
CACTUS and SUCCULENT SOCIETY of NEW MEXICO

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CONOPHYTUM CULTIVATION

Conophytums grow in late summer to early winter. These plants are native to regions that are very dry during the spring and summer months. During late summer and fall to winter, fog and a soft drizzle are often present. The rainfall is never high, but the air and top layers of soil become very moist. In cultivation these plants need small pots and like frequent misting and light waterings during periods of growth. But by all means do not allow the soil to stay soggy for long times! During active growth, mist one or two times a week, enough to wet the soil so that it is only a little moist. The coloring will become very nice when they receive full sun and cool temperatures during the fall and winter.

They start flowering in late summer or early fall at the beginning of the growth time. Then they grow actively for several months and by late winter are ready to start their long dormant time. In late winter, start watering and misting less. When you see the color fade or wrinkling start, they are ready to go dormant. During dormancy, mist two or three times per month so the soil does not become wet, just the plant. Many of these species make a paper sheath that protects the new growth during the dormant period.

Keep up the misting schedule until you see growth start; you can't force growth by heavy watering. During the heat of summer, give the plants half shade to protect them from the hot summer sun.