

# Epiphyllum Society of America

*The International Registration Authority for epiphytic cactus hybrids and species  
of the tribe Hylocereeae*

[WWW.EPIPHYLLUMS.ORG](http://WWW.EPIPHYLLUMS.ORG)

Membership Directory:  
[www.ESA.wildapricot.org](http://www.ESA.wildapricot.org)

Welcome to the Epiphyllum Society of America! We sincerely hope you enjoy your membership with us. We do not know if you are a novice or an experienced collector; however, the following information may be helpful.

Epiphyllums, or “epies” for short, are easy to grow and, once established, will reward you with beautiful flowers regularly. Epiphyllum species originated in the rainforests of Central and South America. Other epiphytic cacti in the tribe Hylocereeae include Disocactus, Selenicereus and Hylocereus species. If you have ever enjoyed the beauty and fragrance of the “nightblooming cereus” (also known as the “Dutchman’s Pipe” or “Queen of the Night”) or enjoyed the juice of the exotic dragonfruit, you are already acquainted with some epiphytic cactus species. These plants clamber up trees in the tropical rainforests, along with orchids and bromeliads. The rainforest canopy shelters the plant from the hot sun and the atmosphere is warm and humid. Water drains away from the roots quickly.

Most epiphyllum species have fragrant white flowers and bloom at night in the summertime. However hybridizers have developed many new cultivars by crossing the species with colorful day blooming cacti. The result is that today we have literally thousands of different named epiphyllum hybrid varieties, with flowers of many shapes, sizes and colors. Individual blooms usually last for several days. Epiphyllum hybrids normally flower in the spring or early summer, but sometimes you will find a variety that will bloom later in the season or even into the fall.

Your epi should be given a place in filtered sunshine, not the direct, hot summer sun. We suggest a hanging basket on a patio or another shady spot. Protect from frost in the winter. A good potting mix should be coarse so that it can never pack and smother the roots. Terrestrial orchid mix (cymbidium/paph) works well. Or, additions can be made to a good purchased general potting mix to assure a “loose” soil mixture. We use azalea/camellia mix to start. You can add small chipped bark, perlite, pumice and charcoal to lighten the mix. A teaspoon of bone meal for a four inch pot is a slow acting fertilizer that will nourish your cutting for the first year.

When you receive a raw, fresh cutting, let it “heal” for several days in a cool, dry place. Dip the cut end in a rooting compound if desired. Until roots are present, the cutting cannot take up water and will rot if kept too wet. Plant the cutting an inch or more into damp potting mix. Withhold water for a couple of weeks. Once the plant shows signs of new growth and is rooting, sprinkle with water lightly at first, then begin to water regularly. Keep the soil moist but not soggy, and never allow it to get bone dry.

Keep a record of your plants. Preserving correct names is very important. Each plant should have a name tag that will withstand rain, watering, sun and weather. Names written on branches, even with “permanent” ink, will fade with time or the branch the name is written on may die back, causing the name to be lost. Name tags can be purchased and should be attached securely. Use a number 2 pencil to write the name of the plant on white plastic tags, or you can purchase permanent metal tags into which you can emboss the name of the plant. As added security you can write the name on the branches or on the pot itself with a paint pen or a Sharpie marker, but even a so-called “permanent” marker will fade quickly. To maintain ID, plant only one variety per pot.

Epiphyllums have a limited root system, so do not use a large container to start. A four inch pot is fine, the plant can stay in this size container until it flowers or becomes too top heavy. Epies enjoy being slightly root bound as long as they are adequately fed. Do not fill the container to the rim, you will need room for water, and you may be able to add some fresh mix each year and not have to disturb your plant until you are ready to repot. When roots have filled the small container, the plant can be potted on to the next larger size. The plant can stay in an 8 or 10 inch pot for many years.

There are many kinds of plant foods; select one that is a “complete” fertilizer or look for one low in nitrogen and a bit higher in phosphorus and potassium. A low-nitrogen fertilizer such as bone meal or bulb fertilizer should be applied in early spring with an application of a balanced fertilizer in early summer to promote vegetative growth.

Pests may include aphids, scale and mealybugs. Use pesticides with caution. Plants should be kept up off the ground where snails and slugs can't get to them. Snails and slugs love the succulent branches of epiphyllums and can do a great deal of damage in a short period of time. Scale is a big problem for epiphyllums. If you see tiny brown bumps on the branches that can be easily scraped off with your fingernail, you probably have a scale infestation. Using a dormant oil or insecticidal soap spray in the early spring before buds begin to form to help control scale. If scale persists you may need to apply a

systemic insecticide at the roots. Follow instructions for any pesticides very carefully.

Benefits of membership in the Epiphyllum Society of America:

- Access to the quarterly ESA "Bulletin" which includes seasonal cultural tips
- A \$15 discount on the Registry of Hybrids and Species
- access to the "Members Only" section of our website. Minute meetings, Bulletins, news etc.
- free admission to Cactus and Succulent Society of America events
- receive the yearly addendum to the Registry
- a free plant when you attend your first meeting!
- monthly meetings with guest speakers
- special events-annual show and sale, volunteer appreciation day, holiday party, and more!
- Most importantly, you are supporting the epiphyllum community and our mission to promote the cultivation of epiphyllums and other epiphytic cacti.

Please address all correspondence to:

*Epiphyllum Society of America*  
*% Geneva Coats, Membership Secretary*  
*13674 Geranium St.*  
*Chino CA 91710-5080*

[genevacoats@aol.com](mailto:genevacoats@aol.com) or  
[ESA.Treasurer@yahoo.com](mailto:ESA.Treasurer@yahoo.com)  
909-438-8242

We meet every month (except December and January) on the first Tuesday of the month, 7:30 pm, at the Los Angeles County Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin Ave, Arcadia, CA. in the Bamboo Room. Parking and admission are free and refreshments are provided. We cordially invite you to attend, enjoy the fellowship, and benefit by our programs.

On our website there is a section with content reserved for members only, including copies of the *Bulletin*. To access, please go to [www.epiphyllums.org](http://www.epiphyllums.org) and enter your user ID and password. Full details will be emailed to you. For any website access problem, please contact Geneva. [genevacoats@aol.com](mailto:genevacoats@aol.com).

We also have an online membership website where you can view the join the Society, view the list of members, edit your email and /or street address and pay annual dues. [www.ESA.wildapricot.org](http://www.ESA.wildapricot.org)