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## Growing West Coast Indoor Orchids Outdoors

There are a number of hardy orchids, but we are talking here about some of your indoor orchids which can benefit from a cooler summer outside.

Most cool growing orchids will enjoy the outside breeze. These orchids usually suffer from the heat in the summer, in homes without air conditioning. Cool growing orchids will tolerate higher temperature if there is good air movement. *Odontoglossum*, *Zygopetalum* and *Masdevallia*, will appreciate the dappled light of a protected east or north exposure with temperatures no lower than 10°C (50°F). Remember that the windows of your home filter the light and that light is more intense outside. *Masdevallia* foliage will lighten with increased light and *Odontoglossum* foliage will develop red pigment. These orchids may be set outside in June and should be brought back inside in early to mid September, in the greater Vancouver area.

*Cymbidium* can tolerate cooler outdoor temperatures and require these low temperatures to bloom. *Cymbidium* can be set outside when any danger of frost is past. In Vancouver, this is mid April. Cyms should be brought in before the first frost, in mid to late October.

Orchids spending the summer outside should be watered thoroughly and frequently as they will dry faster outdoors than they would indoors. Watering in mid-morning is best. Watering too late in the afternoon or too early in the morning may leave water sitting in bracts in cool temperatures which leads to bacterial infection. Orchids will usually be growing at that time of year and will require regular fertilizing.

You can minimize unwanted visitors to your orchids by setting them on a platform to keep the pots from being in contact with soil or lawn. Slugs and snails dislike contact with copper and adding a copper band or marine anti-fouling paint around your platform may also protect your blooms against these nocturnal critters. Make sure your plants do not have unwanted hitchhikers before bringing it inside.