Cymbidium Chatter

Cym. Pink Dream, exhibited by Wain's Orchids at the 2019 COSV Show.

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Latest News

Welcome to the first issue for 2023. I had hoped to get this out early in March (and with a third article included), but life got in the way! I have been very busy with house maintenance these past few months, which has taken a considerable amount of my time.

Grcym. Pakkret Adventure '4 Spikes'

The weather over the past few months has also been very conducive to pests, as whilst I have been occupied with the house, scale and mites have gotten established! I have also spotted the occasional immature cockroach hiding in plants as I have cleaned up. Both mites and cockroaches are known virus vectors, so keep an eye out for them in your collections and take action if you spot them!

On a lighter note, hopefully everyone is starting to see spikes appearing on their Cyms by now. My Grammatocymbidium Pakkret Adventure is in bloom for the first time and I have noticed several other plants in varying stages of spike development.

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Plant Profile: Dural Dream and Progeny (with contributions from John Gate and the 3 Amigos)

There was some discussion about this hybrid of (Lunar Flame X Flaming Vulcan) back in 2017 when Geoff Le Marne exhibited Dural Dream 'Picture' at the Dural Show and it won Grand Champion and Champion Large Flower. It had been registered eight years prior and originated from Gordon Giles' breeding but didn't seem to draw much attention initially. From 2017 onwards, however, a total of 10 hybrids have been registered thus far with more unregistered crosses reaching flowering size.

Examples of the parent grexes – Lunar Flame 'Kirwin' exhibited by Kimberley Orchids in 2019 (left) and Flaming Vulcan 'Templestowe' exhibited by Kimberley Orchids in 2018 (right).

'Picture' is probably the most well-known selection of the grex and divisions of the original have been sold over the past decade or so, with the latest offering in mid in 2022 by Keith Wallace Orchids. John Gate commented on his experience growing 'Picture':

The intensity of its pink varies greatly with light intensity. One year I flowered [it] under shade and it was almost white. Next year under screen with about 25% shade, it came out really pink. From pictures of its progeny, it breeds and matches well with strong reds as well as pinks.

[It is an] excellent grower, [with] compact foliage, [a] tall strong spike, good flower count, [and] multiple spikes; the flower is show quality and it breeds well both as a pod and pollen parent, and results from Keith Wallace's crosses give excellent results. Most of the crosses I have done with it are with whites, pinks and red.

Cym. Dural Dream 'Picture' exhibited by Tony Antoniou at the 2022 COSV Show.

Cym. Dural Dream 'Supreme' exhibited by a COSV member at the 2017 COSV Show.

Cym. Dural Dream 'Rody'. Photo courtesy of John Gate.

John has predominantly used 'Picture' after obtaining a piece of the original in 2017 – including reverse crosses, he made 79 crosses with it between 2018 and 2022. The only one he has retained seedlings of is (Dural Dream 'Picture' X Elisabeth Rickard 'Royale'), a 2019 cross. Seedlings of this cross he gave to another grower are in spike on their first bulb.

'Rody' is another selection John Gate has used, although sparingly –only six crosses in 2019. He describes it as a "very soft pink [with] very compact foliage, but [has a] stem on the short side" and used it with pinks and whites that had tall spikes.

The last selection John has used in breeding was an early flowering seedling he called 'Cheers'. He noted that it "had some positives … but needed to be fuller. I bred with it, kept the flask JG1101 and flowered them myself. Didn't keep any." JG1101 was (Khan Flame 'Raquel' X Dural Dream 'Cheers').

Cym. Dural Dream 'Cheers'. Photo courtesy of John Gate.

Cym. (Khan Flame 'Raquel' X Dural Dream 'Cheers'). Photo courtesy of John Gate.

John has also mentioned that anyone interested in his list of Dural Dream 'Picture' cross should contact him at johnandnerolie@gmail.com and he will provide the list as well as where they might be able to source the flasks from.

Cym. Regal Dream (Dural Dream 'Rose' X Regal Flames 'Queen of Hearts') exhibited at a COSV meeting.

Dural Dream ‘Rose’, held by Wains Orchids and used in several crosses, is the darkest Dural Dream selection I am aware of. One such cross is that of Regal Dream, made using the richly-coloured Regal Flames ‘Queen of Hearts’. ‘Rose’ has also been used in a reverse cross make of Cym. Pink Dream (Dural Dream X Pepper Blaze).

Cym. Pink Dream (reverse cross, Cym. Pink Dream (reverse cross, Pepper Blaze 'Flame' X Dural Dream 'Rose') exhibited by Wain’s Orchids at the 2022 COSV Show.

John Moon, one of the 3 Amigos, has a Pink Dream seedling that has been Grand Champion, Seedling of the Year and Flower of the Year at the Cymbidium Orchid Club of South Australia (COCSA), as well as Champion Standard at the COCSA, Gawler Orchid Club and Orchid Club of SA. He says it "seems to do everything right" and just sets itself.

First flowering seedling of Cym. (Dural Flame 'Dural' X Dural Dream 'Picture'). Courtesy of 3 Amigos Orchids.

John Moon's Cym. Pink Dream on a later flowering. Photo courtesy of John Moon.

Cym. Dural Dream 'Dural'. Photo courtesy of the 3 Amigos.

Cym. (Dural Dream X Khanebono). Photo courtesy of 3 Amigos Orchids.

The 3 Amigos have exhibited other seedlings of Pink Dream, as well as several other Dural Dream crosses over the past few years. They have kindly provided photos of some of these seedlings.

Cym. (Dural Dream X Valley Vapour), grown by Shane Moeller. Photo courtesy of 3 Amigos Orchids.

First flowering of a Cym. (Dural Flame X Dural Dream) seedling. Photo courtesy of 3 Amigos Orchids.

Steve Thomas in WA has another Dural Dream selection, 'Kalamunda', which has been crossed with Valley Splash 'Awesome'. This photo was previously included in Issue 31 (June 2021) but is included here for completeness.

Cym. (Dural Dream 'Kalamunda' X Valley Splash 'Awesome') #21. Photo courtesy of Steve Thomas.

Finally, Dural Dream has also been used in a few crosses that have produced whites with brushmarks or splashes. All of these were exhibited at the 2022 COSV Show last year.

Cym. (Valley Splash X Dural Dream).

Cym. (Maclure's Quest X Dural Dream) #3.

Cym. (Kimberley Splash X Dural Dream).

Cym. (Maclure's Quest X Dural Dream) #2.

Hopefully this article has provided some insight into Dural Dream and its breeding potential. It has both its fans and detractors, but as I am not a judge, nor are modern standard Cyms my primary area of interest (hence Dural Dream does not really appeal to me), I leave it up to the reader to decide on the merits of the grex and its offspring!

Plant Profile: *Cym. hookerianum* (with contributions from Bert Ruiter & Nado Lenkic)

Many growers know this species as *Cymbidium grandiflorum*, the name initially given to it when it was first described in 1851. Unfortunately, this name had already been used for another species (now known as *Cleistes grandiflora*) when the *Cymbidium* genus was created in 1799. At the time, only two true *Cymbidium* species had been identified (*aloifolium*, the type species, and *ensifolium*) and *Cleistes grandiflora* (at the time bearing its original name of *Limodorum grandiflorum*) was thought to be closely related. Making matters worse, the error in reusing a botanical name (which is not permitted to avoid potential confusion) was not corrected for fifteen years.

In 1866 the species was finally given a unique name – *Cymbidium hookerianum*, in honour of William Hooker, the father of Kew botanist Sir Joseph Hooker. Despite the name being established over 150 years ago, it has only been in the past couple of decades that usage has become more commonplace.

Cym. hookerianum is one of the larger species of the genus and, depending on the specimen, has the largest flowers for a Cymbidium species. Given this trait, one can see why the name *grandiflorum* might be chosen if one was unaware of its previous use! Its flowering time tends towards late winter, typically after *elegans* but before *lowianum*.

The flowers are usually a clean green with just a smattering of fine spots on the tepals adjacent to the column, although there is a more heavily speckled form previously known as var. *punctatum*. Both its colour and ability to produce spots/speckles are traits that often show up in its progeny. More often than not the species will suppress or reduce the anthocyanin expression in its immediate progeny, resulting in a reduction of spots/stripes (such as in Cym. Rosefieldense or

Cym. hookerianum. *Photo courtesy of Bert Ruiter.*

An example of the species exhibited by the Orchid Species Society of Victoria at the OSCOV Show in 2018.

Closeup of an immature plant showing the characteristic veining on the foliage around the pseudobulbs.

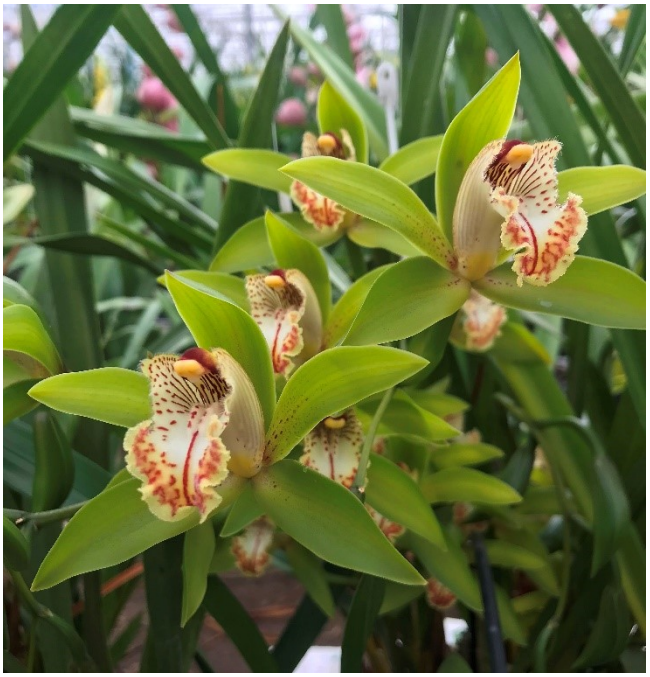
Cym. Wilsonii) or producing cleaner colour (such as in Cym. Lowio-grandiflorum). However, when appropriately partnered it can amplify spots as well (e.g., Cym. Grand Canal).

The species is also scented and can compete with *tracyanum* for strength of fragrance. Unfortunately, this trait is often lost in the progeny, depending on what it is crossed with. For example, the primary hybrid Cym. Lowio-grandiflorum has no discernible scent (at least that I can detect from the several selections I have encountered, plus the one I grow).

One trait that *Cym. hookerianum* does tend to pass to its offspring is its foliage, which features strong veining around the pseudobulbs. Many primary hybrids exhibit this characteristic to some degree.

Cym. hookerianum requires excellent drainage and, in my experience, is more prone to rot than any of its near relatives (the latest taxonomic data puts *Cym. lowianum* and *erythraeum* as the closest related species, followed by *elegans*). In one respect this should not be surprising, as it is typically found on trees, rocks, or steep banks in its native habitat, with its root system extending into the deep moss covering these surfaces. It typically sees frequent foggy and/or misty conditions rather than heavy rainfall. It also does not appreciate some of the extremes of heat that many Australian growers can experience, as some years ago Royale Orchids in NSW reported losing all their plants during a heatwave.

Bert Ruiter considers the clean vivid green of *Cym. hookerianum* to be unique and "well worth exploring in different combinations". He finds that the species grows a slowly for him but some of its hybrids do very well. Cym. Wilsonii (*iridioides* X *hookerianum*), also sometimes called Zaleskianum (see note*), is one that Bert grows. He notes it "flowers well, has a clean colour and short foliage. Plenty of possibilities." The *iridioides* most strongly influences the labellum, narrowing it and often increasing the lip markings. It also reduces the flower size somewhat when compared to *hookerianum*, but otherwise *hookerianum* usually dominates.



Cym. Wilsonii (aka Zaleskianum).
Photo courtesy of Bert Ruiter.

* Note: Unfortunately, the naming of this plant is prone to confusion, as the original specimen (now

A diploid example of Cym. Herbie Poole. Photo courtesy of Bert Ruiter.

Cym. Alida Lieuwen, the primary hybrid between hookerianum *and* elegans*. Photo courtesy of Bert Ruiter.*

lost to history) depicted in Lindenia Plate 778 (the lectotype) is clearly a *Cym. tracyanum*. Even Linden himself considered the possibility that it was simply a variety of that species. As a result, *Cym. zaleskianum* (lowercase "z") is considered synonymous with *Cym. tracyanum* by taxonomic authorities. However, the grex name Zaleskianum (uppercase "z") has been in use horticulturally since 1899 to refer to (*iridioides* X *hookerianum*) and is still recognised as such by the RHS. To avoid ambiguity, however, I recommend using the name *Cym. wilsonii* (the name given to the natural hybrid of these two species) or Wilsonii (the grex version) instead.

Bert has also used Herbie Poole (*Cym. parishii var. sanderae* X *Cym. hookerianum*) in a number of his crosses. Unfortunately, he lost his best 4n but was able to provide a photo of one of his diploid selections in bloom. In my experience this grex can be just as rot prone as its parent, but the influence of *parishii* 'Sanderae' does at least improve its warmth tolerance. Some selections can be quite graceful with their high-arching spikes of large, pastel flowers.

Despite being originally registered in 1989 from Andy Easton's breeding, very few hybridisers have taken the line forward. To date, the only two registered offspring are also Andy's – Beach Ballad (Herbie Poole X Anna Szabo) and God Knows Herbie (God Only Knows X Herbie Poole). Andy ended up remaking the cross several years ago and has used it in further crosses.

The primary hybrid between *hookerianum* and *elegans* is one from Bert's own work and was recently registered as Cym. Alida Lieuwen. The result is a beautiful cascade of golden-yellow blooms and it surprises me that this cross had never previously been made and registered, despite both species being in cultivation and accessible to growers for over a century.

When appropriately partnered, *hookerianum* can also produce compact plants. Cym. God Only Knows (*floribundum* X *hookerianum*) is probably the most compact of them all and has been made

Top row: Cym. God Only Knows 'Winter Falls' (left) and Cym. Seductive #1 (right).
Bottom row: Cym. Seductive #2 (left) and #3, a possible 4n (right). Photos courtesy of Nado Lenkic.

several times. Andy Easton has used it extensively, producing thirteen registered hybrids from it since making the original cross. Here in Australia, Nado Lenkic of Springfield Orchids made the grex over 20 years ago, probably not long after the original registration in 1996. Nado used his "album" *floribundum* 'Springfield' in the cross and one of the seedlings was the spotted and striped 'Winter Falls', a pendulous diploid. Nado then crossed God Only Knows 'Winter Falls' with *tracyanum* 'Tamborine' to produce Cym. Seductive (registered 2020). He had the cross treated with colchicine and at least a couple of seedlings were potential tetraploids.

Continuing the compact pot plant theme is Cym. Imogene Coca (God Only Knows X *hookerianum*), a chance 4n from Andy Easton's breeding (due to *floribundum*'s genetic misalignment, the ploidy of a God Only Knows plant is not guaranteed to be diploid). *Cym. floribundum* has once again dominated

in Imogene Coca, resulting in short foliage and the signature *floribundum* labellum. *Cym. hookerianum*'s influence on colour is apparent, however, in the photo provided by Bert of one of his plants (shown right).

The primary hybrid Cym. Fu Machu (*sinense* X *hookerianum*) is likewise compact and *sinense'*s warmth tolerance has again dominated over *hookerianum*'s susceptibility to temperature. It is another of Andy Easton's hybrids and the grex

Diploid (left) and tetraploid (right) seedlings of Cym. Fu Manchu. Photos courtesy of Bert Ruiter.

Two selections of Cym. Patricia Lucy. Photos courtesy of Bert Ruiter.

An example of Cym. Grand Canal. Photo courtesy of Bert Ruiter.

Mislabelled as Cym. Schlegelii, this plant was almost certainly an example of Cym. Coningsbyanum. Sadly, it went to the great greenhouse in the sky after flowering!

exists as both diploid and tetraploid forms. Andy has already begun using it in breeding and Bert has plans for his plants as well.

Cym. hookerianum has also been used more recently in modern hobbyist lines, such as Cym. Patricia Lucy (Harriet Ishitani X *hookerianum*) from Bert Ruiter's breeding (registered 2020). Bert has observed that despite being 3n, his Patricia Lucy does breed. The grex features large, bold flowers reminiscent of his earlier Cym. Catweazle (Harriet Ishitani X Piñata) and are not likely to go unnoticed!

Then there is Cym. Grand Canal (Canal Parish X *hookerianum* 'Keshab') from Andy Easton, registered just last year – seven years after the pods were sent to the lab. Despite only being 25% of the genetic makeup, *Cym. canaliculatum* has dominated in the shape and the labellum and its effect on the foliage is still visible. However, *hookerianum* has brought out more spots than were evident in Canal Parish. The cross was treated with oryzalin and it will be interesting to see if anyone takes the line forward.

Finally, it would be remiss not to mention some of the early historical hybrids involving *Cym. hookerianum* from which many of today's modern hybrids descend. The 1914 registration of Cym. Coningsbyanum (*hookerianum* X *insigne*) has over 5,000 descendants across 10 generations but is rarely seen today.

Left: an unnamed selection of Cym. Grand Monarch.
Right: Cym. Rosefieldense, exhibited by the Maroondah Orchid Society at the 2019 OSCOV Show.

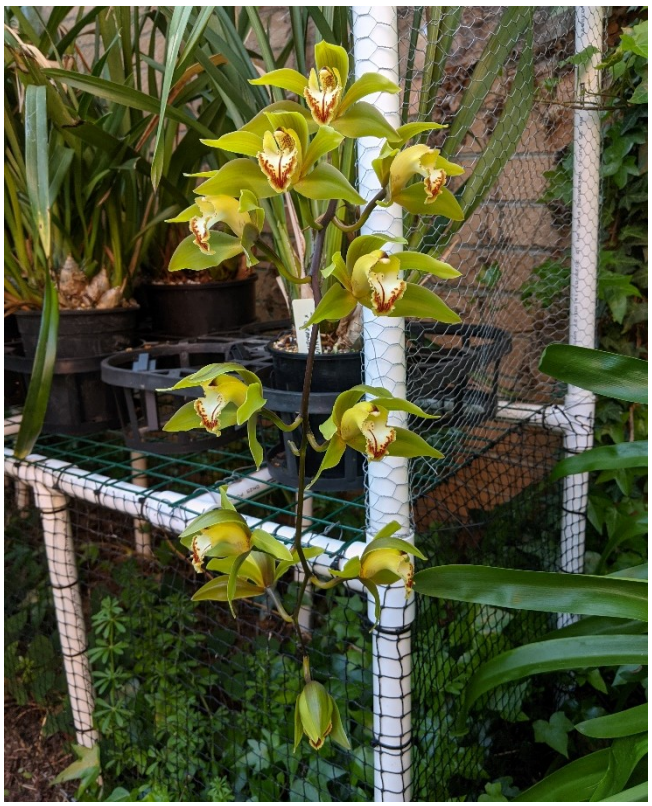
Cym. Grand Monarch (*hookerianum* X Wiganianum) is another famous hybrid, with 'Exquisitum' being the most well-known selection. Unfortunately, it is often confused with Rosefieldense, as the two hybrids share many similarities. The two traits that help distinguish between them are 1) the callus ridges (as Rosefieldense cannot have yellow callus ridges, but some Grand Monarch selections will) and 2) the size of the plant, with Grand Monarch being the only one of the two that can be compact (depending on how much influence *eburneum* has on the plant size).

Cym. Pearl 'Magnificum' deserves a mention as one of the most famous *hookerianum* hybrids. Cym. Pearl, the cross between Alexanderi and *hookerianum* registered in 1918, has a whopping 124 registered offspring, almost double the next most prolific two grexes (Erica Sander and Coningsbyanum). 'Magnificum' was reportedly the only yellow to originate from the original cross and may still exist in cultivation. It was a counted diploid, so it seems unlikely that the Alexanderi used in its creation was 'Westonbirt'.

Cym. Erica Sander was the other obvious early cross to make, being the hybrid with Pauwelsii. Registered in 1921, it has produced 67 registered offspring to date.

Last but not least is Cym. Lowio-grandiflorum, whose parentage is obvious from both its name and its blooms. It is one of the earliest primary *hookerianum* hybrids, dating to 1902, and is only preceded only by the cross with *mastersii* (Cym. Maronii). Unfortunately, it is still sometimes confused with its *lowianum* parent.

Lowio-grandiflorum has given rise to some well-known grexes, including 1915's Butterfly (X *insigne*) and 2004's Cliff Hutchings (X *devonianum*, a photo of which was included in Issue 39). It remained popular in hybridising up until the mid-1950s, after which it largely fell out of favour.



Cym. Lowio-grandiflorum. Believe it or not, these two photos are of the same plant flowering in different years.

Cym. Butterfly 'Dillabirra'.

Acknowledgements and Contributions

I hope you have enjoyed this issue. If you have any feedback or would like to contribute (whether it be just one or two photos, an idea for an article, or to volunteer for an interview), please get in touch! I can be reached at jwhite88@gmail.com.

Previous issues are available at https://www.cosv.com.au/publications-and-resources. Thanks to all those who have contributed to this issue, including John Gate, Nado Lenkic, Shane Moeller, John Moon, Chee Ng, Bert Ruiter and Steve Thomas.

The next issue is planned for June 2023.