

## ***Cattleya mossiae* var *alba***

In 1836, William Hooker (as cited in Chadwick & Chadwick, 2006) wrote, “*C. mossiae* is simply the most magnificent of all orchidaceous plants”

This species blooms in the spring; begins its growth period in summer and then in September takes a 6-month rest before it blooms again. *C. mossiae* likes lots of water during active growth (let dry out between waterings), but should be watered sparingly during dormancy (rest period). It also requires plenty of bright light and good air movement—good, bright light will help to produce more flowers—just take care not to sunburn the leaves. Air movement helps the “drying” between watering. Temperature requirements are 58-60 degrees at night and up to 85 degrees in the daytime (Chadwick & Chadwick, 2006).

Mark gave me this plant for a birthday gift in September 2005 and it has proven to be easy to grow and bloom. Upon receipt, the plant had 6 growths and was in a 6-inch pot. It bloomed the following spring (see picture right). After blooming was complete in 2006, Mark re-potted *C. mossiae* into a 12-inch slat basket and it has resided there ever since. Every year, Mark threatens to divide and re-pot the plant, but I have always insisted on seeing how many flowers it will produce the following year; however, I think Mark will get his way this year. *C. mossiae* has 214 blooms and a few buds today and as can be seen in the photo below, it is sorely in need of some growing room.



Karlene Sanborn

### **Reference:**

Chadwick, A.A. & Chadwick, A.E. (2006). *The classic cattleyas*. Portland, OR: Timber Press Inc.