

*Painted Leaved Orchids*  
*By Erich Michel*

*Subtribe Spiranthinae*

*About 409 species, in 40 Genera.*

*Distribution: Primarily American*

*Plant Habit: terrestrial or occasionally epiphytic. Leaves in a basal spiral or rosette, commonly petiolate, often painted with silver spots or stripes. Roots thick, fleshy, commonly lacking velamen layer.*

*Flowers: small to medium, showy or not, fragrant or not. Flower colors include white, yellow, green, orange or shades of red. Flowers commonly with a deep nectary or spur united with the ovary.*

*Pollination: Bumblebees, Euglossine bees in Sarcoglottis. The red and orange flowered species of Stenorrhynchos complex adapted to hummingbird pollination.*

*Notes: Huge breeding potential for large spiraled inflorescences of red, pink, orange, or yellow flowers. The first hybrid registered in this group was not until 2001. The intergeneric Hybrid Stenosarcos Vanguard (Stenorrhynchos speciosus x Sarcoglottis speciosa) was bred for ornamental rosette foliage, with patterns of silver spots and stripes. One of the few Hybrid grexes ever awarded both the prestigious AQ/AOS (award of quality) and AD/AOS (Award of Distinction) from the American Orchid Society. Improvements were noted in the striking foliage patterns,*

*more open flowers, better arrangement of the flowers on a stronger inflorescence.*

*Culture: This group of orchids grow well with their epiphytic cousins. These are very adaptable plants. Most plants grow well in shade with even moisture and intermediate to warm temperatures. There are many plants in this group which enter a dormant period and the plants drop their leaves. During this time very little water is required.*