

*Cattleya iricolor*, Rchb. F. 1874.



*Cattleya* is a genus of orchid endemic to the tropical regions of the Americas. In 1824, Dr. John Lindley of England named the genus after Sir William Cattley of the Royal Exotic Nursery and later James Veitch and Sons Company. As the story goes, the original specimens of *Cattleya* from Brazil were used as packing materials to protect other orchids and plants on their journey from the Americas to England. Interested in the packing materials, Cattley cultivated the plants and bloomed the species *Cattleya labiata*. Consisting of 40 plus species and hundreds of hybrids, *Cattleya* represents one of the most significant genera in orchid cultivation.

*Cattleya iricolor*, or the Rainbow-colored *Cattleya* (iricolor is Latin for rainbow-colored or multi-hued) is native to the montane forests on the eastern side of the Andes in Ecuador and Peru. This spring blooming plant produces 2-3 cream to straw colored flowers per inflorescence. Originally described in 1874, *Cattleya iricolor* was lost until it was rediscovered in the 1960's. Rare in nature and in cultivation, this *Cattleya* was not allowed to be exported from Ecuador until recently. This specimen of *Cattleya iricolor* was purchased from Ecuagenera, Ltd. of Cuenca Ecuador on a field expedition and generally fun trip for members of the Kansas Orchid Society in 2005. Mark Sanborn is the caregiver of this plant.

*References:*

Orchids wiki

Available: [http://orchids.wikia.com/wiki/Cattleya\\_iricolor](http://orchids.wikia.com/wiki/Cattleya_iricolor)

Withner, C. L., *The Cattleyas and their relatives: Volume I. The Cattleyas* (2002), Timber Press, Inc. Portland. ISBN 0-88192-099-1.

Mayer, H., *Orchid names and their meanings* (1998), Koeltz Scientific Books, Germany. ISBN 3-904144-07-3.