

## CLAMSHELL ORCHID

*Encyclia cochleata* (L.) Dressler

**Synonyms:** *Prosthechea cochleata* (L.) W. E. Higgins

var. *triandra* (Ames) W. E. Higgins

*Anacheilum cochleatum* (L.) Hoffmannsegg

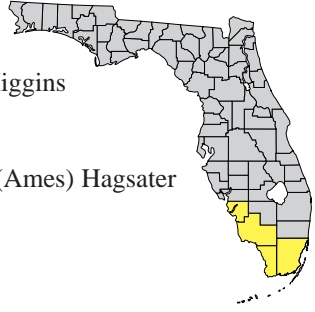
*Encyclia cochleata* (L.) Dressler ssp. *triandra* (Ames) Hagsater

**Family:** Orchidaceae (orchid)

**FNAI Ranks:** G4/S2

**Legal Status:** US—none FL—Endangered

**Wetland Status:** US—UPL FL—UPL



Billy B. Boothe



Gil Nelson

**Field Description:** **Orchid** with pear-shaped, somewhat flattened stem (**pseudobulb**) attached to tree trunks and branches by numerous white **aerial roots**. **Leaves** to 12 inches long, strap-like. **Flowering stem** to 16 inches long, with up to 10 flowers. **Flower** with drooping, narrow, twisted, yellow-green **sepals** to 1.4 inches long, 2 **petals** similar to sepals, and an erect, purple-brown, shell-like **lip** marked with yellow. **Fruit** with 3 wings.

**Similar Species:** No other species resembles clamshell orchid, with its purple, erect lip and flattened pseudobulb.

**Related Rare Species:** See also dollar orchid (*Encyclia boothiana* var. *erythronioides*) in this guide.

## Clamshell orchid

## *Encyclia cochleata*

**Habitat:** Trunks and branches of pond apple, cypress, live oak, and buttonwood trees in swamps and hammocks.

**Best Survey Season:** Flowers fall through spring.

**Range-wide Distribution:** FL, West Indies, Mexico, Central and South America.

**Conservation Status:** This orchid has been decimated by plant poachers and by destruction of habitat. A few populations are known from inaccessible areas of several parks and preserves.

**Protection & Management:** Enforce plant protection laws and prosecute plant poachers. Protect wetlands from logging and draining.

**References:** Coile 2000, Correll and Correll 1982, IRC 1999, Luer 1972, McCartney 1985a, McCartney 1985c, Wunderlin and Hansen 2000a.

