

Great News! An Easy-Growing Orchid  
Epidendrum ibaguense  
Reed-stem or Sun Orchids

Also known as the “poor man’s orchid”, these orchid plants are exceptionally easy to grow and maintain. They will thrive in full sun in coastal areas, and with some shade inland. While they are forgiving and adapt to a wide range of growing conditions, some care is needed to achieve optimum results. If you expect temperatures below 32 degrees they should be protected from the cold.

The color range of these small flowers is incredible; white, red, pink, lavender, yellow, orange and even some multi-colors or blends. The blooms are usually formed in large clusters at the top of the plants. It is not unusual for some growers to mix more than one color plant in a pot. Larger plants tend to bloom almost year round. The cut blooms can be kept in water for up to two weeks.

These orchids seem to do well in a potting soil rich in organic material. Some growers have great success using planting mix, while others use a combination of fine fir bark (Orchid Bark 1/8” to 1/4”) and redwood compost, mixed about half and half. Keeping the roots moist and crowded seems to work well. Remember, if the plant grows too tall in smaller pots, they will become top-heavy and are likely to tip over. The plants grow to about 2’ to 4’ tall.

Fertilize every two weeks with a general-purpose water-soluble fertilizer (20-20-20 or perhaps a 15-30-15). If you want longer lasting fertilizers, consider using Osmocote 14-14-14, usually applied about three times a year.

These plants are easily propagated from small plantlets that form on growth stocks and flower stems called “keiki”. When they have three or four leaves and about 2 inches of “air” roots, they can be cut off or snapped off and planted directly in the potting mix.