



“Blooming in the Gardens”

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2023



BLOOMING IN THE GARDENS

(week of January 1, 2023)

Expanding its horticulture, environmental education and conservation mission, **BLOOMING IN THE GARDENS**, each week spotlights a featured tropical and native plant—to enjoy on a visit this week, or try in your landscape!

CATTLEYA IRENE'S SONG MONTCLAIR

(*Laeliocattleya* 'Irene's Song Montclair')

This orchid hybrid originated in 1999 by Norman's Orchids as a cross between *C. Mari's Song* and *C. Irene Finley*. This plant produces 1 or 2 striking blossoms 3.5-4" across on each new pseudobulb. Rear sepals are lavender, but larger forward petals are a lavender & white combination with dark purple near the fancy ruffled tips. The lip is primarily a golden yellow but trimmed along the edge with white & a touch of dark purple!

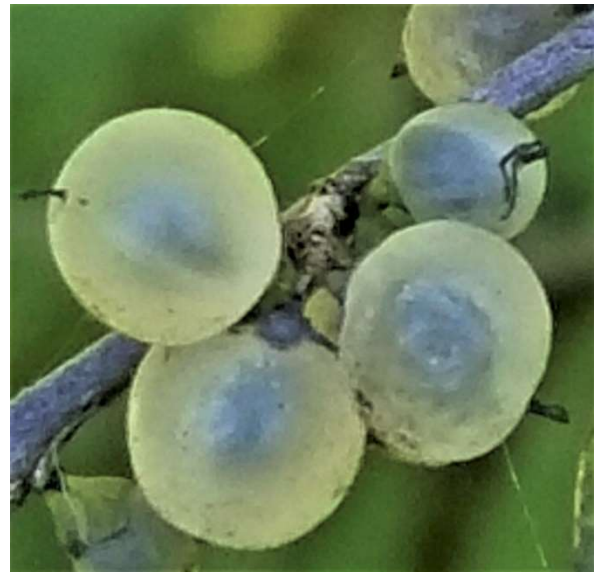


See Irene's Song Montclair in the Samuel Jones Orchid Conservatory. Although fall is prime bloom time for many *Cattleya* in our region, many beautiful orchids still are blooming making a visit rewarding.

SNAKE EYES (*Phaulothamnus spinescens*)

The dense native shrub Snake Eyes can grow 6-12' tall but has no apparent thorns; only sharp, pointed branch tips to protect it from browsing animals. It has .75-1" long simple smooth or slightly fuzzy gray-green leaves.

This dioecious plant is unlike most in that it has male & female flowers on different plants. Tiny yellow flowers which usually go unnoticed appear April-October. Pollinated female flowers form translucent white fruit with visible black seeds which resemble tiny eyeballs, resulting in the common name Snake Eyes or *Ojo de Vibora* in Spanish. Other regional names may include Putea or Devil Queen. A female plant may have hundreds of individual berries scattered on branches. It can produce multiple times annually.



This dense native shrub is actually a member of the Pokeweed Family (Phytolaccaceae) according to the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center making it kin to American Pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana*) & Pigeonberry (*Rivina humilis*). The Wildflower Center notes its native habitat from southern Texas & along the northern Mexico border to Baja, California, including provinces of Tamaulipas, Nueva Leon & Sonora. Unfortunately, it's rarely seen at retail nurseries.

See the current crop of "snake eyes" visible on plants along the Brennecke Nature Trail, having survived the recent freeze.