

***Cattleya lobata* Lindl., Gard. Chron. 1848: 403 (1848).**

Lobed Laelia

Synonyms

- *Bletia lobata* (Lindl.) Rchb.f. in W.G.Walpers, Ann. Bot. Syst. 6: 424 (1862).
- *Laelia lobata* (Lindl.) A.H.Kent in H.J.Veitch, Man. Orchid. Pl. 2: 74 (1887).
- *Sophronitis lobata* (Lindl.) Van den Berg & M.W.Chase, Lindleyana 15: 117 (2000).
- *Hadrolaelia lobata* (Lindl.) Chiron & V.P.Castro, Richardiana 2: 19 (2002).
- *Brasilaelia lobata* (Lindl.) Gutfreund, Colet. Orquídeas Brasil. 4(Pré-anexo): 99 (2006).
- *Chironiella lobata* (Lindl.) Braem, Richardiana 6: 109 (2006).
- *Laelia boothiana* Rchb.f., Allg. Gartenzeitung 23: 322 (1855).
- *Bletia boothiana* (Rchb.f.) Rchb.f., Xenia Orchid. 2: 51 (1863).
- *Laelia rivieri* Carrière, Rev. Hort. (Paris) 46: 331 (1874).
- *Cattleya lobata* var. *superba* F.Buys., L'orchidophile; Traité Théor. & Prat.: 240 (1878).
- *Laelia lobata* var. *alba* Occhioni, Orquidea (Rio de Janeiro) 7: 34 (1944).

Cattleya lobata was discovered by the British naturalist George Gardner in 1836. He found them clinging to the rugged cliffs of the Organ Mountains in the Brazilian Province of Rio de Janeiro, and announced to the world he had discovered the lost *C. labiata* and in 1848 John Lindley described *C. lobata* and named *lobata* because of a great amount of "lobing" of the petals and lip which really just a lot of frilling and wavy edging not actual indentations or lobes. (Withner, 1988).

Lindley considered all the eight-pollinia *Cattleya* species into his genus *Laelia*, it is the case for *C. lobata*, however he placed them in the genus *Cattleya* and James Veitch because the eight-pollinia considered them in the genus *Laelia*.

C. lobata (*L. lobata*) is native to a limited area of Brazil from the vicinity of the city of Rio de Janeiro southward to the north of the State of São Paulo. It is often found growing on rocks facing the ocean and fully exposed to the sun. Because of the difficulty of collecting it, *L. lobata* has never been in abundant supply on the commercial market, and as a result, it was not attractive to the major orchid companies of Europe during the 1800s. The most famous of all orchid books, *Lindenia* and *Reichenbachia*, produced by Linden and Sander's, respectively, have no painting of *L. lobata* or *C. lobata* and no reference to them. Williams' *The Orchid Grower's Manual* tells us that it was seldom seen at horticultural shows, but blames this on its shy blooming. The scarcity of the plant, however, was probably more important.

There is a natural hybrid reported between *L. crispa* and *C. lobata* where their geographic ranges cross, *L. uryattiana*. The natural hybrid, *Lc. Amanda*, results from crossing with *C. intermedia*. (Withner, 1988).

Descriptions

L. lobata, (*C. lobata*) has thick, oblong-ovoid pseudobulbs which generally attain the height of 15 or even 20 centimeters and are surmounted by a single leathery leaf about 20 cm. long by 5.5 cm. wide. In other words, the plant closely allied to *L. crispa* (*C.lobata*) and has also the same leaf and bulb characteristic of this and other large-flowered Brazilian *Laelias*, which cannot be easily distinguished from one another when seen without flowers.

The straight spike, about 30 cm. tall, bears 2 to 5 showy and very fragrant flowers of low brilliance. The sepals are about 5-7 cm. long by 2 cm. wide, of a violet-rose color. The petals have the same color as the sepals and measure about 3-5 cm. long by 4-5 cm. wide. The lip has short side lobes and an elongated waxy-edge apical portion that is a velvety, dark pansy-violet with still darker veins. The throat is lemon-yellow. The apex of the white column, which is 2-5 cm. long is tinted with violet rose; the anther is almost black. (Urpia, 1954).

Hybridization

L. lobata, (*C. lobata*) has not been used extensively in hybridizing, although it would seem to be a suitable parent for breeding with its lovely coloring, floriferousness, they blooming should be last about a month, sweet fragrance, tolerance of stress and relatively small plant size.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, it was crossed with many of the large-flowered *Cattleyas* like *C. labiata*, *C. trianaei*, *C. mendelii*, *C. mossiae* and *C. dowiana*, and with other large-flowered Brazilian *Laelias* like *L. crispa*, *L. tenebrosa* and *L. purpurata*. The resulting hybrids, however, were not as attractive as other *Cattleya* and *Laelia* crosses and little breeding was done after that. According to OrchidWiz x4.3 there are 31 first generation (F1) offspring and 1 awarded, named *C. Pulcherrima* (*C. lobata* x *C. purpurata*), amazingly is an alba hybrid.



Cattleya lobata

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Cattleya purpurata

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Cattleya Pulcherrima

There are darker and clearer varieties and even a rare pure white form of *L. lobata*. Some types, have sepals which curl back and others have sepals that curl forward and a more conical and crisped lip. (Urpia, 1954).

L. lobata has some lovely clones, several of which have received 15 awards from the American Orchid Society. Perhaps the most beautiful is a pale lavender-pink concolor named 'Jeni', AM/AOS. An alba, 'Horich' also received an HCC, as did a rose-lavender 'Future Look'.



Cattleya laelia lobata 'Jeni'

One interesting variety is *C. lobata* Lindl var. *superba*, F.Buys: L'orchidophile; Traité Théor.& Prat.: 240 (1878). More floriferous, with more flowers per cluster. (Higgins, 2016).

References

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- World Checklist of Selected Plant Families (WCSP) Kew.org. Retrieve September 1, 2018 from <http://wcsp.science.kew.org>.
- Orchidwiz Encyclopedia X4.3