

FLORIDA CYMBIDIUMS

By K. Harry McElroy

As a student at Idaho State College I worked at an American Rose Society Test Garden in Pocatello, Idaho. The purpose was to test the suitability of different roses for that climate. A lot of the work was paid for and sponsored by a man who did it as a hobby. My part of the effort was to shovel cow manure on the collection. The work was hard but then I have never had any particular allergy to hard work. My reward for the effort was \$1.25 per hour and a real respect for what was being accomplished. Too bad more testing of this type is not done on all plants that could be grown in different climates particularly my favorite, the cymbidium orchid.

Cymbidiums that will grow and bloom in N.E. Florida are something I have made spent many years of effort and enjoyment to learn. Each year and each plant teaches me something new and the more I want to know about this fascinating genus. My cymbidiums have not been inside for six years and that includes nights below 32 F. Success is the result of successfully creating a micro climate for the plants. All except one of two are in fine shape.

A lot of my cymbidiums are too young to determine how well they will do. I also have a lot of plants that are no longer available commercially but have bloomed well for me. Many are not included on the attached list of cymbidiums which will bloom reliably. **I would love to know what anyone in Florida has success with so that I can add it to my list.**

Flower initiation is not an exact science. Generally cymbidiums like a 20° F day/night temperature swing with the high being 75° F in July and August, this is particularly true of the large standard species which originated in the Himalayas. Our fall is closer to this temperature so plants which initiate spikes during the fall are often successful in Florida although the actual flowering is usually later because the flower spikes abort in the heat of the early summer. Some plants don't get the right light and temperature combination in our conditions. Finding plants that initiate flower spikes and do not abort during the summer heat is what the effort is all about.

Cymbidium breeders and serious growers know that the day night temperature swing requirement of the species used in the hybridization process tends to blur due to the combination of different species. The resulting hybrids become more tolerant of climate variables as a result. There are also strange things going on with the genes of these plants, in which most some require cold temperature although these same plants seem to also have a "hot" gene. Some of the variation is due to the range in which the species grow. Finding a species collected in a hot area may give us warm growers. Another trick is to get the right combination to turn on the hot gene. As I learn more about all this the more curious I become. The only sure way to know is to grow the plant and see for ourselves.

List of Cymbidiums that have been Reliable Bloomers in Jacksonville, Florida by Harry McElroy, cymbidiuman@msn.com	
Registered Name of Cymbidium	Parentage of Registered Cross
Alice Alisa	Alice Williams x Sleeping Beauty)
Allie Bird	Pumilum x Susa

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Amesbury 'Ice Wine'	Geraint x Ora Lee
Auntie Mary Kovich	sinense x insigne
Cameliard	Sweetheart x Angela
Chen's Ruby	Iridioides x Golden Elf
Donovan	Kusuda Shining 'VE Day' x Sleeping Ransom 'Blazing Gold'
Dorothy Stockstill 'Forgotten Fruit'	Phar Lap x Miss Muffet
Dutchman's Gold	Golden Elf x madidum)
Emma's Tiger	Parishii 4N x Golden Tiger #2 4N
Fifi	Madidum x Argonaut
Florida Cracker	Wild Colonial Boy x Golden Elf
Floripink	Kurun x Vanguard
For Your Love	Devon Gala x Snow Aker
Genji	Korintji x San Miguel
Gladys Whitesell 'Contrast'	Fifi x parishii
Gloria Naugle	Golden Elf 'Sundust' 4N x Kusuda Shining 'Brick' 4N
Golden Elf 'Sundance'	ensifolium x Enid Haupt
Golden Tiger 'Pure Glory'	Golden Cascade x tigrinum
Hawaii 'Golden Nugget'	Chironla x Dorama
Honey Bunny'Sugar Candy'	Sara Jean x Lovely Bunny
Janis Lin 'Emily Kate'	Sara Jean x Omymilum
Kauai	Golden Elf x Sleeping Dawn
Kusuda Beauty	Kusuda Shining 'Brick' 4N x Red Beauty 'Netty' 4N
La Costa 'Elf'	Olymilum x Baltic Snow
La Costa Moonlight	Baltic Glacier x Olymilum
Levis Duke 'John Gulbis'	Blue Smoke x Etta Barlow
Lovely Rain 'New Horizon'	Enzan Moon x Parish Madness
Lusterous	Louisiana x Sunrise
Marianne Faithful 'New Horizon'	Tracey Reddaway x Karen
Mary Pinchess	Pumilum x Pajaro
Maui Mist 'Wakefields Snow'	Olymilum x aloifolium

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Maureen Carter	sinense x Sleeping Beauty
Milton Carpenter 'Everglades Gold'	Golden Elf x Via Amberino
Mimi 'Lucifer'	pumilum x Doris Aurea
Pasadena 'Beautiful'	Joan of Arc x George Lycurgas)
Peter Pan	Ensifoliumx Miretta
Sarah Jean 'Ice Cascade'	pumilum x Sleeping Beauty
Pistachio Mint	Bill Quinn x Tom Thumb
Starbright 'Centaur'	pumilum x Lyoth
Sweetheart 'Sensation'	pumilum x Alexanderi
Sweet Spring 'New Horizon' 4N	sinense x Alexanderi
Taste of China	Kusunda Shining #4 sinense 'Alba'
Tender Love 'Independence'	parishii x ensifolium
Tom Thumb	pumilum x Coronado
Valerie Absolonova	Golden Elf 'Sundust' 4N x Tellis
Via Wylie-Coyote	Via Coyote x Via Mar-Vista
Western Movie 'Key Lime'	Blue Smoke x parishii
Yellow Elf	Pure Gold '14 Karat' x Golden Elf 'Sundust'
Unregistered Cross	Christian Heritage 'Andy's Gift' x Tracey Reddaway
Unregistered Cross	Enzan Harmony x Wood Nymph
Unregistered Cross	Golden Tiger 2n x Pure Glory 'Alba Diploid'(+ Colchicine)
Unregistered Cross	Grassy Waters x Claude Pepper
Unregistered Cross	Mem. Jacqueline Oyston 'Ice Princess' x Atlanta 'Geyserland'
Unregistered Cross	One Tree Hill x (Carilara x Applejack)-Alice Williams 'Emerald'
Unregistered Cross	Tityus x Alderman

Note: pumilum is a warm grower
 madidum blooms easily but does not like too much sun or cold
 ensifolium is a very warm grower
 eberno-lowianum is warm tolerant