LAELIOCATTLEYAS . . . Flamboyant Peacocks of the Cattleya Alliance

FRANK FORDYCE

The happy combination of Laelia x Cattleya is one that refuses to take a "back-seat," even to the increasingly popular Slc. group. Ofttimes we tend to overlook certain hybrid-types . . . but Laelio cattleyas lend so much sparkle, rich color, flamboyant form, vigor and delicious scent that it is literally impossible to overlook these treasures.

Botanically, Laelias are distinguished from Cattleyas by the presence of eight pollinia instead of four but bigeneric crosses between the two genera are easily made. The genus is widely distributed from Mexico to Southern Brazil with at least 25 species listed in Sanders List of Orchid Hybrids.

The Brazilian Laelias are by far the most widely used in hybridizing as they more closely resemble the standard Cattleya form. It is most interesting to check the Laelio-cattleyas listed in the A.O.S. Register of Awards and trace their ancestry back to the specific Laelias used. The hybrids checked had received a minimum of 3 awards each, thereby pointing to the fact that the hybrid had at least a good average. Of the 45 awarded hybrids listed in Supplement IV, I found 36 involving Laelia purpurata, 14 involving Laelia tenebrosa, 8 involving Laelia pumila and one involving Laelia xanthina. Several hybrids contained a combination of these species as well.

Undoubtedly, among the reasons hybridists have used L. purpurata and L. tenebrosa so widely is their relatively large size in comparison to most of the Laelia complex. With L. purpurata carrying 3 to 11 large spring blooming 6-9" flowers carried well above the foliage on long, well-spaced stems, it well qualifies as one of the true "peacocks" of the tribe.

Because this species has such a wide range of color, hybridizers have used its many purples, whites and white with purple, pink or blue lips to produce some of our most attractive modern day hybrids. Finding the one particular clone of this species that is superior is the constant effort of every conscientious hybridizer for its varieties run into the hundreds, perhaps outdistancing any other Orchid in this respect. Unfortunately, its poor form carries through from generation to generation and has proven difficult to eliminate; even so its list of accomplishments ranks among the great.

Laelia purpurata is an ancestor of such famous hybrids as Lc. Lustre, Lc. Callistoglossa, Lc. Cavalese, Lc. Bonanza, Lc. Dominiana, Lc. Canhamiana, Lc. Ann Follis, Lc. Cecille Simmons, Lc. Eva Robinson, Lc. Little Moe, Lc. Oakland and Lc. Quadroon to mention only a few.

Laelia tenebrosa is second only to L. purpurata in its influence upon modern hybrids and this highly-colored Brazilian Laelia is of paramount interest to hybridizers. The varieties most often used are large-flowered and a deep lustrous, reddish-brown, enhanced by a deep purple

lip. Variety Walton Grange has clear, bright yellow sepals and has contributed a great deal to our finest yellows. This too, has some "built in" breeding problems, because many of its progeny, though possessing rich color, have rather poor shape. When L. tenebrosa is crossed with C. dowiana it produces Lc. Luminosa, one of our finest most influential yellow hybrids. Some of the L. tenebrosa hybrids that have attained recognition are Lc. S. J. Bracey, Lc. Sandra Ozella, Lc. Princess Margaret, Lc. Marie Ozella, Lc. Lorraine Shirai, Lc. George Baldwin, Lc. Amber Glow and Lc. Mem. Albert Heinecke.

Laelias that have made tremendous contributions to the breeding of rich, clear colors are *L. cinnabarina*, *L. flava*, *L. harpophylla* and *L. xanthina*. The newly defined *L. millerii* is also proving to be an excellent parent of red and orange hybrids.

Laelias may be divided into two or more sections geographically, the Brazilian and the Mexican.

Undoubtedly *Laelia anceps* is the best known of the Mexican group, and is widely variable in form and color. These are often referred to as the "cool" growing laelias because they will withstand the out of doors climate of most Southern California areas. A new interest is now developing among hybridizers towards hybrids bred from the white and purple forms of *L. anceps* because they can be mounted on driftwood, walls and trees in the patios of hobbyists without the cost of building a glasshouse. *Laelia gouldiana*, *L. autumnalis* and *L. albida* make up the balance of the more popular Mexican laelias.

In pinpointing the major influence Laelias have upon modern hybrids, it is recognized that they are responsible for richness and depth of color in tepals and especially in the lips of our purples. Certainly, there would be no argument that Laelias have influenced our yellows tremendously. Dodson and Gillespie, in *The Biology of the Orchids* state that "the yellow color of the genus *Laelia* is dominant over the purple color in Cattleyas. First generation hybrids between such Laelias as *L. flava* and the labiate Cattleyas are all yellow, although some purple pigment may be evident on the reverse side of the tepals and sometimes along the veins in the front of the flowers."

It is most interesting to note that while checking the Laelio-cattleya hybrids listed in Sanders, definite patterns of breeding kept coming into prominence. One of the outstanding examples is that of Lc. Princess Margaret (Lc. Profusion x C. Clotho). This hybrid contains 4 shots of C. warscewiczii, 2 of C. dowiana, 2 of C. mossiae, 1 of C. warneri, 1 of C. trianae, and 1 of L. tenebrosa. Remembering that genes are inherited either singly or in packages, both good and bad, we note that Lc. Princess Margaret is a spring-summer blooming hybrid, undoubtedly deriving

Lc. Danae 'Lyoth Belle' HCC/AOS (Lc. Francois Coppee x Lc. Jocelyn) — A happy combination of Laelia tenebrosa with Cattleya dowiana lent superb form through the influence of Cattleya labiata. This hybrid flowers in delightful art shades, is large in size and carries little or no tendency towards crippling. Bred in France, it has excellent vigor, clear yellow coloring and lack of deformity in many selected varieties of which many meristems are available in the trade.





Lc. Medon 'San Francisco' AM/AOS (Lc. Mrs. Medo x Lc. Sargarno) — The use of Lc. Lustre, with a Cattleya warscewiczii (syn. C. gigas) and Laelia purpurata background, tends to lend an undertone of warmth to purples when used in combinations that have Cattleya dowiana background. The famous yellow tetraploid, Lc. Mrs. Medo was crossed with the purple Lc. Sargarno, stemming from Lc. Lustre. This is a good illustration of the effects of crossing a yellow with a purple where the yellow has lent warmth of tone.

Lc. Waianae Sunset 'Pokai' AM/AOS, HOS (Lc. Mysedo 'Miya' 4n x Lc. Dorothy Fried) — This is a new parent plant which is destined to make its name well known in a short time. The rich, glowing color is inherited from the tetraploid Lc. Mysedo, a Lc. Mrs. Medo hybrid. With a similar background as the preceding cross (Lc. Medon), this was a product of a yellow and a purple. A hybridizer using this as a parent may now go either way in subsequent breeding.





Lc. Jocelyn 'Alcazar' (Lc. Barres x Lc. Crowborough) — Interestingly enough, this hybrid derives most of its yellow coloring from C. dowiana and L. tenebrosa, both quite far back in its ancestry, since most of the parentage of this cross is purple. This cross is almost entirely a product of English and French breeding and meristems of it are readily available.

this habit from the spring blooming C. mossiae, and the summer blooming C. warscewiczii, C. dowiana and C. warneri, with a possible assist from L. tenebrosa. The color packages of L. tenebrosa and C. dowiana have been "lost" along the way: to the purple influence of C. warscewiczii, C. warneri, C. mossiae and C. trianae.

It is interesting to note that Lc. Princess Margaret contains some albino color genes that express themselves occasionally in its progeny. Lc. DeLoris Ziegfield, Lc. Derrynane, Lc. Louise Kieswetter and Blc. Edwin Chong are prime examples of purple hybrids that produce an accasional semi-alba.

Thinking it might be of interest, I have searched Sanders List of Orchid Hybrids and the AOS Register of Awards and have selected what I feel to be a cross section of the most valuable (and incidentally the most awarded) Laeliocattleyas. They are listed in general color groups, although we must recognize that certain specific clones may vary in color from the group in which it is placed.

Study the listing and you will find some most interesting and valuable information in the combinations that make up one of our most colorful groups . . . the Laeliocattleyas.

YELLOW, BRONZE, ART SHADES

bicolor)

ALMA WICHMAN (Lc. Golden Joy x Lc. Edgard Van Belle) AMBER GLOW (Lc. Derna x Lc. Anne Walker)

ANN FOLLIS (C. granulosa x Lc. Ethel Merman)

AUTUMN SYMPHONY (Lc. Medon x Lc. Cardinal)

CANBERRA (Lc. Litana x C.

CARMENCITA (Lc. Luminosa x C. dowiana)

CHARLESWORTHII (C. dowiana x L. cinnabarina)

DANAE (Lc. Francois Coppee x Lc. Jocelyn) DERNA (Lc. Nugget x C. dowiana)

DOMINIANA (C. dowiana x L.

EDGARD VAN BELLE (Lc. Cloth of Gold x Lc. Gallipoli)
ELSTEAD GEM (C. bicolor x L.

GATTON GLORY (Lc. Canberra x C. Mimosa)

G. S. BALL (C. schröderae x L. cinnabarina)

GOLDEN GATE (Lc. S. J. Bracey x Lc. Isotta) GRANDEE (Lc. Mrs. Medo x C.

ISSY (C. leopoldii x L. tenebrosa)

SUNBURST (Lc. Carmencita x C. dowiana subs. aurea) PURPLE CLUSTER

ADOLPH HECKER (C. Porcia x Lc. Bonanza)

GEORGE McDONNELL (Lc. Helen Wilmer x Lc. Molly Tyler)
LITTLE MOE (C. Porcia x Lc. Priam)

MOLLY TYLER (Lc. Mrs. W. N. Elkins x C. Leda) ROSA KIRCH (Lc. Pasadena x C. VANDELETTA (Lc. Ibbie x C. Leda)

KENCOLOR (Lc. Kenosha x C.

LEE LANGFORD (Lc. Calizona x

LENA BALDWIN (Lc. Lee Lang-ford x C. Peter Sander)

LORRAINE SHIRAI (Lc. Dema x

LUMINOSA (C. dowiana x L.

MARIE OZELLA (Lc. Lee Lang-ford x C. Nigrella)

MEDON (Lc. Mrs. Medo x Lc. Sargon)

MEM. ALBERT HEINECKE (Lc.

MYSEDO (Lc. Mrs. Medo x Lc. Mysia)

ORANGE BEAUTY (Lc. Orange Blossom x Lc. Orange Gem)

ORANGE BLOSSOM (Lc. Elinor x Lc. Trimyra)

ORANGE GEM (Lc. Elinor x Lc.

PACIFIC SUN (Lc. Golden Charm x Lc. Medon)

SANDRA OZELLA (Lc. S. J. Bracey x C. dowiana subs. aurea)

G. S. Ball)

Luminosa x C. Venus) MRS. MEDO (Lc. Luminosa x C.

S. J. Bracey)

Luminosa)

SEMI-ALBA

ACONCAGUA (Lc. Schröderae x C. Maggie Raphael) ALBULA (Lc. Schröderae x C. Hassalii) BRITANNIA (Lc. Canhamiana x C. warscewiczii) CANHAMIANA (C. mossiae x L. purpurata) CYNTHIA (Lc. Schröderae x C. HASSALLII (Lc. Britannia x C. warscewiczii)

JANE DANE (Lc. Britannia x Lc. President Wilson)

MEM. MAGGIE HOOD (Lc. Acon-cagua x C. Enid)

SNOWDRIFT (Lc. Cynthia x C.

STEPHEN O. FOURAKER (Lc. Mayne x C. Enid)

WHITE OPAL (Lc. Canhamiana x C. Ville de Liege)

PURPLE

ALISAL (Lc. Gov. Gore x C. labiata)

LTESSE (Lc. Britannia x C. Remy Chollet) ALTESSE

ARECA (Lc. General Maude x C. Enid) ATLANTIS (Lc. Coquette x C.

BACCHANTE (Lc. Berenice x C.

ALKIS (Lc. Queen Mary x C. Peetersii) BALKIS

BONANZA (Lc. Cavalese x C. Prospector)

BOU PHILLIPO (Lc. Windermere x C. mossiae)

BRACEYANA (Lc. Lustre x C.

CAVALESE (Lc. Lustre x C.

CECILE SIMMONS (C. Nigrella x Lc. Twinkle Star)

CUESTA (Lc. Cavalese x Lc. Marie Dobrott)

DELORIS ZIEGFIELD (Lc. Princess Margaret x Lc. C. R. Cadwalader)

DERRYNANE (Lc. Balkis x Lc. Princess Margaret)
DESNA (Lc. Dominiana x Lc. General Maude)

DETTA (Lc. Sargon x C. Dinah)

DINARD (Lc. St. Gothard x C. Dinah)

DOROTHY FRIED (Lc. Princess Margaret x C. Dinah)

EARL J. SMALL (Lc. Princess Margaret x Lc. Altesse)

ELISSA (Lc. Ishtar x C. Dinah) ELIZABETH LIND (Lc. Sagana x Walter Jewell)

ENNERDALE (Lc. Elissa x Lc. Hyperion) EVA ROBINSON (Lc. Ishtar x C. Angus)

FLORIDA (Lc. Red Oak x Lc.

FRANK LIND (Lc. Helen Wilmer x Lc. Windermere) GENERAL MAUDE (Lc. Rubens x C. Hardyana)

GEORGE BALDWIN (Lc. Princess Margaret x C. Enid)

GEORGE CUTLER (Lc. Mary Rose x Lc. Manila) GITCHIE MANITO (Lc. Morvyth x C. Gay Gordon)

GOVERNOR GORE (Lc. Altesse x

Lc. Hertha)
GRUBSTAKE (Lc. Orosi x C.

Prospector) HELEN WILMER (Lc. General Maude x Lc. Wellsiana)

HERTHA (Lc. Momus x C. Mon-

HYPERION (Lc. General Maude x C. Leda)

ISHTAR (Lc. Sargon x C. Fabia) JOSEPH HAMPTON (Lc. Hilary x Lc. Marie Dobrott)

KISMET (Lc. General Maude x C. Tityus)

KISMET QUEEN (Lc. Princess Ishtar x C. Kismet)

LUSTRE (Lc. Callistoglossa x C. leuddemanniana)

MANILA (Lc. Cuesta x Lc. Joseph Hampton)

MARY ROSE (Lc. Queen Mary x Lc. Rosalind) MEM. WALTER ARMACOST (Lc. Cuesta x C. Tityas)

MIAMI (Lc. Runah x Lc. Sargon) MORVYTH (Lc. Lustre x Lc. St. Gothard)

NERTHUS (Lc. Integrity x Lc.

OAKLAND (Lc. Buccaneer x Lc. Mary Rose)

OLIVER LINES (Lc. Princess Margaret x Lc. Sargon)

PACIFIC (Lc. Medon x Lc. Atlantis)

PARADISIO (Lc. Robertiana x C. Remy Chollet)

PASADENA (Lc. Lustre x C. trianae)

PRINCESS ISHTAR (Lc. Ishtar x Lc. Princess Margaret)

PRINCESS MARGARET (Lc. Profusion x C. Clotho)

PROFUSION (Lc. Serbia x C. x hardyana)

PROMISE (Lc. Hyperion x Lc. Princess Woodstar)

QUADROON (Lc. Susan x C. Nigritian)

QUEEN MARY (Lc. Lustre x C. Peetersii)

RAVENSWOOD (Lc. Morvyth x C. Ardentissima) RED OAK (Lc. Sargon x C. Diana)

RONDEL (Lc. Cuesta x Lc. Braceyana)

SAN FRANCISCO (Lc. Elissa x Lc. Trempealeau) SARGON (Lc. Lustre x C. x hardy-

SCHRODERAE (Lc. Bella x C. Maggie Raphael)

SEATTLE (Lc. Elissa x Lc. South

SOUTH ESK (Lc. Elissa x Lc. Profusion)

ST. GOTHARD (Lc. x gottiana x C. x hardyana)

SUPERVIA (Lc. General Maude x C. Empress Frederick)

SUSAN (Lc. Mrs. Chamberlain x C. Dinah)

TELEGRAPH HILL (C. Tellus x Lc. Hertha)

TRAILS END (Lc. Joseph Hampton x C. labiata) TWINKLE STAR (Lc. Avignon x C. Empress Frederick)

VALLANDINA (Lc. Profusion x C. Dinah)

VANDELLETTA (Lc. Ibbie x C. Leda)

WAIANAE SUNSET (Lc. Dorothy Fried x Lc. Mysedo)

WALTER SLAGLE (Lc. Mary Rose x Lc. Walter Winchell)

WINDERMERE (Lc. Momus x C. trianae)

WYATT EARP (Lc. Paradisio x C. Prospector)

PURPLE SPLASHED

EXCELLENCY (Lc. Lustre x C. Suavior) INTEGRITY (Lc. Sargon x C.

JUDY SMALL (Lc. Excellency x Lc. Louella O. Parsons)

Santa Monica)

BLUE

BLUE BOY (Lc. Ariel x Lc.

WHITE

KAHILI KEA (C. Mrs. Robert Stone x L. anceps)

Note the repeated use of certain parent stock throughout the entire Laeliocattleya complex. In the purple section, we find Lc. General Maude, undoubtedly used for the form derived from L. pumila subs. praestans. Certainly Lc. Princess Margaret appears repeatedly and possibly because it is one of the finest spring-summer bloomers of exceptional form. For years, growers have endeavored to improve the spring-summer purple hybrids and have found their major success through the use of Lc. Princess Margaret. Lc. Lustre finds its way into scores of hybrids because of its intense coloring derived from Lc. Callistoglossa (C. warscewiczii x L. purpurata) and its exceptionally large dark purple lip. Many Lc. Lustre hybrids have acquired a delightful scent and some tend to carry a splash of deeper purple on the outer areas of the petals. Lc. Ishtar and Lc. Elissa have been very popular, also, and can be traced back to the same parentage we've just mentioned.

The yellow alliance is not as far removed from the species influence and the majority of those listed can be traced to L. tenebrosa. Certainly it is foremost with Laelia cinnabarina, L. flava and L. xanthina being minor contributors.

The bloom size of the purple cluster-types listed is inherited from the Cattleya tribe, C. bowringiana and C. elongata. The intensity of color is inherited from the laelia influence.

The semi-alba group inherits the white tepals from selected semi-alba forms of the species involved and relate almost exclusively to L. purpurata.

As mentioned previously, purple-splashed petals appear in the combination of (C. warscewiczii x L. purpurata). The blue section involves L. purpurata, possibly the var. Werkhauseri. Very few whites are derived from the laelia influence. The one listed is of the Mexican Laelia group.

Although impractical to trace the lineage of all Laeliocattleyas, this cross section encompasses the major clones used to produce our finest modern hybrids and serves as a basis for all future Laeliocattleya breeding.

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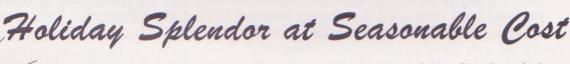
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