



Naming your Cymbidium

In order that we may distinguish between different cymbidiums, a nomenclature has been developed to facilitate this. The specific name is written in three parts: the first describes the genus, the second the grex and the third the specific clone. This applies to all orchids, but will be described for cymbidiums here.

The genus name distinguishes between the various orchid genera or major orchid groups, e.g., *Cymbidium*, *Cattleya*, *Masdevallia*, etc., and strictly speaking should be written in full and in italics and is commenced with a capital letter.

As an alternative it may be written in normal type but must be underlined, e.g., Cymbidium, Cattleya, or Masdevallia. In common usage these are however often abbreviated with standard abbreviations and then become Cym., C. Masd.

The second or grex name is always written in normal letters and again starts with a capital and is followed by lower case letters. Thus all seedlings grown from the crossing of *Cymbidium* Pink Champagne and *Cymbidium* Red Beauty, whichever is used as the pod parent, must be called *Cymbidium* Kirby Lesh.

It is the right of the original hybridiser to choose the grex name and this is registered with the Orchid Registrar of the RHS. All subsequent crossings using these two parents must use *Cymbidium* Kirby Lesh as the grex name.

The original hybridiser may allow another grower to choose the grex name or if the original hybridiser cannot be found, then any individual can choose the grex name. The grex name is the same to an orchid, as your surname is to you.

The third name distinguishes between the various seedlings within a cross. This is synonymous with your various children and is used to distinguish between the brothers and sisters. It is again written with a capital letter to commence each word and lower case for the remainder. The clonal name is enclosed in **single prompts**. Thus the full name for a specific clone may be written *Cymbidium* Kirby Lesh 'Frances'.

All divisions or proliferations of this clone must bear the same name and may not be changed by a subsequent grower, especially if they receive an award with it.

A seedling must be a complete clone, and the owner has the right to choose the clonal name. However, a division may have a previous clonal name and as such it is both courteous and correct to check with the original owner. If this clone receives an award then recognition of the award follows the name. It is then written in its most correct form as *Cymbidium* Kirby Lesh 'Frances' HCC/OSCOV or more commonly as Cym. Kirby Lesh 'Frances' HCC/OSCOV

Species are named a little differently, in that the second or specific name is also written in italics and all letters in it are in lower case. The third or cultivar name is written the same as in hybrids. A specific superior clone of the species *Cymbidium lowianum* is thus written *Cymbidium lowianum* 'Compte de Hemptine'.

There is a correct way to write orchid names. It is a pleasure to see this applied to our cymbidiums.