

Clivia Mirabilis – Rourke

Original description:

Rourke, J.P. (2002). *Clivia mirabilis* Rourke (Amaryllidaceae : Haemantheae) a new species from the Northern Cape Province, South Africa. *Bothalia* **32** : 1-7.

Distribution:

So far this species has only been recorded from the Oorlogskloof Nature Reserve near Nieuwoudtville in the Northern Cape Province, South Africa.

Habitat:



C. mirabilis grows on the lightly wooded east-facing talus slopes below sandstone cliffs in the Oorlogskloof canyon, in humus between sandstone boulders. The climate is semi-arid Mediterranean with a winter rainfall of just over 400 mm. At an elevation of ~900 m the plants experience occasional light frosts in winter and very hot dry days in summer.

Leaves:

The stiff upright leaves have a prominent pale whitish median stripe on the leaves. The leaf bases are strongly pigmented in purple-red. The leaf margins are smooth.

Flowers:

Between 20 and 48 Bicoloured flowers are borne on long drooping pedicels (25 – 40 mm) on a purple to carmine peduncle. The pedicels are orange red. The flowers are orange-red at the ovary turning yellow towards the tips of the tepals which are green. The flower darkens as it opens, and after pollination the whole flower including the ovary is coloured dark orange red. When the flower withers the ovary and pedicels turn green.

Berries:

The berries have a distinctive irregular glebulose-gongyloid shape.

Roots:

As an aid in surviving the hot dry summers *C. mirabilis* has thick fleshy roots up to 20 mm in diameter which function as water storage organs. An adult plant can have a root system up to 0.75 m in diameter.