

## *Interspecific breeding at Utopia Clivias*

The name interspecific Clivia is not well known to the general public, although grown and collected by most Clivia growers all over the world. Interspecifics are crosses with Clivia miniata as pod parent and a specie Clivia as pollen parent, or vice versa. The resulting plant is then called an interspecific. In other words, interbreeding with different species of Clivia. This is a new trend in breeding clivias which can flower at different times of the year. The flowers are pendulous, but larger and more open than those of the wild species. In F2 generations flowers become larger with more flared or open flowers. These plants can flower any time between May and September yearly, with the main flowering time in July when we have small interspecific shows and displays to promote these plants. They are robust, fast growing and more resistant to pests and diseases. Make sure to add one to your collection and it will bring some colour into your garden over the winter months.

Our collection also includes some of the late Rudo Lotter`s finest interspecifics, which his father Wessel Lotter has bred. We also use these extensively in our breeding programme. They include registered hybrids like, Cinderella, Moondrops, Ginger Bells, Ruben, Sunrise Surprise, Brown Eyed Girl, Rosy Cheeks, Pink Baby and his best interspecific called Chanel.

Interspecifics flower when little else is flowering in your garden. We have bred and acquired some wonderful plants in the last few years of which Secret Desire is a prime example. This plant won best Interspecific on show in PE in 2009 and is by far more superior to most others in colouration and flower shape.

### **A: Why do we breed with interspecifics**

We consider interspecific breeding as the "new age" breeding of Clivias. Most of the new and unusual colours in Clivias originate from interspecific breeding. We at Utopia Clivias believe that the future of Clivias lie hidden in these genetics. The largest range of colours are found in interspecific flowers.

### **B: Interspecific breeding through the years.**

The name "interspecific" says it all, interbreeding with different species of Clivias. The first crosses were made many years ago between Nobilis and Miniata and these were named "Cyrtanthiflora". Breeders have since crossed all the various species to miniate and vice versa. Some proven results of f1 breeding are that using miniata as a pod parent will give larger more open flowers in the first generation. We see the F1 generation of interspecifics only as a stepping stone to much better, more diverse flowers in the second and third generations.

### **C: About our breeding lines:**

#### **The "Secret" Series:**

The parent plants of this range are a Pastel miniata x 5 Star (Gardenii x group 1 yellow). These are all the most beautiful pinks and pastels with open recurved flowers. I am currently line breeding with these plants and the first f3 flowered in 2016.



*Secret Love*



*Secret Desire*



*Secret Hope*

Pink clivias are still rare and hard to come by. With the large gene pool in interspecific breeding, pink flowers are now also seen in the interspecific range of clivias. My first pink pastel types emerged from ten plants I received as a gift from a friend in 2007, as two-year old seedlings. These were all grown from seed of the same cross namely, (Coromandel Orange x Group 1 Yellow) x 5 Star (Gardenii x group 1 yellow). These F1 plants are all split for Group 1 Yellow and therefore, when sibling crosses are made, a percentage of them have green stems.

The first of these ten plants flowered in 2009 and to my surprise, it was a beautiful creamy pastel which developed pink tinges as it matured. The flowers were large and semi-open on a small to medium sized plant. It flowered during the interspecific time and I decided to take it to the Eastern Province Interspecific Show where it was voted best on show. I named this one "Secret Desire" as it was desired by so many at that show. During 2011 two more opened. I participated in both the Eastern Province and Garden Route Clivia Shows, where both these plants were selected as winners. At the Eastern Province show in July, "Secret Wish" was voted best on show. It is salmon pink with semi-open flowers on a sturdy medium sized plant. In August the third plant started opening and I named her "Secret Hope". Although all the flowers were not open yet, it was voted second best on show. It is a beautiful pink with large semi-open flowers on a medium sized plant. Since then, others have all flowered, mostly as beautiful pink pastels. Two of the ten plants flowered as yellow interspecifics.

They do not all flower during show times, but I have named and numbered them for breeding purposes. I did sibling crosses with them and the first f1 flowered in 2015. It was a beautiful large pink semi-pendulous flower named "Secret Child". Although the flower count was low, as the plant was only three years old at that stage, I have good expectations for the crosses. The other plants in this range are as follows: "Secret Love" has lovely salmon pink flowers on a semi broad leaf, compact plant. "Secret Rose" opens in a lovely round cream flower that matures into an apricot pastel. "Secret Dream" is almost a pink versicolor with cream on the inside and pink on the outside of the petals. As the flowers mature, they change to pink. "Secret Strawberry Parfait" has the pinkest flowers and is the only one that offsets well. "Secret Baby Doll" is a more pendulous flower in soft shades of cream, pink and pastel.

What makes these plants stand out from the rest, is the size of the plants. Most of them are much smaller and more compact than the average interspecific with shorter leaves. They are neat, tidy plants and it seems that the umbels keep on improving every year. They have viable pollen and set seeds well. I am extremely excited to see the results of all these sibling crosses, where I used the pollen on pink *miniata* and other interspecifics. It was surely one of my best gifts ever.



*Secret Strawberry Parfait*

### The "Dream" series

These are all selfed seedlings of a Nakamura bred interspecific, grown from seed. The first selfing of this plant only produced about 8 -10 seeds which grew into these magnificent plants. The flowers are large and semi open. These plants all have flowers with Picotee-type edging, and semi to broad leaves, up to 90mm. We are linebreeding these plants as well as using them in other crosses.

When I first laid eyes on these plants eight years ago, I was blown away by the shape and size of these three-year old plants in comparison to our normal interspecifics. They were broad-leafed, sturdy and large. All were selfed seedlings of a Nakamura bred interspecific, grown from seed by Kerneels Buitendag. The first selfing of this plant only produced about 8 -10 seeds which grew into these magnificent plants.

I fell head over heels in love with them and managed to persuade Kerneels to part with them. These have grown into large robust, broad-leafed plants. When they came into flower, I knew they were special.

The first plant to flower, I named "Dreaming" and it has a distinct white Picotee edge around the flower. The flowers are large and semi open. These plants all have flowers with Picotee-type edging, and semi to broad leaves, up to 90mm.

I have named this collection, the "Dream Series". I have been crossing them with each other, in order to line-breed and keep the quality of the flowers with the unique characteristics of these plants.

Some of the others that have flowered and have been named: " Dream Catcher", "Sweet Dreams", "Apricot Dreams", "Dream On", "Dream Land", "Dreaming Hearts", "Day Dreamer" and "Dreamscapes".

These are very fertile plants which set seeds well. I have also utilised their pollen extensively on my other interspecifics and cannot wait for the resultant seedlings to flower within the next season or two. Some of the seedlings show signs of variegation, making them even more striking. I will keep you updated on the results. Exciting times await us, as these seedlings grow and come into flower over the next few seasons!

These plants are now being registered at the International Clivia register and checklist.



DREAMSCAPES





*Utopia Clivias*

DREAM OF HEARTS



*Utopia Clivias*

DREAM ON



DREAMING

### New versicolour range

We are breeding a new range of versi colours from different breeding material. They range from pink versi colours to dark red and brick brown versi colours. Versi colour genes are very dominant and are carried over to the next generation even only as a pollen parent. The famous "Star Green" is used in this breeding line. "Star Green" is truly a one of a kind flower with dark brick red outer petals and green inner petals which gradually change to a dusty pink as it matures. We are very excited about seeing the outcomes of these Star Green crosses, but that will only be in a year or two.

**Versicolour flowers – Here the colours on the inside and outside of the tepals are different.**

The best f1 of "Star Green" is a plant that flowered for the first time in 2018. We have named this f1 "Star Green Destiny". "Star Green Destiny" is far superior to the original Star Green in many ways, and therefore we have decided to use this F1 in all our breeding with the Star Green range for the following reasons: Star Green original versus F1 Star Green Destiny:

"Star Green Destiny" produces viable pollen which Star Green original does not.

"Star Green Destiny" has larger, more flared flowers than the mother plant.

The flower count on this first flower of "Star Green Destiny" is (20) florets, where "Star Green Original" has never produced more than (15) florets at maturity. It also has the strong dark brick red versi-colour on the back of the petals. As the colour change in the flowers is not so extreme when it matures as with the original "Star Green", the versi-colour seems to show up better on the mature flowers.

The F1 is a larger, stronger more vigorous plant and hopefully will be less prone to pests and disease.



STAR GREEN ORIGINAL





STAR GREEN VERSI ON THE BACK OF THE TEPALS



*Utopia Clivias*

STAR GREEN DESTINY



STAR GREEN DESTINY MATURE



5 STAR VERSI

#### 4. Conclusion:

Interspecifics give us a longer flowering period as they start flowering from June to September. They are fast growing and more disease resistant than miniata. The range of colours and forms of flowers are unlimited, and they are therefore a must in any breeder`s collection.