Encyclia *tampensis* (Lindl.) Small, 1913

**Common Name**: Florida Butterfly Orchid or Tampa, Encyclia.

**Meaning:** from Tampa, Florida

From Charles Baker Culture Sheet: Oigin/Habitat: The Bahama Islands and Florida. This orchid was first collected near Tampa, Florida in 1846 and is the most common epiphytic orchid in Florida. Plants grow at low elevations in conditions that vary from dark, humid, swampy forests to high (relatively), dry, barren trees in full sun, and Luer (1972) reported that plants survive a hard freeze. Plants have been found growing on palm trees and on fence posts. In the Bahamas, plants grow in coppices on Grand Bahama Island and on Andros Island.

PSEUDOBULB/STEM: 0.4-2.8 in. (1-7 cm) long by 0.4-1.0 in. (1.0-2.5 cm) wide. The elliptic to egg-shaped pseudobulbs are erect to ascending and are enclosed at the base by thin, dry sheaths.

LEAVES: Up to 16 in. (40 cm) long by 0.8 in. (2 cm) wide. One to three dark green, linear-lanceolate leaves are carried at the apex of the pseudobulb. They are leathery to rigid, keeled on the lower side, and held in somewhat spreading positions.

INFLORESCENCE: Up to 31 in. (80 cm) long. The erect peduncle emerges from between the leaves at the apex of the pseudobulb on a developing new growth. Flowers are carried in a simple raceme or a branched panicle on the upper part of the spike, with each blossom on a pedicellate ovary that is up to 1.4 in. (3.5 cm) long.

FLOWERS: Up to 45 per inflorescence. The fragrant. long-lasting blossoms have long, slender, sepals and petals with rather narrow bases and rounded to bluntly pointed tips. The sepals and petals are found in various shades of green, yellow, or brown. They are often suffused with purple. The 3-lobed lip is white with a central purple spot on the midlobe and radiating purple lines on the lateral lobes. The column is white, and the anther is yellow. The lateral lobes are oblong to tongue-shaped, have bluntly pointed tips, and if spread point obliquely forward to the central axis of the lip. In their natural position, however, they curl upward to clasp the column. The lateral lobes are separated from the base of the midlobe by a short and fairly narrow isthmus. The midlobe then spreads rather abruptly into an ax-shaped blade with a rounded apical margin and lateral margins that are somewhat undulate and may be spreading or curl downward somewhat. The disc is a pair of parallel blades on the isthmus. Overall, the lip is 0.5-0.7 in. (1.2-1.8 cm) long by 0.5-0.7 in. (1.2-1.8 cm) wide across the lateral lobes and 0.2-0.4 in. (0.6-1.0 cm) wide across the midlobe if the lip is spread out. The column is 0.4 in. (1 cm) long and is winged at the apex.



Natural Habitat by Kew

**Native to**: Bahamas, Florida.

**Homotypic Synonyms**

Epidendrum *tampense* Lindl. in Edwards's Bot. Reg. 33: t. 35 (1847)

**Heterotypic Synonyms**

Encyclia *tampensis f. albolabia* P.M.Br. in N. Amer. Native Orchid J. 1: 132 (1995)

Epidendrum *tampense var. albolabium* A.D.Hawkes in Lloydia 13: 164 (1950)

The American Conservation Center shares: Encyclia *tampensis*, the Florida Butterfly Orchid, is distributed in the Bahamas, Cuba, and Florida where it is one of the most abundant epiphytic orchids in the central and southern counties, especially along waterways. Pseudobulbs are dark green and typically an inch or less in diameter with one or two narrow grass-like leaves. Inflorescences emerge from the leaf axil and can have up to 45 fragrant flowers with sepals and petals in various shades of yellow, copper, green, or bronze and the lip is white veined with purple spots or striping in the center. The flowering period is May-August with a peak in June. This orchid grows on a wide variety of trees including live oak, red maple, gum, bald cypress, buttonwood, pop ash, and pond apple.

Encyclia *tampensis* is apparently secure across its range and although it is one of the most common epiphytes, this orchid has been commercially exploited.

Habitat: epiphyte

Leaf Arrangement: alternate

Number of leaves on stem: one, two, three

Form of the Labellum: the labellum is not pouch-like

Labellum Outline: the labellum is lobed

Main Color of the Labellum: blue to purple, white

Nectar Spur: absent

Inflorescence Type: the inflorescence is a panicle, the inflorescence is a raceme

Labellum Characteristics: the labellum is lobed

Labellum Length: 12–18 mm

Sepal Length: 12–22 mm



Encyclia *tampensis*

Photograph by unknown

A close up of a flower

Description automatically generated

Encyclia *tampensis* ‘Peggy’s Delight’ AM/AOS, 82 points, 2017

Photograph by Jean Wilson

Mid-America Judging Center Monthly Judging

**AOS Awards:**

Encyclia *tampensis*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | FCC | AM | HCC | AQ | JC | CCM | CCE | CHM | CBM | CBR | TOTAL |
| AOS | 0 | 14 | 8 | 0 | 2 | 14 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 40 |
| Years Awarded | - | 1974 - 2021 | 1986 - 2021 | - | 1966 &  2004 | 1962 - 2010 | 2006 | - | 1964 | 0 |  |

Forty awards averaging 11.8 flowers and buds per inflorescences; 3.4 cm. natural spread.

**Hybrids**

Of the one hundred sixty-seven F1 generation offspring found, forty-one or 24.6% have been awarded. Encyclia *tampensis* has two hundred forty-seven progeny. Of the one hundred sixty-seven F1 generation hybrids registered, Encyclia *tampensis* was used thirty-three times as the seed parent and one hundred thirty-four times as the pollen parent. The first Encyclia *tampensis* hybrid registered in 1955, Encyclia Lee Ward (Encyclia *tampensis* x Encyclia *aldenocaula*). Encyclia Lee Ward was originated and registered in 1955 by W. W. G. Moir. The first registration of Encyclia *tampensis* hybrid was registered in 1955 with noted steady registration of E. tampensis crosses from 1955 to 2022.

Two Encyclia *tampensis* hybrids appear to have significance. Encyclia Atropine (Encyclia *cordigera* x Encyclia *tampensis*) for having the largest number of offspring, eleven. Encyclia Atropine originated and registered in 1962 by Dr. Henry Walburn. Encyclia Atropine has received seven AOS awards: (AM – 2; HCC – 2; CCE – 1; and CCM – 2).

Encyclia Atropine has eleven F1 generation offspring and twelve progeny.

Close-up of a green flower

Description automatically generated

Encyclia Atropine ‘Orchidglade’ AM/AOS, 81 points, 2000

Photograph by Jean Wilson

Florida-Caribbean Center Monthly Judging

Encyclia Cindy (Encyclia *alata* x Encyclia *tampensis*) for having the largest number of awarded grex, eleven. Encyclia Cindy originated and registered in 1968 by Das Orchids. Encyclia Cindy has received eleven AOS awards: (AM – 11; HCC – 3; and CCM – 5).

Encyclia Cindy has nine F1 generation offspring and ten progeny.

Close-up of a flower

Description automatically generated

Encyclia Cindy ‘Sweet Spot’ HCC/AOS, 78 points, 2021

Photograph by Glen Barfield

Florida-Caribbean Center Monthly Judging

The positive characteristics Encyclia *tampensis* passes to its offspring are floriferousness, fragrance, long lasting flowers, and easy to grow. Encyclia tampensis often passes to its offspring a long inflorescence. The negative characteristics Encyclia tampensis passes to its offspring are small flowers, blooms in the summer, and may have inherited a stubbornness to hybridize. Depending on the coloring of the secondary parent used in Encyclia *tampensis* hybridizing, from viewing pictures of Encyclia tampensis offspring in OrchidWiz, frequently the secondary parent’s coloring is the dominate color expressed in offspring.

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