

## Where Oh Where Did My Blc's Go?? Part 2 in The Name Changing Game

By Richard Pippen, Ph.D

Professor Emeritus, Western Michigan University

Naples, Florida

Well, you see, it all started like this. First there was *Brassavola digbyana*, a really neat orchid with a good sized greenish white flower (see picture), a really big, frilly lip (and a delightful lemon fragrance). Orchid hybridizers thought it would be great to use this species as a breeder to impart a large, fringed lip to many cattleya-like orchids. So they did, and it worked great! *B. digbyana* was crossed with laelias and cattleyas and they were crossed with each other and thus the Blc's were born. *Blc.* stands for *Brassolaeliocattleya*—a hybrid genus that involved *Brassavola* x *Laelia* x *Cattleya*. Many really great looking crosses using *Brassavola digbyana* were made. You probably have several in your collection. I know I do in mine.



That was fine, but then the orchid taxonomists took a closer look at *Brassavola digbyana* and said among themselves, “you know, this species is really different from the other species of *Brassavola* (*B. nodosa* for example) so we need to put it into a separate genus.” So they did. They transferred *Brassavola digbyana* into the genus *Rhyncholaelia* (*Rl.*)! Now *B. digbyana* becomes *Rl. digbyana*. (I won't bother you with the technical whys and wherefores, only plant taxonomists would appreciate that ☺).

Then most of the *Laelia* species that were used to create Blc's were transferred to *Sophronitis* (as was discussed in Part 1 of this series in an earlier NOS newsletter). So Blc's became Rsc's (*Rhynchosophracattleya*)! Ok, we can deal with that, but do the taxonomists leave well enough alone?? No! So, they made another “genus adjustment” and transferred all the Brazilian Laelias that were *Sophronitis*, into *Cattleya*!!

So what does that mean for us poor mortal orchid enthusiasts? **It means that all the "B" parts of Blc. that were formerly from *B. digbyana* are now "Rl". And all of the "L" parts of Blc. that were formerly from the Brazilian Laelias are now "C".** Thank goodness that all the original cattleyas that formed the “C” part are still *Cattleya*! Putting it all together, most of the former Blc's are now Rlc's (*Rhyncholaeliocattleya*).

I have listed a number of examples in the table below. Don't be discouraged! Whatever you call them they are still great orchids!!

### The Old Way

*Brassolaeliocattleya* (*Blc.*)

*Blc.* Ann Miyamoto

### The New Way

*Rhyncholaeliocattleya* (*Rlc.*)

*Rlc.* Ann Miyamoto

*Blc.* Alma Kee 'Tipmalee'  
*Blc.* Blanche Aisaka  
*Blc.* Bryce Canyon  
*Blc.* Chia Lin  
*Blc.* Chunyeah  
*Blc.* Doctor Joe Walker  
*Blc.* Dora Louise Capen  
*Blc.* George King  
*Blc.* Glenn Maidment  
*Blc.* Goldenzelle  
*Blc.* Hausermann's Symphony  
*Blc.* Haw Yuan Beauty  
*Blc.* Lucille Lundberg  
*Blc.* Maitland  
*Blc* Meditation  
*Blc.* Memoria Helen Brown  
*Blc.* Ocone  
*Blc.* Samba Splendor  
*Blc.* Tassie Barbero  
*Blc.* Toshie Aoki  
*Blc.* Waianae Leopard  
*Blc.* Waianae Maiden  
*Blc* Waikiki Gold  
*Blc.* Williette Wong

*Rlc.* Alma Kee 'Tipmalee'  
*Rlc.* Blanche Aisaka  
*Rlc.* Bryce Canyon  
*Rlc.* Chia Lin  
*Rlc.* Chunyeah  
*Rlc.* Doctor Joe Walker  
*Rlc.* . Dora Louise Capen  
*Rlc.* George King  
*Rlc.* Glenn Maidment  
*Rlc.* Goldenzelle  
*Rlc.* Hausermann's Symphony  
*Rlc.* Haw Yuan Beauty  
*Rlc.* Lucille Lundberg  
*Rlc.* Maitland  
*Rlc.* Meditation  
*Rlc.* Memoria Helen Brown  
*Rlc.* Ocone  
*Rlc.* Samba Splendor  
*Rlc.* Tassie Barbero  
*Rlc.* Toshie Aoki  
*Rlc.* Waianae Leopard  
*Rlc.* Waianae Maiden  
*Rlc.* Waikiki Gold  
*Rlc.* Williette Wong

I want to thank David Genovese for his critical reading and suggestions in the preparation of this article.

#### References:

- Dressler, R. L. Special Report/Lumpers and Splitters: Cattleyas and Molecular Systematics. *Orchids* pp. 812-183. Nov. 2008
- McHatton, R. Special report/What's New in Orchid Nomenclature. *Orchids*, pp. 98-99. Feb 2008.
- McHatton, R. Special Report/Light at the End of the Tunnel? *Orchids*, pp. 334-335, May 2008. *Atlanta Orchid Society Journal*, January 2009 (An email exchange between David Mellard and Ron McHatton, AOS Director of Education)
- Royal Horticultural Society Plant Registry Website  
([rhs.org.uk/plants/registerpages/orchiddetails.asp](http://rhs.org.uk/plants/registerpages/orchiddetails.asp)  
)