

Native Orchid of the Month—September

Platanthera ×channellii (Channell's fringed orchid)

Platanthera ×channellii (Channell's fringed orchid) is a naturally occurring hybrid between *P. cristata* and *P. ciliaris* both of which occur in western and southeastern Louisiana. The parent species are found in bogs, marshes, and moist flatland habitats. The name is in honor of Robert B. Channell who led the effort to describe the hybrid.



The plant grows from a tuberous root with a stem that is up to 36 inches long and bears a raceme with about 50 flowers. It has two to four lanceolate leaves that are glossy-green and lance-shaped.

The flowers of *P. cristata* range in color from yellow to deep orange. Those of *P. ciliaris* vary in color from apricot to orange. They are heavily fringed on the lip and bear a spur at the back to the lip filled with nectar. Hybrids between the two species display color, floral size, and spur lengths

that are intermediate to the parents.

The parent species are frequently found in the western and southeastern portions of the state. Their range extends to several southern states. Channell's fringed orchid has been found in many areas across the South when the parents are located on the same site. The hybrid has been sighted in Louisiana, but no specific information has been reported.

The plants bloom from June through September with a peak in August.

