

Native Orchid of the Month—October

*Platanthera x bicolor*  
(fringed orchid)

*Platanthera x bicolor* (fringed orchid), also known as the ‘bicolor bog orchid’, is a naturally occurring orchid resulting from the crossing of Louisiana native species *P. blephariglottis* (white fringed) and *P. ciliaris* (yellow fringed orchid). It is, however, only in the Florida parishes where both species are known to occur naturally and hybridization might occur.

Both parent species are found in bogs, wet meadows, marshes, and moist open woodlands. The hybrid occurs from the Southeast to the Lake States of northern United States.



It has not been described botanically, but the flower color is immediate between the white flowers of *blephariglottis* and the yellow ones of *ciliaris*. The flowers are heavily fringed with a long nectar spur which extends back away from the lip.

Flowering occurs from July through September and they are borne in a cluster

at the top of stalk that may be three feet tall.

The individual flowers vary in size, but are usually about an inch in length. The cluster of flowers may be up to six inches in length.

The plant may have one or two bluish-green leaves with several prominent veins and may be up to 12 inches long.

*Platanthera x bicolor* has not been documented in Louisiana, but may occur in southeastern portion of the state where both parent species occur naturally.

