

# *Cattleya crispata* (Thunb.) Van den Berg, Neodiversity 3: 6 (2008).

SUBGENUS *Parviflorae* SECTION *Rupestres* Withner 1990

Common Name: The Yellow Laelia



## Synonyms

*Amalia flava* (Lindl. ex Heynh.) Heynh. 1846; *Amalia fulva* (Lindl.) Heynh. 1846; *Cattleya caetensis* (Pabst) Van den Berg 2010; *Cattleya flava* (Lindl.) Beer 1854; *Cattleya lutea* Guidon 1858; \**Cymbidium crispatum* Thunb. 1818; *Hoffmannseggella caetensis* (Pabst) V.P.Castro & Chiron 2002; *Hoffmannseggella crispata* (Thunb.) H.G.Jones 1974; *Laelia caetensis* Pabst 1975; *Laelia fulva* Lindl. ex Heynh 1846; *Sophronitis caetensis* (Pabst) Van den Berg & M.W.Chase 2000; *Sophronitis crispata* (Thunb.) C. Berg & M.W. Chase 2000;

## Description

Found in the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais on iron ore hills as a small to medium sized, "rupicolous" lithophyte, encountered under dense scrub bushes on cliff ledges at an elevation of 400-1200 meters with terete, cylindrical pseudobulbs with a stout basal sheath and carrying a single, apical, erect, leathery, narrowly oblong, obtuse leaf. Well drained pots in a cool to warm environment and bright indirect light combined with a dry

winter rest will make this an easy late winter and early spring blooming species with a 8 to 20" [20 to 50 cm] long raceme subtended by a compressed sheath and having from 2 to 10 flowers once established.<sup>3</sup>

This laelia has been known for years as *rupestris*, meaning rock- or cliff-dwelling in Latin, and not all orchidists today have changed their labels to read *crispata*. The R.H.S. still uses *rupestris* for the registration of hybrids of this species, so the duality will continue. We are used to that by now, trying to meld botanical knowledge and horticultural practice. Possible confusion is aggravated since *crispa*, *crispata* and *crispilabia* are

three separate species contained in this genus. As Pabst points out, *L. crispata* shares with *L. flava*: and *L. cinnabarina* the characteristic of having one of the widest distributions of all the rupicolous laelias in Brazil. The plants are found in the mountains near Belo Horizonte in Minas Gerais and then north to Montes Claros, a distance of more than 500 km. The type specimen was collected near Diamantina in the Serra da Piedade. The plants grow at an altitude of 700-800 m., relatively low compared to other rock laelias, and Odebrecht (1988) describes collecting them en route to Diamantina from Rio de Janeiro.

The flowers are of medium size, about 4 cm. across with as many as ten produced in crowded succession on the apex of the flower stalk. They are easily recognized by their bright magenta color, the white bases of the sepals and petals, and the relatively broad width of the segments. The deep yellow in the throat spreads onto the base of the disc, and the apex of the lip is a darker red—purple than the sepals and petals. The midlobe is crisped as is typical for most of these rock laelia flowers. The sepals are 7-8 x 20 mm., the petals 7-8 x 21-22 mm., and the lip is 12-14 mm. broad x 16-17 mm. long. In Brazil the plants flower from September through December, in northerly climates mostly in February and March.

Two natural hybrids are reported by Pabst: one, a cross with *L. flava* and described under that species, is called *L. caetensis*; the other, described under *L. ghillanyi*, is called *L. cipoensis*. In cultivation the first hybrid was registered by Young in 1903, LC. Glycera, using *C. trianaei* as the other parent. A variation named as a subspecies by Blum, *L. rupestris* subsp. *sanguinea*, presumably has flowers with a redder color than usual, and Blumenschein has shown the plants to be tetraploid. To date, however, we do not appear to have such plants in cultivation.

H. G. Jones reduced this species, under the name *L. rupestris*, along with *L. longipes*, to synonymy under *L. caulescens* (see *Caldasia* 10: 50, 1970). This nomenclature is erroneous (see *L. longipes*) in light of present opinions and should not be considered further. There is also the possibility that *crispata* and *tereticaulis* may be the same.

## Habitat

Brazil. Plants are found in the state of Minas Gerais and have one of the widest areas of distribution of any of the rock-growing laelias. The type specimen was collected near Diamantina, but plants are now known to occur from the mountains near Belo Horizonte in the south to Montes Claros in the north, a distance of some 310 miles (500 km). Plants grow at 1300–2600 ft. (400–800 m). They are usually found on exposed, almost horizontal ledges where they are protected somewhat by *Vellozia* bushes and other stunted vegetation. --

Source: Charles Baker<sup>4</sup>

## Awards

Origin	HCC	AM	CHM	CBR	CBM	CCM	Total
	5	6	1	2	4	1	19
Years	1985-1996	1960-2014	1982	1992-2001	1952-1961	1960	

## F-1 Hybrids

Generation	Before 1940	1940-49	1950-59	1960-69	1970-79	1980-89	1990-99	2000-10	After 2010
F-1	33	1	9	34	14	26	10	18	8

The three most awarded of *Cattleya crispata* F-1 hybrids were produced in the 1960's. Cattlianthe El Cerrito is a primary with *Guarianthe aurantiaca*. It has 22 progeny in 3 generations and has 9 AOS awards.



Cattlianthe El Cerrito AM/AOS

Cattlianthe Ken Battle is a cross with Ctt. Confetti (*C. trianae* x *Gur. aurantiaca*). It has 16 progeny in 2 generations and 6 AOS awards.



Cattlianthe Ken Battle AM/AOS

The third notable (based on awards) F-1 from *C. crispata* is Cattleya Rosemary Clooney, a cross with an old complex standard. It has 13 progeny and 6 AOS awards.



Cattleya Rosemary Clooney AM/AOS

## Progeny

*Cattleya crispata* has 4,919 progeny in 11 generations. It features in a number of well known hybrids including Ctt. Hazel Boyd, Jfk. Appleblossom, Ctt. Trick or Treat, Rlc George King, Ett. Volcano Trick and Rth. Love Passion.

## Breeding Strengths and Weaknesses

The small size is a plus in some breeding lines. The species is floriferous with 5 to 10 flowers per inflorescence. Its upright form makes for a nice presentation. The yellow color is strong. The open form and small lip are weaknesses.<sup>6</sup>

## Culture

**LIGHT** 3,500-4,500 foot-candles. Bright light is required, but direct midday sun may cause sunburn. Continuous strong air movement is particularly important for plants grown in bright light.

**TEMPERATURES** Summer days average 72-73 F (22-23 C) and nights average 48-49 F (9-10 C), with a diurnal range of 24 F (13° C). Plants will, however, tolerate warmer temperatures for short periods if humidity is high and air movement is strong.

**HUMIDITY** Records are not available for this location, but reports from other stations in the region indicate that humidity probably averages near 80 percent much of the year, dropping to 70-75 percent in winter and early spring.

**WATER** Rainfall is moderate to heavy from spring into autumn, but it declines in winter, resulting in three to four relatively dry months. Cultivated plants should be watered heavily while actively growing, but they should always dry out between waterings. Water should be gradually reduced in late autumn after new growths mature.

## 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. 1990.** *The Cattleyas and Their Relatives: Volume II* Timber Press

<sup>3</sup>www.orchidspecies.com

<sup>4</sup>OrchidWiz.Database X4.2

<sup>5</sup><https://secure.aos.org/>

<sup>6</sup>Miranda, Thomas. .2011. Orchid of the Month- Rupicolous Cattleyas, Orchids. December 2011

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