

ALBANY PITCHER CARE GUIDE

CEPHALOTUS

Cephalotus, or the West Australian pitcher plant, can be a little tricky to grow. It tends to keel over and die suddenly! It is worth persevering, though.

Watering - Use a water tray or saucer, but don't let them get to water logged – 12cm depth is okay. Let the plant dry out just a little between waterings. Use rainwater or soft water.

Position - They can tolerate sun or shade, but we would recommend a sunny position but put of full sun. The traps tend to be greener but larger if in a shadier place. We grow ours in our tropical house. The larger leaves and traps form in shadier conditions, and the plant has more colour if kept in the sun.

However, they can suffer if allowed to overheat, so beware of hot temperatures in a glasshouse, particularly in the spring when the sun comes out before vents and doors are open. A cool greenhouse is ideal, or an east or west windowsill.



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Pest and disease - They can be prone to powdery mildew but you can use a proprietary fungicide as directed (we have used Roseclear). Watch out for botrytis especially in tightly packed plants. Scale insect, aphids and mealy bug can sometimes attack them. Treat by dabbing the pests with a little methylated spirits on a paintbrush, or spray with Provado ('The Ultimate Bug Killer').

Compost - Use 3:1 peat:sand but also grows well in pure Supersphag.

Winter care - The Cephalotus appreciates cooler temperatures but is best-kept frost-free. So keep damp over winter.