Encyclia *alata* (Bateman) Schltr., 1914

[al-AH-ta]

**Common Name**: Winged Encyclia.

**Meaning:** Winged

From Charles Baker Culture Sheet: ORIGIN/HABITAT: Distributed from southern Mexico through Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. In Mexico, these plants are found in the States of Campeche, Chiapas, Quintana Roo, Veracruz, and Yucatan. They grow in tropical semideciduous forest and oak forest at 300-4250 ft. (100-1300 m) on slopes facing the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean.

PLANT SIZE AND TYPE: A robust, clump-forming sympodial epiphyte that may grow to as much as 23 in. (58 cm) tall.

PSEUDOBULB: To 5 in. (13 cm) tall. The clustered, pear-shaped pseudobulbs are sheathed when young.

LEAVES: 4-20 in. (10-50 cm) long. Usually 2 rather rigidly leathery, narrowly linear-lanceolate leaves are carried at the top of the pseudobulb, but there may sometimes be 3 or more. They are 0.4-2.0 in. (1-5 cm) wide, taper to a sharp point at the tip, and have short, tubular stalks at the base.

INFLORESCENCE: Usually 16-35 in. (40-90 cm) long, but often more than 39 in. (100 cm) long. The stiff, erect inflorescence, which may be simple or branched, emerges from between the leaves at the top of the most recently matured pseudobulb.

FLOWERS: A few to many blossoms are carried in a loose raceme or compound panicle near the top of the long flower spike. The spicily fragrant flowers are variable in size and color but are usually 2.0-2.5 in. (5.0-6.3 cm) across. Sepals and petals are usually yellowish green marked, mostly near their tips, with purple or purplish brown. The wide-spreading sepals and petals are rather narrow and may be bluntly or rather sharply pointed. The 3-lobed lip is usually a dirty white with some brownish or purple suffusions or marks. The wide-spreading side lobes are widest near their rounded tips. The central part of the widely spread midlobe has several raised purple or red-brown lines which change into broken wart-like projections near the very wavy apical margin. The relatively short, somewhat arched, club shaped column is widest at the tip. It is yellow green, speckled with red, and has a pinkish anther cap.



Natural Habitat by Kew

**Native to**: Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico Gulf, Mexico Southeast, Nicaragua, Panamá.

**Homotypic Synonyms**

Epidendrum *alatum* Bateman in Proc. Hort. Soc. London 1838(2): 25 (1838)

**Heterotypic Synonyms**

Epidendrum *alatum var. grandiflorum* Regel in Ann. Sci. Nat., Bot., sér. 4, 6: 374 (1856)

Epidendrum *alatum var. longipetalum* Regel in Ann. Sci. Nat., Bot., sér. 4, 6: 374 (1856)

Epidendrum *calocheilum* Hook. in Bot. Mag. 68: t. 3898 (1841)

Epidendrum *formosum* Klotzsch in Allg. Gartenzeitung 21: 201 (1853)

Epidendrum *longipetalum* Lindl. & Paxton in Paxton's Fl. Gard. 1: 149 (1850), nom. illeg.



Encyclia *alata* ‘Beautiful Pamela’

Photograph by Garrie Brumley

A close-up of a yellow and brown flower

Description automatically generated

Encyclia *alata* ‘Early Bird’ AM/AOS, 82 points, 2006

Photograph by Jean Wilson

Alanta Judging Center Monthly Judging

**AOS Awards:**

Encyclia *alata*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | FCC | AM | HCC | AQ | JC | CCM | CCE | CHM | CBM | CBR | TOTAL |
| AOS | 0 | 16 | 20 | 0 | 6 | 10 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 57 |
| Years Awarded | - | 1981  -  2022 | 1971 - 2010 | - | 1985 - 2006 | 1981  -  2005 | 2001  &  2004 | 1985  &  2004 | 1957 | - |  |

Fifty-seven awards averaging 42.9 flowers and buds per inflorescences; 4.5 cm. natural spread.

**Hybrids**

Of the ninety-seven F1 generation offspring found, twenty-five or 25.8% have been awarded. Encyclia *alata* has two hundred forty-four progeny. Of the ninety-seven F1 generation hybrids registered, Encyclia *alata* was used thirty-two times as the seed parent and sixty-five times as the pollen parent. The first Encyclia *alata* hybrid registered in 1955, Encyclia Gail Nakagki (Encyclia *alata* x Encyclia *cordigera*). Encyclia Gail Nakagki was originated by Tatsumura and registered in 1955 by Mr. and Mrs. S. Noda. The first registration of Encyclia *alata* hybrids was registered in 1955 with noted steady registration of crosses to 2022.

The Encyclia *alata* hybrid that appears to have the most significance is Encyclia Orchid Jungle (*phoenciea* x *alata*). Encyclia Orchid Jungle originated and registered in 1984 by Fennell Orchids. Encyclia Orchid Jungle has received thirty-four AOS awards: (FCC – 1; AM – 18; HCC – 8; AQ – 2; and CCM – 5).

Encyclia Orchid Jungle has forty-three F1 generation offspring and eighty-nine progeny.

Close-up of a flower

Description automatically generated

Encyclia Orchid Jungle ‘Epijim’ AM/AOS, 81 points, 2005

Photograph by James Jeansonne

New Orleans Orchid Society Show

From reviewing data and photographs from OrchidWiz, flowers of Encyclia *alata* tend to be stellated with fenestration. Encyclia alata has a proclivity to pass on dark coloring in sepals and petals of its offspring, depending on the coloring of the secondary parent. More frequently than not Encyclia *alata* offspring inherit its lip shape. Encyclia *alata* offspring inherit floriferousness.

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