

# *Prosthechea cochleata*

Florida Clamshell Orchid • Cockleshell Orchid

◆ Florida Native ◆



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**Distribution:** Southern Florida (Collier, Miami-Dade, Monroe counties; state-listed endangered; Florida var. *triandra* endemic to Florida), West Indies, Mexico, and Central America. National flower of Belize.

**Growth Habit:** Epiphyte. Cypress swamps, tropical hammocks, and mangrove forests — low to mid-canopy on rough-barked trunks and branches.

**Host Trees:** Live oak and mahogany favored in restoration. Also cypress, mangrove, and pond apple. Rough bark preferred; avoid smooth-barked species.

**Watering:** Twice weekly in summer; once weekly in winter with occasional misting. Allow roots to dry between waterings. 80–85% humidity year-round.

**Temperature:** Warm to intermediate, 65–86 °F. Protect from frost.

**Light:** Bright indirect light with strong, constant air movement. East or lightly shaded south exposure ideal.

**Additional Notes:** Sequential bloomer — one or a few flowers at a time on the same spike over many months (peak September–May). Non-resupinate: dark purple lip forms a hood at the top; pendant yellow-green petals hang below. This is the Mexican form that is not self-pollinating. (Florida var. *triandra* is self-pollinating.) Mildly spicy fragrance. Featured in Fairchild's Million Orchid Project.

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