

Line Breeding for Pink Cymbidium

Without doubt *Cymbidium* *Alexanderi* is the greatest *Cymbidium* because it was the foundation for *Cymbidium* breeding; total progeny of 15,955 can support the statement. We can expect flowers of *Cym. Alexanderi* should be "Naturally" pink color because the presence of *Cym. insigne* background. However, achieving white flower colors in orchids was always a goal for breeder and it was done with the clone *Cym. Alexanderi* 'Westonbirt'.

Cym. insigne and *Cym. Ceres* are the main contributor of red pigments. This hybrid was registered by Hamilton Smith in 1919 and in 1931 Hanbury exhibited the reddish bronze *Cym. Ceres* 'F. J. Hanbury', which received an FCC/RHS.



Cym. Ceres (*Cym. iansonii* x *Cym. insigne*)
Photo by L. Batchman

Cym. Ceres represent a milestone developing red color hybrids, it had been used multiple times to create a wide range of red colors hybrids and most of them were diploid, which may lack of size and substance. There is a need for tetraploid parents. Because of extensive breeding efforts, tetraploids with pink to red coloration started to appear. The pink tetraploid *Cymbidium* Coral Sea 'Leona Mayner' is of pink coloring and gives seed. (Hetherington 1963).



Cym. Coral Sea 'Sarita Mayner' BM/CSA 78.1 Points
Photo by CSA

Apparently breeding with *Cym. Coral Sea* does not go further, there are registered just 14 offspring, first generation and 15 total progenies. Perhaps there were conflict with the number of chromosomes.

Cym. Babylon (*Cym. Olympus* x *Cym. Pauwelsii*) a lovely pink hybrid, it had 157 offspring, first generation and 3,283 total progenies. It might start the Cymbidium pink line breeding because most of its first-generation hybrids are pink color. Observing the table below, *Cym. Vieux Rose* (*Cym. Babylon* x *Cym. Rio Rita*) highlight from the list, its beautiful hybrid was created by Hothfield in 1949. They earned 1 culture awards granted by the CSA in 1980, 5 HCC and 1 CCM giving by the AOS.



Photo by Atstupenas

Bramesa Golden Dragon 'Leapin' Lou' HCC/AOS (76 points)



Photo by Atstupenas

Cym. Rio Rita
Cym. Pearl x *Cym. Ruby*

Cym. Babylon some first-generation presumable pink or with pink tint

Seed		Pollen	Hybrid	Year	Offspring	Awards
<i>Cym. Alexanderi</i>	x	Cym. Babylon	<i>Cym. Cleo Sherman</i>	1956	76	59
<i>Cym. Rosanna</i>	x	Cym. Babylon	<i>Cym. Ann Green</i>	1958	42	30
<i>Cym. floribundum</i>	x	Cym. Babylon	<i>Cym. Oriental Legend</i>	1961	6	24
Cym. Babylon	x	<i>Cym. Pearl</i>	<i>Cym. Tinsel</i>	1949	1	13
Cym. Babylon	x	<i>Cym. lowianum</i>	<i>Cym. Leedja Clean</i>	1955	3	13
<i>Cym. Remus</i>	x	Cym. Babylon	<i>Cym. Burgundian</i>	1955	6	8
<i>Cym. Spartan Queen</i>	x	Cym. Babylon	<i>Cym. Featherhill</i>	1956	3	8
Cym. Babylon	x	<i>Cym. Rio Rita</i>	<i>Cym. Vieux Rose</i>	1949	135	7

Another interesting *Cymbidium* that contributed with pink hybrids is *Cymbidium* Delrosa 'The King' FCC (93), which got one of the highest and oldest *Cymbidium* AOS award records is the capsule parent is the great *Cym. Alexanderi* (*Cym. Eburneo-lowianum* x *Cym. insigne*) and the pollen parent is *Cym. Peregrine* (*Cym. Ceres* x *Cym. Parsifal*), but it just produced 3 offspring.



Cym. Delrosa 'The King' FCC/AOS 93
Points, 1953 April 22

Species of *Cymbidium* that contribute to the *Cymbidium* pink line breeding

Cymbidium dayanum, this lovely species native range is from Himalaya to Japan (Southern Kyushu) and Malesia. It was naturalized in Hawaii. *Cym. dayanum* is a fairly compact *Cymbidium* species that passes this trait on to its progeny. Flowers, especially the lip show an attractive red coloration and petals and sepals are softly pink tone.

The vigor of *Cym. dayanum* is outstanding, and the hybrids exhibit this welcome characteristic as well. Its hybrids mature quickly, they are able to perform well over a wide range of environmental conditions and passes this tolerance on to its progeny (Hatfield 2018).



Cym. dayanum var. *dayanum*
Photo taken from powo.science.kew.org

Cymbidium insigne is a key species for infusing the pink color in the line breeding. The color of the petals and sepals varies from near white to a rather deep rose flush. There is inclined to be a complex of rose dots on the bases of both petals and sepals. The lip is profusely marked with red-lilac bars and dots on the frontal lobe and lines of the same color on the side lobes. (Crosby H. 1952).

Cymbidium ensifolium is a compact plant, bloom early in September. It contributes with scent, erect blooming spike and heat-tolerance to its offspring. Apparently the first generation also had bad features, including a limited color range, poor shape and substance and short flower life. However, these are problems which can overcome in future generations of hybrids. (Rogerson 1991).

New direction breeding *Cymbidium* pink

I think regarding form perhaps new direction must go toward narrow shape segments, different than the classic *Cym. eburneum*. About pink color it expresses on the flower as veins and patterns not as a solid color. Far relation genetic procure them to mate. In a very different subject, polyploid can get better flower size in this *Cymbidium* complex.

In order to complement and get an idea of possible new direction I pulled out some recent awards using new species that can be potentially breed *Cymbidium* pink flowers

Cymbidium White Iceberg 'Frostbite' HCC/AOS (79 points)

Cymbidium insigne x *Cymbidium wenshanense*

Award No: 20234668 Date: Feb 04, 2023 Event: National Capital Center Monthly

Judging (Washington, DC) Judging Center: National Capital Judging Center

Exhibitor: R. J. Griesbach Photographer: Michael Summers



Cymbidium Desert Rain 'Spring Shower' HCC/AOS (77 points)
Cymbidium Banana Split x *Cymbidium erythraeum*
Award No: 20224865 Date: Apr 23, 2022 Event: Southern Tier Orchid
Society Show (Binghamton, New York) Judging Center: Northeast
Judging Center Exhibitor: Jeanne Kaeding Photographer: Geoffery
Gould



Cymbidium Maufant 'Jersey' HCC/AOS (78 points)
Cymbidium Red Beauty x *Cymbidium* Thurso
Award No: 20225309 Date: Mar 19, 2022 Event: Pacific
Central Judging Center - Filoli (Woodside, California)
Judging Center: Pacific Central Judging Center Exhibitor:
Japheth Ko Photographer: Chaunie Langland

Cymbidium Flirtation 'M.B.F.' HCC/AOS (77
points)
Cymbidium Zebra x *Cymbidium floribundum*
Award No: 20222058 Date: Jan 29, 2022
Event: Gulf Coast Orchid Society Show
(Gautier, MS) Judging Center: Atlanta
Judging Center Exhibitor: Marble Branch
Farms Photographer: Chip Lechner





Cymbidium Minuet 'David Sanders 4N' AM/AOS (80 points)

Cymbidium insigne x *Cymbidium floribundum*

Award No: 20224667 Date: Feb 05, 2022 Event:

National Capital Center Monthly Judging (Washington, DC) Judging Center: National Capital Judging Center

Exhibitor: John Sonnier: British Embassy Washington

Photographer: Bryan Ramsay

Cymbidium Memoria Ellen Margron 'Beauty Spots' HCC/AOS (78 points)

Cymbidium Brenda x *Cymbidium* Devon Odyssey

Award No: 20212261 Date: Feb 07, 2021 Event:

California-Sierra Nevada Center Monthly Judging (Sacramento, California) Judging Center:

California-Sierra Nevada Judging Center

Exhibitor: Cynthia Battershall Photographer:

Ramon de los Santos



Cymbidium Renee Taylor 'Patricia Olson' AM/AOS (81 points)

Cymbidium Kabuki Moon x *Cymbidium* Hazel Tyers

Award No: 20222266 Date: Mar 02, 2022 Event:

California-Sierra Nevada Center Monthly Judging (Sacramento, California) Judging Center: California-

Sierra Nevada Judging Center Exhibitor: Paul and Phyllis Chim Photographer: Ramon de los Santos

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