

Giant Aussie™ (*Phaius australis*, Swamp Orchid)

The Swamp Orchid is one of Australia's largest terrestrial orchids. They are now an endangered species due to over-collecting from the wild and significant habitat destruction from over-development.

Plants grow to about 1 m high with erect flower spikes to over 1.2 m tall with a mass display of flowers from late Winter to Spring for about 4 to 6 weeks of the year.

The flowers are about 10 cm in diameter with red-brown petals and a pink-purple lip. The lush green foliage also makes an attractive feature when the plant is not in flower.

Features:

Australian Native, Mass floral display in late winter to spring, Good for tubs, Attractive foliage, Height to 1.2 m, width to 50 cm.

Use: Excellent for pots or as a feature landscape plant in semi-shaded moist situations. Originating from Queensland and Northern NSW, Swamp Orchids are suited to growing outdoors in pots or as a landscape plant in tropical and sub-tropical climates; or in pots indoors in a brightly lit room or in a greenhouse in cooler climates.

Flowering: Late Winter to Spring.

Habit: Upright, clumping terrestrial orchid.

Care: These orchids are very easy to grow as long as you keep the water up to them. They prefer semi-shade in a moist soil or potting mix. The best way to grow them is to plant them in a deep self-watering container and keep them topped up with water. Otherwise, place the pot in a saucer of water so that the water level is 2.5 to 5 cm up the base of the pot particularly during spring and summer. After flowering, re-pot in a quality grade composted bark-based potting mix and apply a standard slow release fertiliser.

