

A lucky find

By Carrie Kruger, Utopia Clivias

Some of our most famous clivias were not all bred by world famous breeders, but originated from the most humble places like small backyard nurseries or in ordinary gardens of non-collectors. Spotting these special clivias, has always been one of my wishes. Being a mother of two gymnast daughters, the only travelling I have done for the past few years, was to different towns where they would compete. I decided that whenever we travel to these towns for gymnastic competitions, I will make a special effort to go into the little nurseries and look at what they have to offer in unusual bulbs and maybe spot a clivia or two?

It was in one of these little towns where I made my discovery five years ago. Not expecting much in this little Eastern Cape town, I still decided to go in and have a look at what they had in stock. As I wandered through the little nursery looking at their local bulb selection, my eye caught a single clivia in flower. From a distance it did not look like much as the flower was past its best, and rather tattered and torn.

Upon closer inspection I was impressed with the colouring of the nearly faded flowers. I decided to take this girl home with me and give her a chance with some good feeding and potting up in new soil.



Figure 1. Lucky Girl 2008

For two years the plant grew new leaves and become a healthy specimen, but did not flower for two seasons.

Early in the season of 2010, I spotted a flower forming and I was rather excited to see what it would look like after two years of feeding and resting.

Well, I was not disappointed. This plant rewarded me with a beautifully presented umbel of multi coloured flowers.



Figure 2. Lucky Girl 2010

In 2011 it flowered again, and this time the umbel was even better looking. Not knowing anything about the history or breeding of this plant, I have done multiple pollinations with a variety of pollens for the past three years, and only time will tell.



Figure 3. Lucky Girl 2011

I have aptly named this clivia “Lucky Girl” and it flowers early in the season every year. These treasures are often hiding in the most unusual places and it is always rewarding to spot one of these special clivias and add it to your collection.