

# Zygopetalum

## ORIGIN

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## HABITAT

Southern Brazil from the states of Minas Gerais and Espirito Santo in the north to Rio Grande do Sul in the south. Plants grow as terrestrials in sparse woods, on brushy gentle slopes, or on grassy plains or meadows near forests at 4250-5600 ft. (1300-1700 m).

## Cultural Recommendations:

### LIGHT

2000-3000 fc. Relatively bright light is required by most Zygopetalums, and healthy plants that do not bloom usually have inadequate light. At proper light levels, the leaves should be light green. A yellowish cast to the leaves indicates too much light while soft, weak, dark green leaves indicate too little. Many growers successfully grow zygopetalums under the same conditions and as companions of cymbidiums.

### TEMPERATURES

Summer days average 69-73F (21-23C), and nights average 56-58F (13-14C), with a diurnal range of 13-15F (8-9C). Growers report that these plants will tolerate much warmer temperatures for short periods without adverse effects.

### HUMIDITY

Near 80% for most of the year, dropping to near 75% in winter and early spring.

### WATER

Rainfall is moderate to heavy from spring to early autumn, but conditions are somewhat drier in late autumn and winter. Cultivated plants should be kept evenly moist while actively growing, but water should be gradually reduced in autumn. Plants should not be allowed to dry out completely, however.

### FERTILIZER

A balanced fertilizer, mixed at 75-100 ppm N, should be applied weekly during periods of active growth. Pots should be leached every few weeks to prevent salt buildup, especially when fertilizer is being applied most heavily. Year-round leaching is important in areas with heavily mineralized water.

### REST PERIOD

Winter days average 60-61F (16C), and nights average 47-49F (8-9C), with a diurnal range of 12-14F (7-8C). Growers report that these plants will tolerate temperatures near freezing for short periods, but it is better if they are not exposed to such extremes. While rainfall is lower in winter, some is received each month. Also, additional moisture is available from heavy dews, which are common. Therefore, water should be reduced for cultivated plants so that they become somewhat dry between waterings, but they should not be allowed to dry out completely. Fertilizer should be reduced or eliminated altogether until water is increased in spring.