

## SOFTCANE (NOBILE TYPE) DENDROBIUMS and COELOGYNES

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### SOFTCANE CULTURE

Softcane, or Nobile type Dendrobiums grow naturally in Northern India & Thailand at elevations up to 1500 metres in the foothills of the Himalayan mountains.

**Temperature** These species and their hybrids are hardy plants that will tolerate temperatures from 3 degrees centigrade to temperatures in the high thirties. They are easy plants to grow providing some basic rules are followed.

**Watering & Fertilising.** To grow softcane dendrobiums well, different seasonal treatment is required. After flowering in October, increase watering & gradually increase fertiliser. Soluble 'flower-booster' fertiliser at the recommended strength on the packet is preferred. By November when new growths are 100mm or more high, water plants every second day and include fertiliser at least once per week. Maintain this treatment until new growths are nearly mature, say February or March. Reduce water & fertiliser so that by April, plants are receiving no nitrogen fertiliser at all. Water sparingly, just enough to prevent bulbs from shrivelling, until plants flower in Spring.



Den. nobile

**Compost.** Plants should be grown in a well drained medium. Pots should be as small as possible and avoid over potting. Repot soon after flowering and before new growths start to develop roots. Cover the plants with 30-50% shade in Summer to prevent burn to new growths, however, flowering will be enhanced if plants are given full or near full sun during Winter.

Softcane dendrobiums are easy orchids to grow provided they are given plenty of water & fertiliser in Summer, but in Winter give them no nitrogen fertiliser, little water & plenty of light.

### COELOGYNE CULTURE

Coelogyne is a large and diverse group of about 200 orchids of Asian origin. Most of the members of this showy genus of epiphytes and lithophytes have white or green flowers, with contrasting labellums displaying many brown or yellow markings.

Coelogyne are generally plants from mountainous regions and about 80 percent of the species are suitable for cultivating in cool to intermediate conditions. However there are also species from the warmer monsoonal, tropical lowlands which are generally very easy to grow and will rapidly build into specimen plants if the conditions are favourable.

Most species are grown in pots with a bark-based mix, however those with pendulous flower spikes, or the rampant growers with long rhizomes, are best accommodated in baskets. As a bonus, several species have pleasantly fragrant blooms.

They appreciate being watered once a week during the cooler months, and up to every two or three days during warm weather. Best species for beginners include *C. fimbriata*, *C. ovalis*, *C. flaccida*, *C. cristata*, *C. tomentosa* (syn *C. massangeana*) and *C. lactea*. Some of the best hybrids include *C. Jannine Banks* (*flaccida* x *mooreana*), *C. Linda Buckley* (*mooreana* x *cristata*) and *C. Unchained Melody* (*cristata* x *flaccida*)



Coel. Unchained Melody