

CYMBIDIUMS AND HOW I GROW THEM — TOM DORAN

Below. a Cymbidium I recently brought to a meeting. It was producing the first signs of flower spikes. I did this because so many people are afraid of Cymbidiums and think them difficult to grow .

I have had this Cymbidium for many years, and its called Cymbidium “free from a flower shop“ as that’s how I got it, free from a flower shop . It had stopped flowering awhile before and they were going to throw it out, so...

Now my understanding of Cymbidiums is that mostly what we see are crosses of the various species, but that a lot of the genes are from Cymbidiums that come from the foothills of the Himalayas, where its cool and wet, so I grow them outside all year except when they flower. I grow them on the patio, where its warm and sunny in summer days but cold nights it rains on them but I also water them. Like many orchids they need a definite temp change day / night otherwise they won’t flower - by which I mean it has to be cold! Early to mid winter if you look at the base of the pseudobulbs you will see spikes growing, thin ones like your little finger are leaves and fat ones like your thumb are flowers. Bring them in and over the next month or so they will flower, the flowers last up to six weeks.

If you look at this one you will see that the newest pseudobulb is as high above the pot as the pot itself is high, and the plant is perfectly happy.

I think that Cymbidiums may think our summer-spring-autumn is their opposite seasons and that when we bring them in to flower they think its summer - but that’s just my feeling.

They may not flower every single year as if the nights are not cold they will not flower; however, I had them outside for the two cold winters after the Icelandic volcano eruption (2010,) so they are very hardy indeed. Incidentally, if mine are not going to flower I leave them out through the winter .

Anyway don’t be afraid of them they are easy and beautiful . and getting one not in flower is both cheaper and more fun as you don’t know what its going to look like. They make a beautiful display on a table or sideboard over the depths of winter when they finish flowering they are banished to the outside world for the rest of the year.

Enjoy .



TOM DORAN

