reflexed. Conversely, under shadier conditions few, flatter, more intensely colored flowers are produced.

**Watering & Humidity**-They prefer moist conditions but should be allowed to nearly dry out between waterings. High humidity, as much as 85% is appreciated. These plants must be given good air movement.

**Fertilizing:** Apply a balanced fertilizer, half strength once per week but flush the medium often.

**Potting:** Spagnum moss in clay pots or slabs. They do not like a stale mix.

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