ORYTHORN ORCHID
*Cyrtopodium punctatum* (L.) Lindl.

**Synonyms:** *Epidendrum punctatum* L.

**Family:** Orchidaceae (orchid)

**FNAI Ranks:** G5/S1

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

**Wetland Status:** US–UPL FL–UPL

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**Field Description:** Orchid attached to tree trunks by many white aerial roots. Stems (pseudobulbs) 12 - 14 inches long and 2 inches thick at base, pointed, with papery sheaths or rings left from old leaf bases. Leaves to 28 inches long, narrowly lance-shaped with parallel veins, rising from tips of pseudobulbs. Flowers to 3 inches across, in showy, much-branched clusters up to 3 feet long with 30 - 40 flowers; sepals 3, pale yellow with large purple-brown spots; petals 2, bright yellow with small purplish-brown spots; lip 3-lobed with 2 brownish-red lobes curving strongly upward, and middle lobe bright yellow. Fruit to 3.5 inches long and 2 inches wide, green, nodding.

**Similar Species:** An exotic terrestrial species, *Cyrtopodium paranaense*, has yellow-green flowers with no spots; it has escaped into pine rocklands in Dade County.

**Related Rare Species:** More than 70 other native orchid species are endangered or threatened in Florida.
Cowhorn orchid  

*Cyrtopodium punctatum*

**Habitat:** Trunks and stumps of cypress trees in swamps, branches of buttonwood trees in coastal hammocks, and occasionally pine rocklands and marl prairies.

**Best Survey Season:** Flowers March–May but pseudobulbs and leaves are distinctive all year.

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

**Conservation Status:** This orchid was removed “wagonload upon wagonload” by plant collectors, and is now found in only the most remote areas in a few preserves.

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