

# *Encyclia cordigera* [HBK] Dressler 1964

Large-lipped *Encyclia* - In Nicaragua - Flor de Encarnacion<sup>3</sup>



## Synonyms

*Cymbidium cordigerum* Kunth 1815; *Encyclia atropurpurea* var. *leucantha* Schlechter 1922; *Encyclia atropurpurea* var. *rhodoglossa* Schltr. 1922; *Encyclia atropurpurea* var. *rosea* [Batem.] Summerhayes 1957; *Encyclia cordigera* var. *rosea* [Batem.] H.G.Jones 1969; *Encyclia doeringii* Hoehne; *Encyclia duboisiana* (Brongn. ex A. Rich.) Neumann 1845; *Encyclia macrochila* (Hook.) Neumann 1845; *Epidendrum atropurpureum* var. *lionetianum* Cogn. 1903; *Epidendrum atropurpureum* var. *longilabre* Cogn. 1903; *Epidendrum atropurpureum* var. *roseum* [Batem.] Rchb.f 1854; *Epidendrum cordigerum* (Kunth) Foldats 1969; *Epidendrum doeringii* (Hoehne) A.D. Hawkes 1957; *Epidendrum duboisianum* Brongn.; *Epidendrum longipetalum* Godefroy-Lebeuf 1892; *Epidendrum macrochilum* Hook. 1836; ; *Epidendrum macrochilum* var. *albopurpureum* C. Morren 1846; *Epidendrum macrochilum* Hooker var. *roseum* Batem. 1839.<sup>3</sup>

## Description

With ovoid-pyriform, to subglobose pseudobulbs, subtended by a scarious sheaths in youth, sulcate with age and carrying 2 oblong-elliptic, obtuse, coriaceous, narrowing below into an elongate, narrow, petiole-like base leaves that blooms in the winter and spring on an apical, to 2' [60 cm] long, few to many flowered, racemose inflorescence with a short, basal bract and strongly fragrant, heavily textured flowers.<sup>3</sup> The tips of the petals and sepals curl forward and their apices have prominent green nectaries. The sepals and petals vary from greenish brown to deepest red brown. The lips are variable from white with a few purple veins to deep rosy magenta.<sup>2</sup>

## Habitat

Found in Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, French Guiana, Surinam, Guyana, Venezuela, Brazil, Colombia and Peru as a medium sized, bifoliate, hot to warm growing epiphyte, but can occasionally be lithophytic, occurring in dry forests, tropical rainforests and in dense scrub at an altitude of 0 to 900 meters.<sup>3</sup> Distributed from southern Mexico, through Central America, the West Indies, and into Colombia and Venezuela. *E. cordigera* is common in the rather dry, scrubby forests of coastal regions from sea level to 2950 ft. (900 m) on both the Pacific and Atlantic sides of the dividing mountain range. In Central America, it is more common on the Pacific side. -- Source: Charles Baker<sup>4</sup>

## F-1 Hybrids and Progeny

*Encyclea cordigera* is definitely the largest of the Building Blocks for *Encyclea* hybrids with 197 F-1's and a total progeny of 318 in 4 generations. A lot of experimentation has gone on since the first cross was made in 1904. Within the genus, 95 hybrids have been registered. The most successful is *Encyclea Rioclarense* with



*Encyclea Rioclarense* 'Arnie' AM/AOS



*Epicyclia Mabel Kanda* 'Mothers Day 06' AM/AOS

6 offspring and 15 awards. It is a primary with *Encyclea randii*. Intergeneric hybrids have been tried with a boatload of Cattleya Alliance genera. A noteworthy grex is Epicyclia Mabel Kanda, a primary with *Epidendrum paniculatum*. It has 7 offspring and has been awarded 9 times. Other intergenerics are crosses with

## Awards

*Encyclea cordigera* has 56 AOS awards including 2 FCC, 22 AM, 2 CBM, 13 CCM, 2 CHM, 10 HCC, 5 JC. It has an additional 35 other awards from various countries.

## Culture

LIGHT: 2500-3500 fc.

TEMPERATURES: Summer days average 87-89F (31-32C), and nights average 65-66F (18-19C), with a diurnal range of 21-24F (12-13C). Spring is the warmest season, when days average 91-94F (33-34C), and nights average 62-67F (17-19C), with a diurnal range of 24-32F (13-18C). While these temperatures are common over much of the range, values are somewhat cooler in Caracas, Venezuela where *E. cordigera* was found in abundance before the habitat was covered with concrete and asphalt. In Caracas, days average 78-80F (26-27C), nights average 61-62F (16-17C), with a diurnal range of 16-18F (9-10C).

HUMIDITY: Near 80% during the growing season, dropping to 60-65% in winter and spring.

WATER: Rainfall is moderate to heavy during the growing season. Cultivated plants should be allowed to dry slightly between waterings.

FERTILIZER: 1/4-1/2 recommended strength, applied weekly. A high nitrogen fertilizer is beneficial from spring to midsummer, while a fertilizer high in phosphates should be used in late summer and autumn. High phosphates promote better blooming the next season and encourage new growths to harden before winter. In order to prevent salt buildup, the medium should be leached every few weeks during periods of heavier fertilizer applications. This is especially important in areas with heavily mineralized water. Leaching is performed by watering the plant normally to dissolve any accumulated salts, and then an hour or so later flushing the media with water equal to about twice the volume of the pot.

REST PERIOD: Throughout much of the habitat, winter days average 89-92F (32-33C), and nights average 60-62F (16-17C), with a diurnal range of 28-32F (16-18C). Near Caracas, however, days average 75-78F (24-26C), and nights average 56-58F (13-14C), with a diurnal range of 19-21F (11-12C). For 4-6 months in winter, rainfall averages less than 1 in. (25 mm), but moisture is available from heavy dew. In cultivation, water should be reduced during the winter but not eliminated. In most growing areas, plants need an occasional early morning misting, with a light watering once every few weeks. Water is most beneficial during bright, sunny weather. If possible, light levels may be increased in winter to reflect the greater number of clear winter days in the habitat. Fertilizer should be reduced or eliminated until spring.

**GROWING MEDIA:** Plants may be mounted on cork or tree-fern slabs if high humidity can be maintained, and if water can be applied at least once daily during the summer. If potted, an open, fast draining medium such as cork nuggets or medium to large fir-bark is recommended. Repotting is best done as new root growth begins or as soon after flowering as possible.

**MISCELLANEOUS NOTES:** As indicated by the varying conditions found in nature, *E. cordigera* adapts to either intermediate or warm growing conditions. It tolerates hot daytime temperatures if humidity is high and air movement is strong. Most growers consider this species easy to grow and flower.<sup>5</sup>

## References

**Aldridge, Peggy. 2008.** *An Illustrated Dictionary of Orchid Genera.* Selby Botanical Garden Press.

<sup>1</sup>**la Croix, Isobyl. 2008.** *The New Encyclopedia of Orchids.* Timber Press

**Meisel, Kaufmann, Pupulin 2014.** *Orchids of Tropical America.* Cornell University Press

<sup>2</sup>**Withner, Carl L. 1998.** *The Cattleyas and Their Relatives: Volume V.* Timber Press

<sup>3</sup>[www.orchidspecies.com](http://www.orchidspecies.com)

<sup>5</sup>[www.orchidculture.com](http://www.orchidculture.com)

<http://apps.kew.org/wcsp/qsearch.do>

<https://secure.aos.org/aqplus/SearchAwards.aspx>

<sup>4</sup>OrchidWiz.Database X4.1